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SUNDAY, NOV. 2 "CONN. VETERANS DAY PARADE" TO BE BIGGEST IN NEW ENGLAND
Parade to Salute Women in the Military – 60th Anniversary of
Pres. Truman's Signing of U.S. Women's Armed Services Integration Act

HARTFORD, CONN., October 20, 2008 – The **biggest veterans day parade in all of New England** will take place in **Hartford** on **Sunday, November 2**. Close to 4,000 marchers have already signed up for the ninth annual "Connecticut Veterans Day Parade. It will step off at 1 p.m. near the Connecticut State Capitol Building in Hartford and proceed for 1.26 miles through the Downtown area.

Veterans who are registered to march or ride in the procession include those of **past conflicts, as well as those who have returned from Iraq and Afghanistan, along with patriotic commissions from many towns**. Any Connecticut resident who is an active, retired or honorably discharged member of the U.S. Armed Forces including commissioned officers, warrant officers and enlisted personnel of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, National Guard, and Reserves is welcome to march. To sign up, veterans still can go to www.ctveteransdayparade.org or call the Parade Information Line at (860) 724-2649 ext. 23.

The parade will kick off with the entire **University of Connecticut Marching Band**. The procession will feature more than 20 other college, high school and middle school marching bands, fife & drum and pipe & drum corps, and drill teams, including the **Central Connecticut State University Blue Devils Marching Band**.

The **parade's final unit will be a Salute to Women in the Military, since 2008 is the 60th anniversary of President Truman's signing of the U.S. Women's Armed Services Integration Act. Many active and veteran servicewomen will march or ride and be led by a female color guard**. The act authorized regular and reserve status for women in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps. Before then, and except for nurses, women could not serve in the regular forces in peacetime. Today, about 200,000 women serve on active duty and make up 14 percent of the force; about 225,000 women serve in the reserve components and comprise 15.5 percent of their strength.

Special parade features will include fly-overs by military aircraft and a tolling of church bells and Moment of Silence when the parade will pause in observance of veterans who died while serving their country, followed by the singing of the National Anthem. Volunteers will hand out American flags to spectators, and sell 2008 commemorative Parade lapel pins at \$3 apiece or two for \$5. Proceeds will help to pay for parade operations.

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The **parade will be preceded at 12noon** by a **Wreath-Laying Ceremony** to remember veterans at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch at Jewell St. and Trinity St. in Hartford's Bushnell Park, featuring a Color Guard and the Manchester Regional Police & Fire Pipe Band. The Bushnell Park Carousel will be open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Connecticut Veterans Day Parade honors the dedication and sacrifices of servicemen and women from all U.S. conflicts, and offers the state's residents the opportunity to express their thanks. This year, as the nation also observes the 90th anniversary of the end of World War I, and the 200th anniversary of the Connecticut Second Company Governor's Horse Guard, the parade promises to be most memorable.

Two influential Connecticut business leaders who are longtime supporters of U.S. veterans are the **Grand Marshals of the 2008 Parade:**

- **Raymond P. Necci**, President and Chief Operating Officer of The Connecticut Light and Power Company and Yankee Gas, and a Glastonbury resident, and
- **Paul F. Pendergast**, President and Chief Development Officer for Saint Francis Hospital & Medical Center in Hartford, and a West Hartford resident.

The 2008 Honorary Grand Marshals are:

- **Robert L. Genovese** of Naugatuck, an Air Force veteran and Co-Founder of the “Veterans Who Care Committee” which assists Connecticut veterans and their families who are in need;
- **Tom Guzzo** of West Hartford who fought to get the federal government to provide grave markers for all veterans – a true testament to the power of one person who perseveres;
- **Nan C. Carmon** of Windsor who, with her family's funeral homes, was instrumental in raising funds in Connecticut for the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. and later made it possible for scores of aging veterans to travel to the nation's capital to see it with their own eyes;
- **Russ Jones of West Hartford**, recently retired SVP/CIO and Treasurer of Kaman Corp. and a Vietnam veteran who has supported the parade since its establishment in 2000; and
- **José (Joe) Pickard of Wethersfield and Dolores Nieves of New Britain**, who together are representing all of “**The Borinqueneers**” – the U.S. Army's 65th Infantry Regiment from Puerto Rico that was established and served during the Korean War.

The Connecticut Veterans Day Parade is organized by a collaboration of veterans' groups, corporations, local municipalities, businesses and civic organizations, and is administered by the Greater Hartford Arts Council. The **Connecticut National Guard** manages all parade logistics, and the City of Hartford hosts the event. **This year, for the first time, the Greater Hartford Jaycees will volunteer** to be special marshals, walking along with the individual units to help the parade move along on time. **-more-**

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The 1.26-mile parade will begin near the Connecticut State Capitol at the intersection of Buckingham St. and Washington St., travel north down Trinity Street and through the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch, go right onto Asylum Street, and make a right onto Main Street where it will pass a reviewing stand across from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and finally make a right onto Capitol Avenue where it will end. The event is expected to last for 2 to 2 ½ hours.

This parade is made possible by funding from **Title Sponsors that include:** Aetna; Connecticut Light & Power; the Connecticut National Guard; Hartford Steam Boiler; the State of Connecticut; United Technologies; and WDRC Radio. **Associate Sponsors include:** Bank of America; the Greater Hartford Arts Council; The Hartford Courant and courant.com; ING; Kaman Corporation; Pratt & Whitney; South Church Hartford; Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center; and Travelers. **The parade is produced in cooperation with:** Bob's Discount Furniture; Brad Davis; Carmen Anthony Restaurant Group; the City of Hartford; the Connecticut Department of Veterans Affairs; Eljen Corp; the Exchange Club of Rockville; Hobbytyme Distributors; Prudential Financial; Rockville Bank, TSI Harley-Davidson of Ellington; and Webster Bank. **In Kind Sponsors include:** American Medical Response; Girl Scouts of Connecticut; Greater Hartford Jaycees; Monaco Ford; Mr. Trophy; and R2 Graphics.

All veterans who want to march in the Sunday, November 2 “Connecticut Veterans Day Parade” still can sign up at www.ctveteransdayparade.org or call (860) 724-2649 ext. 23. People who want to volunteer to help at the event can register there as well. Full spectator information about the parade can be found at www.ctveteransdayparade.org.

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