



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Laura Soll, Communications Director 860-688-4499, cell 860-833-4466, lsoll@aol.com

**SEEKING U.S. VETERANS, SPONSORS & VOLUNTEERS FROM ALL CITIES & TOWNS
TO JOIN IN "2011 CONNECTICUT VETERANS PARADE"**

HARTFORD, CONN., September 19, 2011 – Connecticut is sending out the call to all towns and cities in the state for U.S. veterans, businesses, organizations and individuals to participate in **one of the nation's largest salutes to veterans parades**. The **12th annual "Connecticut Veterans Parade"** will step off on **Sunday, November 6 at 12:30 p.m. (new time)** near the Connecticut State Capitol in Hartford and will proceed through the Downtown area.

Last year, nearly 4,000 people marched or rode in the Connecticut Veterans Parade, making it the **largest veterans' parade in New England and one of the biggest in the entire nation**. The colorful 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. Special features will include a tolling of church bells and Moment of Silence when the parade pauses in observance of veterans who died while serving their country.

U.S. veterans are encouraged to register now to march or ride in the 2011 Connecticut Veterans Parade. 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 participate. Parade organizers also seek veterans groups, patriotic commissions, local municipalities, and marching bands and drill teams from colleges, high schools and middle schools, as well as pipe & drum and fife & drum corps from all over the state.

The 2011 Parade Grand Marshal is U.S. Army Corporal Americo "Rico" Pace of West Hartford, a World War II veteran and member of the U.S. Army's 197th AAA (AW) Battalion. Drafted in 1942 and trained in amphibious, anti-aircraft and anti-tank warfare, Pace was part of the first wave of soldiers who landed on Omaha Beach in Normandy, France on June 6, 1944, just hours in advance of the D-Day invasion of 160,000 Allied troops. An active retiree and volunteer at age 89, Pace now balances two part-time volunteer jobs: he is a greeter at Saint Francis Hospital & Medical Center's visitors desk, also spends several days a week at the Connecticut State Capitol Building and the Legislative Office Building, where he provides informative tours to tourists, school groups, and other visitors.

An **impressive group of Honorary Grand Marshals** will be named by the Connecticut Veterans Parade committee in the coming weeks.

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Sponsorship dollars are needed to help to pay for the operations of the parade, which is organized by a nonprofit collaboration of veterans' groups, corporations, local municipalities, businesses and civic organizations. The Connecticut National Guard assists with the management of parade logistics, and the City of Hartford hosts the event. Many of the members of the Parade Planning Committee have been involved in the parade since its inception more than a decade ago. **Sponsors can include** corporations, organizations, and individual residents who wish to make a contribution to the effort.

To make a **financial contribution** to help support the parade, **checks should be written** to
“*Connecticut Veterans Fund*” and mailed to:

Connecticut Veterans Fund
1245 Farmington Avenue #338
West Hartford, CT 06107

Parade organizers are seeking scores of volunteers to help with a variety of hands-on responsibilities, before and during the parade.

In addition, for the second consecutive year, the **Veterans Day National Committee in Washington, D.C.** has announced that the parade is **recognized as one of the nation's official “Veterans Day Regional Sites”**. The parade is **one of only 57 entities in the entire U.S.** and the **only Connecticut recipient of the prestigious honor**.

This year's parade route will be slightly different from previous years. As in the past, the procession will begin near the Connecticut State Capitol at the intersection of Buckingham St. and Washington St., and travel north up Trinity Street and through the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Arch. This year, the parade will make a right onto Pearl Street (a wider avenue than nearby Asylum Street), then will make a right onto Main Street where it will pass a reviewing stand at the corner of Main & Gold Streets across from the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and finally will make a right onto Capitol Avenue where it will end at Hudson Street. The event is expected to last for 2 to 2½ hours.

To register to march or volunteer in the 2011 Connecticut Veterans Parade, or learn more about becoming a parade sponsor, call the Parade Info Phone at 860-986-7254 or visit www.ctveteransparade.org.

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