

For Immediate Release



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Lone Bugler on 2-Year National Unity Tour to Renew America's Spirit Visiting Connecticut

Will perform "Taps" at Iwo Jima Memorial in New Britain, CT on Saturday, May 10 at 10:00 AM

(Saturday, May 10, 2014, New Britain, CT) Auston O'Neill, Jr is on a mission: he and his wife, Bonnie, are traveling throughout America to rekindle the spirit of America's "Greatest Generation."

The O'Neill's will be visiting the Iwo Jima Memorial in New Britain on **Saturday, May 10, at 10:00 AM** where Mr. O'Neill will perform "Taps" at the close of a wreath laying ceremony honoring of the men and women of Connecticut who were the "ordinary heroes" of the World War II generation.

"The WWII generation understood the importance of coming together during difficult times," said O'Neill, whose father was a decorated combat infantryman during the war. "We need to revive their spirit of courage, shared sacrifice, 'can do' attitude, and service to others if we are going to meet the challenges of our own time."

The O'Neill's tour is part of a national grassroots campaign to raise public awareness about Spirit of '45 Day, the new annual day that honors the WWII generation that is observed on the second Sunday in August, aligning with the anniversary of August 14, 1945 - the day the America learned that WWII had ended and began the task of rebuilding the world.

The O'Neill's son was deployed to Afghanistan on the day they began their tour from Washington, DC on February 7th.

The O'Neill's have logged more than 13,000 miles in their mobile home since February, visiting WWII memorials, museums, state veterans homes and other locations that are preparing to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII next year, which will include a round the world wreath laying ceremony with thousands of buglers performing "Taps."

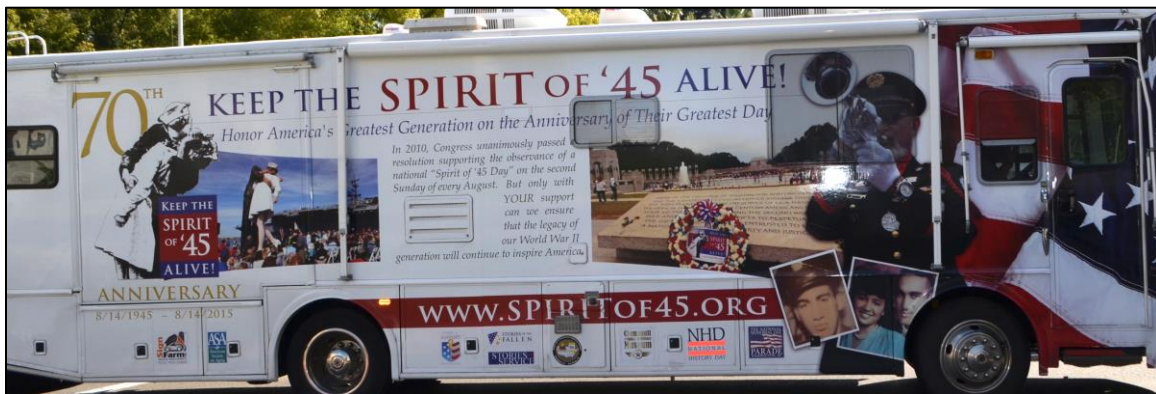
"The Iwo Jima Memorial is proud to host this visit by the Spirit of '45 Day Express." said Marianne Mihalyo, Secretary of the Iwo Jima Memorial Historical Foundation. "We have been observing Spirit of '45 Day every year since it was unanimously passed by the US Congress in 2010, and will be commemorating the 70th anniversary of the battle of Iwo Jima during our program next year."

The Iwo Jima Memorial Foundation has been selected as the state hub for facilitating Spirit of '45 Day and 70th Anniversary events and activities in Connecticut. The Iwo Jima Memorial, on the Newington/New Britain town line, is the only one of its kind and was built by Survivors of the Battle of Iwo Jima. It is maintained and run by volunteers of the non-profit Foundation and relies on donations to continue its Mission.

The Spirit of '45 bus will arrive at the memorial escorted by Connecticut Veteran motorcyclists. The visit will include a presentation by Connecticut Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, Dr. Linda Schwartz, who will comment on the contributions of our "Greatest Generation" of World War II Veterans. This visit comes one week before the Iwo Jima Survivors Victory Ride being held locally on May 18th. OPERATION THANK YOU, part of the Victory Ride, gives thanks to all World War II Veterans who are encouraged to attend free as Guests of Honor at the celebrations that day.

"The Iwo Jima Memorial reminds us of the true meaning of sacrifice as we approach Memorial Day," said William Brewer, representative of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, one of the organizations that is participating in the international wreath laying ceremony. "It also reminds us of the importance of supporting today's generation of men and women who serve in our name, and make sure that they are able to successfully transition back to civilian life when they return home."

The Spirit of '45 Day Express will continue on to New York City after it will make appearances in Times Square and other venues before returning to Washington, DC to appear in the National Memorial Day Parade on May 26.



For more information about the Spirit of '45 Day tour, please visit www.Spiritof45.org or contact Warren Hegg, National Coordinator, "Keep the Spirit of '45 Alive!" Warren@Spiritof45.org (408) 857 – 5252

For more information about the Iwo Jima Memorial or the Iwo Jima Survivors Victory Ride/OPERATION THANK YOU, please call Gary Roy at 860-291-9666.

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