

Honor the legacy of the Greatest Generation!

**70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**  
8.14.1945 ~ 8.14.2015

KEEP THE  
SPIRIT  
OF '45  
ALIVE!

[www.spiritof45.org](http://www.spiritof45.org)



# Event Planning Toolkit

[www.Spiritof45.org](http://www.Spiritof45.org)

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# Introduction

Welcome to the 2014 National Spirit of '45 Day campaign!

"Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!" is a nationwide, grassroots, nonpartisan coalition of organizations and individuals who are working together to establish an annual day to honor the achievements of what is often referred to as America's 'greatest generation' so that their example of courage, self-sacrifice, can do attitude, service and national unity will forever inspire future generations of Americans – especially our youth.

In 2010, Congress voted unanimously in favor of a **National Spirit of '45 Day** to be observed on the **second Sunday of every August**, coinciding with the anniversary of August 11, 1945, the historic day when President Harry S. Truman announced that World War II was over and America took on the responsibility for rebuilding the postwar world in an unprecedented effort to assure a better future for both its allies and former enemies alike.



**National Spirit of '45 Day** provides an opportunity for America to say "Thank you!" to those who served in uniform and those who supported them on the Home Front, the men and women who were the "ordinary heroes" of the WWII generation who are now passing away at an estimated rate of one every 90 seconds. It is also a time to honor the memory of the more than 400,000 Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice and never came home.

By remembering and reflecting upon the achievements of the generation that endured the difficult times of the Great Depression, defended freedom in WWII, and then went on to assure a better future for their children and their children's children, Americans of all ages can come together to renew our national spirit so that we can meet the historic challenges of our own time. It is especially important that the youth of America be involved in Spirit of '45 Day in ways that help inspire them to contribute to making the world a better place in their lifetime.



*People everywhere celebrated "America's Greatest Day" on August 11, 1945*



*On the inaugural Spirit of '45 Day in 2010, thousands of people gathered around a giant Seward Johnson sculpture of the famous "kiss" seen around the world on August 14, 1945 that was brought in to New York's Times Square.*



This year marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II. The Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive coalition is helping to facilitate several major events and activities to help further build public awareness about Spirit of '45 Day so that it will continue to gain acceptance as "America's 45 national day."

You and your community can join this effort by:

- Urging your local elected officials to issue a proclamation officially declaring the second Sunday in August as "Spirit of '45 Day" to honor of the members of the World War II generation in your community. (A sample proclamation is included in this Planning Guide as Exhibit A.)
- **Organizing a commemorative event or activity in your community during the weekend of August 14 - 10, 2014.** (Be sure to register your event at [Spiritof45Day.org](http://Spiritof45Day.org).)
- Preserving the stories of the men and women who experienced August 11, 1945 and submitting them to the Spirit of '45 websites so these first hand memories of their "Greatest Day" can be preserved and shared with future generations.

This toolkit provides ideas and concepts to help you and your organization with **organizing a commemorative event.**

Remember - KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE is a grassroots campaign, so we are looking to individuals and organizations to step forward and organize their own events, using their own creativity, resources and energy!

**Don't feel that you have to organize a Big Event each year on Spirit of '45 Day. Many communities are having simple wreath laying ceremonies consisting of some opening comments and youth reading a supporting proclamation from their elected officials, and closing with the laying of a wreath and a bugler playing "Taps."**

**Imagine if every community did this on the second Sunday of every August!**

**This would truly be a tribute to the men and women of the Greatest Generation and be a way to remind us all of how we can continue to draw inspiration from their example of courage, self-sacrifice, service to others and national unity.**





# Preparing for your event

Start planning and organizing your event as soon as possible each year. Before you begin, visit [www.spiritof45.org](http://www.spiritof45.org) to see if there were events in your area last year or activities already planned near you this year; you may want to combine efforts or link up!



## Read this toolkit!

Take a look through this toolkit to give you ideas and a sense of what you can do.

## Define your event

Create a draft agenda for your event, and use this to help guide you in your event planning. If you have plenty of time, resources and motivation, aim high! If you are limited in what you can do, but still want to participate, choose our *Basic Ceremony* option. **The most important thing is to DO SOMETHING!**

## Refer to past events

You may have hosted or participated in other commemorative events (or even company events, parties etc.) You may be able to use many of your experiences and contacts to help you plan your Spirit of '45 event.

## Assemble a team

There are many people in your community who are willing and able to help you, from event planning to providing a specific service or meeting a particular need. We encourage you to get as many people involved as possible!

## Find a venue

The event can take place anywhere appropriate in your community: City Hall, a memorial, a park, a museum, a veterans hall, a VA hospital, a senior center, a church, etc. If you are using a public space, contact the appropriate agency to make sure you have any permits required.

## Sound system

If you have a large venue (especially outdoors) you will need amplified sound (a PA system) You can rent one, or even better, see if someone will donate one for the day. If your event will have music or a DJ, they may have their own audio system. Local schools, churches, or community centers may also be able to help.

## Fundraising

KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE is unable to provide funding or fundraising support (we are a non-profit, just like many of you!) We encourage you to reach out to local groups and businesses, especially for donations of products and services. However, don't let a lack of resources keep you from holding an event – simply adjust your plans based on what is available in your community, or follow our “*Basic Ceremony*” suggestion.

## List your event at Spiritof45.org/

Add your event to our national roster at our website, so others can find you and so we can send you additional information.

## Promote your event

Start promoting your event as soon as you have a venue and a time! You will not only attract attendees, but you will find groups and individuals in your community to help out. See the “*Promoting your Event*” section of this Toolkit for more.

See the **Resources** section of this toolkit for sample letters to help you recruit help and ask for assistance!

# Ceremonial Activities

The centerpiece of your event can be a ceremony recognizing the men and women of the World War II generation. The following pages provide tips on components you might wish to include in your ceremony.

**Remember - you don't have to do everything on this list; this is only a reference. We simply encourage you to do the best you can to honor the members of the Greatest Generation in your community! (SEE "Some Things You Can Do")**

## SAMPLE EVENT AGENDA

- Master of Ceremonies
- Welcome
- Presentation of Flag (Color Guard)
- National Anthem
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Invocation/Opening Reading
- Guest speakers
- Reading of Local Proclamations/Resolutions
- Salute to the World War II Generation
- Musical entertainment
- Video clips
- Wreath Laying
- Benediction
- Taps
- Farewell



## Master of Ceremonies

The Master of Ceremonies (MC) is the main speaker at your event. His or her job is to keep the event moving smoothly. This person can be a special guest, or anyone who is comfortable speaking in public and leading your event. The MC can be assisted by someone “off stage” who can help direct speaker and guests to the stage as needed.

## Welcome

The MC should open the event with a brief greeting:

SAMPLE SCRIPT (modify as appropriate)

*“Welcome to our ceremonial observance of Spirit of ’45 Day, a special day honoring the men and women of our World War II generation on the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary of August 11, 1945, the day the War ended and the healing of the world began. It was the Greatest Generation’s “Greatest Day.”*

*“Today and throughout the week, communities across America are paying tribute to these “ordinary heroes” of the past century by remembering what they achieved for our country and the world, and the incredible sacrifices that they made so many years ago.*

*“It is our hope that our children and our children’s children will always remember this generation and will continue to draw strength and inspiration from their example of national unity, cooperation, integrity, courage and selflessness as we face the challenges of today and the future.”*

If desired, the MC or another guest can deliver longer welcoming remarks after the presentation of the flag and the singing of the National Anthem.



## Presentation of the flag/color guard

Having a ceremonial color guard march in the colors is an appropriate tribute to the military service of our World War II veterans. The following groups can provide color guards:

- § Local military
- § Local veterans group
- § ROTC or Jr ROTC
- § Boy Scouts/Cub Scouts

The leader of the Color Guard will work with you to incorporate the Color Guard into the flow of your ceremony.

If you do not use a color guard, make sure you display our nation’s flag in an appropriate manner. We recommend you refer to the information provided by the National Flag Foundation:

**[www.americanflags.org](http://www.americanflags.org)**



## National Anthem

The Star Spangled Banner may be performed by a singer, musician or band. If you have musical entertainment, they may be able to perform the band. You can also find singers at local church choirs, school singing groups, glee clubs, etc.

Singers may sing “a cappella” (without music) or they may require a CD or backing band. Factor this into your event planning.

You can also play a recording of the National Anthem. A free recording is available for download at [www.spiritof45.org/yourevent](http://www.spiritof45.org/yourevent). Finally, if you are unable to use a singer or play a recording, you can always lead the attendees in singing it together!

## Pledge of Allegiance

You may also wish to recite the Pledge of Allegiance after the National Anthem (or on its own, if necessary). The MC or a special guest can lead the group in the pledge. The Pledge is also a wonderful way to include a young person in the formal ceremony!

For your reference, the text of the pledge is:

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”



## Invocation/Opening reading

Depending on your audience or venue, you may wish to offer a reflective prayer or reading to open the event.

The invocation can be delivered by a clergyman, a military or veteran’s group chaplain, or a volunteer. For public events, we encourage an inclusive, non-denominational selection in consideration of the diverse backgrounds of those who fought and died for our country (Houses of worship hosting events for their own congregations should, of course, select something appropriate for their audience).



## Guest speakers

Your event will most likely include one or more guest speakers, including elected officials, notable local veterans, and other public figures.

Make sure that all invited speakers know their role in the program. If you have a longer program with multiple speakers, you may want to space them out with musical performances, video presentations, etc.

Each speaker’s remarks should be no more than 3-5 minutes, unless you have a special keynote speaker, who may speak for up to 10 minutes. Also, remind all speakers in advance that the purpose of the day is to honor our World War II generation, not to promote any personal, political or business agenda.

You can also invite guest speakers to read supporting proclamations from your local elected officials

See the **Resources** section of this toolkit for sample letters inviting guest speakers

## Reading of the National Spirit of '45 Day Resolution

Congress passed a resolution in 2010 in support of establishing a **National Spirit of '45 Day** as a permanent annual observance. This resolution can be read in communities during your event. If your Congressional Representative or other elected office is attending, he or she can read it, or a youth representative should read it.

For your reference, the text of the Resolution is included in the **Resources** section of this toolkit.

## Reading of local proclamations, letters of support, or resolutions

In addition to the Congressional resolution, we are encouraging communities to reach out to their local, county and state elected officials to also issue resolutions and statements of support.

A sample proclamation, plus a sample letter of request are included in the **Resources** section of this toolkit.

## Recognition of the World War II generation

The most important part of your program will be the recognition of the members of the World War II generation in attendance.

The MC should announce:

***“If there are World War II veterans present, please rise, if you are able, to be recognized.”***

The MC then should lead the audience in applause. MC should also recognize those who served on the home front, and families of those lost in service.

Depending on size of event, individuals may be recognized. Also, you may wish to provide a special certificate, letter or other commemorative gift or form of recognition



## Musical performances

Depending on the length of your event, you can include performances of appropriate music by local singers or musicians. Musical performances are a great way to break up your program, especially if you have numerous guest speakers.



For more on using music to enhance your event, refer to the *"Other Activities and Elements"* section of this Toolkit.

## Video/Audio clips

If you have the technical capability, you can include video and/or audio clips as part of your ceremony.

Appropriate video/audio clips might include segments of interviews with local veterans, clips of documentaries or other films about local veterans, video provided by a local museum, or relevant news clips provided by a local station.

We recommend keeping such clips to 5 minutes or less.

Several video clips are available on the Spirit of '45 web site for use at your event.

## Thank-You's

Before you begin the Ceremonial Closing, the MC should take a moment to thank the individuals, groups and businesses that have helped put together the event.

## Ceremonial Closing

We encourage you to conclude your ceremony by honoring the over 400,000 Americans who gave their lives during World War II, and by remembering those members of the WWII generation who have since passed away.

We suggest the following sequence:

- **Tribute to the Fallen: Remarks**
- **Wreath laying**
- **Benediction/closing reading**
- **Moment of Silence**
- **Taps**

## Tribute to the Fallen: Remarks by AWON/ Gold Star family member:

If an AWON member is not available in your community, consider inviting a local Gold Star family member (someone who has lost a loved one in the service of our nation) from another war, to speak about sacrifice and the importance of remembering the fallen, of any era.

## Wreath Laying

Many groups incorporated ceremonial wreath laying ceremony last year, featuring a bugler who played Taps. This is especially appropriate if you are holding your event at a memorial, park, veteran's center, WWII museum or cemetery. You can obtain an appropriate wreath from a local florist.







### **Benediction/Closing reading**

Depending on your audience or venue, you may wish to offer a reflective prayer or reading as part of your closing. This benediction can be delivered by a clergyman, a military or veteran group chaplain, or a volunteer.

For public events, we encourage an inclusive, non- denominational selection in consideration of the diverse backgrounds of those who fought and died for our country (Houses of worship hosting events for their congregations should of course select something appropriate for their audience).

### **Moment of Silence**

The benediction/closing reading should be followed by a moment of silence. Even if you do not include a benediction/closing reading, make sure you remember to take a moment of silence.

### **"Taps"**

If at all possible, the ceremony should conclude with the playing of "Taps" by a bugler. You may also be able to recruit a bugler from a local military installation, veterans group, or marching band.

**Bugles Across America**, a national network of bugle players, has volunteered to play on Spirit of '45 Day. To find a bugle player near you, visit: [www.spiritof45.org/yourevent](http://www.spiritof45.org/yourevent) or contact BAAS directly at [www.buglesacrossamerica.org](http://www.buglesacrossamerica.org)

### **Farewell**

Once Taps has been played, after a respectful pause, the MC should briefly announce that the event is over, and dismiss the audience:

"Thank you for being here today. Let us all continue to honor the legacy of our World War II generation by striving to lead lives dedicated to the Spirit of '45 – the spirit of service, community and national unity!"

### **More ideas?**

We will be updating and enhancing this toolkit each year with input from participating organizations like yours.

Please share your ideas with us by sending an e-mail to [events@spiritof45.org](mailto:events@spiritof45.org) so we can include them in the next version of this toolkit.

*And please remember to tell us all about your event and to submit pictures and video clips after August 11 to the Events Registration section of the Spirit of '45 web site.*



# Additional Activities/Elements

Here are some additional ideas for making your event a truly memorable one for your participants.

Maybe you can think of more. Let us know!

## Photo Gallery of WWII Portraits

You can decorate your event using poster-sized portraits of men and women from your community, showing them as they were during WWII.



Scan them into a computer to create a slideshow to be shown them on screen or a digital picture frame.

You may want to enlarge your photos as posters so that they can be displayed on Veterans Day and other occasions, and brought out each year in future Spirit of '45 Day programs.



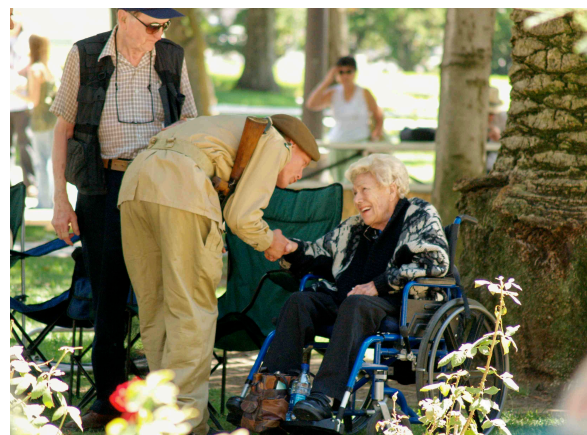
## Re-Enactors

Re-enactors are a very popular way of helping to bring the WWII era to life. Veterans love to see and touch the uniforms, equipment and vehicles they remember from their service.

Many WWII history and community museums last year included WWII re-enactors in their events. See the Spirit of '45 web site for examples.



You may need to obtain permits for vehicles and replica firearms at your venue; the re-enactor group should know how to do this.



## *Music and Entertainment for your Spirit of '45 Event*

### **The Importance of Music**

Music from the 1930's and 40's is one of the best ways to bring the emotions and memories of the era to life. The era was so tied to swing music and especially the songs of the big band era, you can't have a really successful event without music. At the very least, if you have absolutely no budget—rent a sound system with CD player and get CD's of that era's music. The tracks are easy to find online, and if all else fails, go to [singers@swinginbluestars.com](mailto:singers@swinginbluestars.com) and purchase their CD's of the Andrews Sisters songs.



### **Finding Talent**

If you have a few hundred dollars for talent, then look online. Key words would be:

- Andrews Sisters Group
- Swing Band
- Patriotic Music

... and also put in your city, so you don't get musicians from all over the world in your online search.

Tell them it would be fabulous if they could donate a little of their time for a good cause, and that they would have great exposure. Offer them a booth so they can sell their CD's. This often helps offset the cost of paying them.

Many groups are happy to donate time if they can gain exposure in the community and do something good. If you have media coming to cover the event, tell them that; it is a good enticement also.

Contact local dance studios to see if they have students who would come and swing dance at

your event. Always entertaining to watch—especially when they come in period costume.

School bands are hard to get in August, because school is out for the summer. But if you know the music director, he or she might be able to pull together a small group for your event. A donation to their music program would be attractive to them.

There are also many retirement communities that have bands that play swing music. These people are retired, and having a band gives them something to do. Many used to play for top name bands. These bands will often donate their time to a good cause, and if not, they are very reasonably priced.

### **Be Specific/Have a Program**

Nothing drives musicians and singers more crazy than having a vague idea of when they will be performing and where. So, please have a detailed plan. Tell each group when and where to set-up and what time they will be performing (start and end)...and stick to it!

Also, if the band or singing group does have their own sound system, you can ask to use it for your program. They might be fine with that—and it will save you money. It does not make sense for everyone that comes to bring their own sound system. Get some economies of scale.

### **Paying Talent**

If you have agreed to pay a band or singers, please pay them on the day of the event, or very soon after—especially if they are giving their time free or at a reduced rate. They shouldn't have to hound you to get paid!

See if you can find a local band, ensemble, or singing group that specializes in playing these songs. You can also invite local swing dance groups to attend to add energy and excitement.

Other music options include a brass band/ensemble to play patriotic tunes, or a DJ playing music from the era. If you have a local radio station that features music from the 1930s & 1940s, they may be able to help with music.



## Exhibits

If your event is at a museum or historical society, this is a great opportunity to highlight collections related to World War II, the Great Depression, and other 1930s & 1940s themes. If your event is at another type of venue, invite local museums or private collections to display memorabilia or showcases at your event.



## Interviews/Oral Histories

Your event is a great opportunity to capture the personal stories of the men and women of the World War II generation. Look for organizations or individuals in your community that are already gathering oral histories, and invite them to your event!



An easy activity is to capture their stories of is to ask them where they were on August 11, 1945, or where they were and what they felt when they heard the war was over.



You can find copies of a basic interview form in the **Resources** section of the Toolkit, or on our website at [www.spiritof45.org/yourevent](http://www.spiritof45.org/yourevent).

You can also conduct videotaped oral history interviews, or begin the process of producing Digital Stories (short videos that can be uploaded to the Internet for sharing with schools, libraries, museums, and others).

See [www.stories-of-service.org](http://www.stories-of-service.org) to learn more and to download a free guide for producing videos of your local WWII veterans.

## Re-enact the Kiss!

A fun way to recapture the emotion of the day is to re-enact the famous kiss from the Times Square Photo.

You can download a large-format version of the kiss photo from our website to create a backdrop for photos. Visit [www.spiritof45.org/yourevent](http://www.spiritof45.org/yourevent)

## Printed program

You may wish to create a printed program describing the day's agenda and thanking your supporters or contributors.

This program can be as simple as a single page flyer or as elaborate as a full-color glossy booklet, depending on the size of your event and your resources. See if you can find a local graphic designer or design student to assist you, and a local printer to provide donated or discounted printing services.

## Cakes and Refreshments

Order a replica of the Spirit of '45 cake that was presented during the banquet held in the Bob Hope Salon of the famous Queen Mary in Long Beach, CA on August 14, 2008.

Templates for customizing your cake can be downloaded from the Spirit of '45 web site.

For larger groups, order Spirit of '45 Day cup cakes in red, white and blue!



# Promoting your Event

As soon as you have decided on a date, time and venue for your event, start promoting it to the public and media! Here are some tips and tools to assist you.

## List your event at [www.spiritof45.org](http://www.spiritof45.org)

Start by submitting your event to our list at our website. Many visitors come to our website looking for information about KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE – make sure people from your community can find you!

## Flyers/posters

Distribute flyers for your event throughout your community. Good places to target include senior homes/centers, Veterans group meeting places, VA hospitals, historical societies, libraries, museums, and anywhere else!



E-

## mails

Send out an e-mail to everyone you know, asking them to forward it.

If you are on Facebook, Twitter, or any other social media website, use it to spread the word (or recruit a younger person to help you!).

## Press Release

Make a list of all the newspapers, TV stations and radio stations in your area. Find out the point of contact for news about local events, or the contact for the general editorial desk. Send them a press release announcing your event.

We will be issuing a series of media releases during the weeks prior to August 11 to build public awareness. Check the Spirit of '45 web site for the latest releases.

## Newspapers/publications

In addition to sending local papers your press release, follow up directly with reporters or personalities that have a history of covering patriotic/veterans/WWII-related stories.

You should also submit your event to the paper's free community calendar. Finally, local publications may be willing to provide you with donated or discounted ad space.

## Radio

In addition to sending radio stations your press release, submit a script for a PSA (Public Service Announcement) to be read on air.

Target stations that play music from the era, or that have patriotic/veterans-related programming (you can event contact the hosts of these shows directly).

There is a 10-minute interview with Warren Hegg, National Spirit of '45 Program Supervisor available on the Spirit of '45 Day web site.

## Television

In addition to sending TV stations your press release, follow up directly with reporters or personalities that have a history of covering patriotic/veterans/WWII-related stories.





# Follow Up

Our campaign does not end on August 14!

Here are some ways you can continue to spread the word and KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE! throughout the year.

## Share your event

Post photos and a summary of your event on our website. If you have your own website, Facebook page, or other online location, you can link to it from our website.

## Thank-you's

Don't forget to send thank-you notes and photos to everyone who supported or participated in your event. This is a great opportunity to establish relationships for future activities.

## Continue to be a Participating Member in the KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE! National Campaign!

Come back to our website ([spiritof45.org](http://spiritof45.org)) for more information on how you can continue to KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE, including:

- Year-round service and commemorative activities for the school year
- Tips on preparing for Veterans Day, including information on how to organize a Spirit of '45 entry in your local parade.
- Information about the Spirit of '45 National Leaders Conference in San Diego, CA!

*Go to [Spiritof45.org](http://Spiritof45.org) to make a donation to keep the campaign going so that we can continue to build public awareness and participation, and support events like yours!*



# Basic Ceremony Script (Sample)

*NOTE: Make sure a flag is present (on a stand, tabletop, etc.)*

**Master of Ceremonies (MC):** "Welcome to our ceremonial observance of Spirit of '45 Day, a special day honoring the service of those who served in World War II, in uniform and on the home front. We have come together to mark the 66<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of August 11, 1945, the day the War ended and America assumed the responsibility for leading the rebuilding of the postwar world.

"Communities across America honor the men and women of our World War II generation not only by remembering their service and sacrifice, but by pledging ourselves to continue their legacy. We are here to draw strength and inspiration from their example of national unity, cooperation, service and selflessness as we face the challenges of today and the future.

"Please rise, if you are able, and join me in the Pledge of Allegiance."

*<Recite the Pledge, invite guests to be seated.>*

**MC:** "Congress unanimously voted in support of establishing the second Sunday in every August as Spirit of '45 Day, a special day honoring the legacy of the World War II generation."

*<MC reads the Resolution, or invites a guest speaker to do so.>*

**MC:** "Our (Mayor/City Council/Assembly/etc.) has passed a (Proclamation/Letter of Support/etc.) in support of Spirit of 45 Day here in our community.

*<MC reads the Proclamation/Letter, or invites a guest speaker or youth leaders to do so. >*

**MC:** "If there are World War II veterans present, please rise, if you are able, to be recognized.

*<MC leads applause. Depending on size of event, individuals may be recognized. MC may also recognize those who served on the home front, and families of those lost in service.>*

**MC:** "Our community is taking part in a nationwide campaign called "Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive" which is dedicated to honoring the legacy of the World War II generation by ensuring that we always remember their example of national unity, cooperation, service and selflessness. One of the leaders of this campaign is Edith Shain, who you may know as "the Nurse" in the famous photograph of the sailor kissing the Nurse in Times Square on August 11, 1945. Sadly, Edith passed away before her vision of a national day of remembrance to honor the "ordinary heroes" of her generation became a reality. However, I would like to share some words from her today.

*<MC or guest speaker reads the letter from Edith. (See Message from Edith)*

**MC:** "Before we conclude today, let us take a moment to remember the 400,000 Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice in World War II, as well as those members of the World War II generation who have since passed away."

*<If an AWON member is present, introduce him/her to lead the next section. He or she may make some brief remarks as well>*

*<Depending on the venue, a prayer may be offered. We encourage an inclusive, non-denominational selection in consideration of the diverse backgrounds of those who fought and died for our country>*

**MC or AWON:** "Please rise, if you are able, for the playing of Taps and a moment of silence. Military and veterans should render the hand salute, and civilian guests may place their hands over their hearts."

*<Bugler plays Taps. MC waits for a moment of silence before concluding>*

**MC:** "Thank you for being here today. Let us all continue to honor the legacy of our World War II generation by striving to lead lives dedicated to the Spirit of '45 – the spirit of service, community and national unity!"

# Sample Letters:

Use the following sample letters to help you ask for help, invite guest speakers, and reach out to your local elected officials.

## REQUESTING A VENUE

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am writing to see if <VENUE NAME> would be available for a community event on August \_\_\_\_\_, from (TIME TO TIME).

Our community is part of a national campaign to observe National Spirit of '45 Day to honor and preserve the legacy of our World War II generation. Congress has designated National Spirit of '45 Day be observed on the second Sunday of every August to coincide with August 14, 1945, the day WWII ended and America began to lead the rebuilding of the postwar world.

As part of this effort, we are hosting a "Spirit of '45 Day" event on **August \_\_\_\_\_**, that will salute those who served in uniform and on the home front, pay tribute to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and mobilize all Americans and future generations to carry on the legacy of national unity and commitment to service of the World War II generation.

<RECOMMENDED/IF APPLICABLE - A couple of sentences, a paragraph, or bullet points describing the components of the event you have already confirmed>

<RECOMMENDED - A couple of sentences or a paragraph on why you or your organization are supporting National Spirit of '45 Day.

For further information, please refer to the attached materials <send copies of flyers or other information>,. You can learn more about the national campaign at: [www.spiritof45.org](http://www.spiritof45.org).

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: <PHONE/EMAIL>

Thank you in advance for your support. We hope you will join us on August \_\_\_\_ to help keep the Spirit of '45 alive!

Note: When contacting venues, make sure you do some research about permits, fees and other requirements. We suggest having a few back-up options, in case you are unable to secure your first choice.



# INVITING GUEST SPEAKERS/RECRUITING HELP

Dear \_\_\_\_\_: I am writing to ask for your assistance with a special event.

Our community is part of a national campaign called KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE, which is dedicated to preserving the legacy of our World War II generation by honoring them on National Spirit of '45 Day, which has been designated to be observed on the second Sunday of every August, coinciding with August 14, 1945, the day President Truman announced that WWII had ended and America took up the task for rebuilding the world.

As part of this effort, we are hosting a "Spirit of '45 Day" event on **August \_\_\_\_\_**, from (TIME TO TIME).. The day will salute those who served in uniform and on the home front, pay tribute to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and mobilize all Americans and future generations to carry on the legacy of national unity and commitment to service of the World War II generation.

<RECOMMENDED - A couple of sentences or a paragraph on why you or your organization are supporting National Spirit of '45 Day .

<RECOMMENDED/IF APPLICABLE - A couple of sentences, a paragraph, or bullet points describing the components of the event you have already confirmed>

I would like to invite you to participate in this event by... <Speaking at the event> <Performing music/national anthem, etc.> <Providing/donating equipment or services>

<Bringing a re-enactors group> <Assisting with planning or volunteering> <etc., etc., etc.>  
For further information, please refer to the attached materials <send copies of flyers or other information>.

You can learn more about the national campaign at: [www.spiritof45.org](http://www.spiritof45.org). In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: <PHONE/EMAIL>.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope you will join us in keeping the Spirit of '45 alive!



# ASKING A LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIAL FOR A SUPPORTING PROCLAMATION/LETTER

Dear \_\_\_\_\_: <MAKE SURE YOU USE THE APPROPRIATE TITLE/NAME SPELLING>

I am writing to ask for your assistance in securing a proclamation or letter of support for a special initiative saluting service and honoring the contributions of our oldest citizens.

Our community is part of a national campaign called KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE, which is dedicated to preserving the legacy of our World War II generation.

As part of this effort, we are hosting a “Spirit of '45 Day” event on **August \_\_\_\_\_**, from (TIME TO TIME).. The day will salute those who served in uniform and on the home front, pay tribute to those who gave the ultimate sacrifice, and mobilize all Americans and future generations to carry on the legacy of national unity and commitment to service of the World War II generation.

<RECOMMENDED - A couple of sentences or a paragraph on why you or your organization are supporting KEEP THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE>

<RECOMMENDED/IF APPLICABLE - A couple of sentences, a paragraph, or bullet points describing the components of the event you have already confirmed>

As part of the event, we are hoping that <the City/State/County> would present a proclamation or letter saluting our World War II generation. This document would be a complement to a national House Concurrent Resolution in support of Spirit of '45 Day, and would re-affirm our community's support of our Greatest Generation.

In addition, we would be honored if you or someone from your office would be available to present the proclamation/letter and to say a few words to our audience.

For further information, please refer to the attached materials <send copies of flyers or other information>.,.

You can learn more about the national campaign at: [www.spiritof45.org](http://www.spiritof45.org). In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at: <PHONE/EMAIL>.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope you will join us in KEEPING THE SPIRIT OF '45 ALIVE!



Don't forget to send the attached sample proclamation so that your elected official will have a model to work from!

# Sample Proclamation/Letter

PROCLAIMING AUGUST 14, 2015, as Spirit of '45 Day

WHEREAS, On August 14, 1945, the people of the United States received word of the end of World War II, and greeted the news of the Allies' noble victory with joyous celebration, humility, and spiritual reflection; and

WHEREAS, The victory marked the culmination of an unprecedented national effort that defeated the forces of aggression, brought freedom to subjugated nations, and ended the horrors of the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, These historic accomplishments were achieved through the collective service and personal sacrifice of the people of the United States, both those who served in uniform and those who supported them on the Home Front, and the nearly 300,000 Americans who gave their lives in service to their country during World War II; and

WHEREAS, August 14, 1945, marked not only the end of the war but also the beginning of an unprecedented era of rebuilding led by the United States to restore the societies of both their allies and former foes alike, and the formation of an array of organizations and institutions which helped to strengthen American democracy by promoting civic engagement, volunteerism, and service to community and country; and

WHEREAS, The courage, dedication, self-sacrifice, and compassion of the "ordinary heroes" of the World War II generation continue to inspire our nation, especially the men and women who are currently serving protecting our country around the world; and

WHEREAS, The entire World War II generation, military and civilian alike, has provided a model of national unity and community that will continue to serve as a source of inspiration for current and future generations of Americans to come together to work for the continued prosperity of the United States and the world.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, (ELECTED OFFICIAL'S NAME), on behalf of the CITY/COUNCIL of \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby proclaim Sunday, August 14, 2015, as

SPIRIT OF '45 DAY

Be, it further proclaimed that the CITY COUNCIL supports a national "Spirit of '45 Day" of commemoration to be held annually on the second Sunday of every August hereafter.

PROCLAIMED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.





## Sample Personal Request from WWII Veteran

Dear Friend

In February 1945, I was a young teenager on the beach of Iwo Jima fighting for my life during one of the worst battles of World War II. Today I'm fighting a battle against time and I need your help.

I'm writing to you on behalf of my dear friend, Edith Shain. Edith was the nurse in the famous photograph taken in Times Square on August 14, 1945, the historic day President Truman announced that World War II was over.

Edith decided to use her "accidental celebrity" to lead a national grassroots movement to create an annual day to honor the "ordinary heroes" of the WWII generation so that their example of courage, self-sacrifice, service and national unity would forever inspire future generations of Americans – especially our youth.

Sadly, Edith passed away on Fathers Day in June 2010, just before her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday. But her vision became reality a few weeks later when Congress unanimously voted in support of a **National Spirit of '45 Day**.

This new national day is to be observed on the second Sunday of August, coinciding with the day America learned the war was over and began rebuilding the postwar world to help assure a better life for our children and their children's children.

I remember the joy and pride we all felt on August 14, 1945, the day the war ended. I also remember the sadness I felt for my buddies who died on the beaches of Iwo, and the 400,000 other young men who made the ultimate sacrifice defending freedom.

My generation is now rapidly fading into history. I hope that all Americans will take a moment every year on the second Sunday in August every year to remember that Day, to honor those who served and those who stood behind us, to remember the sacrifices of those who never came home, and to keep the Spirit of '45 alive!

This year National Spirit of '45 Day is being observed on Sunday, August 11. I respectfully ask that you have some observance in your community, even if it is just a simple wreath laying at your local WWII memorial or other appropriate location. It means a lot to us.

Semper Fi!

Harold "Skip" Adams (USMC Ret)

## Notes