

Dear Chapters, Veterans and Service Men and Women

On Saturday June 25th, 2011 the Bourbonnais Friendship Festival is dedicating the entire Festival day to the Armed Services. In conjunction with the dedicated Armed Services Day and the celebration of the Great Lakes Naval's Bands 100th anniversary, the 25 piece Great Lakes Navy Band will perform the Patriotic opening sharply at noon Saturday.

The Festivals intention is to invite all armed service members to be at the front of main stage to be recognized in the opening ceremony. The Festival Committee wants to touch as many local service chapters, branches and any armed services members in the surrounding areas to participate at the ceremony at the Main Stage at noon with their attendance for this dedication.

We are looking to have a flag presentation and the playing of the National Anthem for all the services. The Naval band will play patriotic songs before the flag presentation at 12:30 pm Saturday. After the presentation the Naval rock band (Horizon) will perform on the main stage from app.12:30pm until 2pm and then musical groups of all styles will continue through the day. The Festival grounds will also have the honor of displaying the Illinois Patriot Guard Riders Traveling Memorial Wall. This amazing and Patriotic Wall is dedicated to all the State of Illinois Service men and women that have given their lives or are missing in action from the Iraqi and Afghanistan Wars from the year 2002 to date and displays a photo of each patriot also. The wall will be on display and attended with members to answer questions and hand out info over several days of the Fest for all to see, remember, show respect.

The Festival is also looking in to a fly over by a service helicopter and viewing of it by the public on the grounds during the afternoon for a couple hours. The Main stage area will also have some of the men and women Veterans from the Illinois Veteran Home in Manteno, Illinois coming to be honored too.

We will also have a operating Abrams Tank built to spec, about quarter the size, by a local man from Bradley named Bill Mohler and he may shoot some t-shirts to the crowd from his cannon on the tank for the festivity celebration. It is quite remarkable, fun to see and I believe the only of its kind. We call it Tank!!!

The Festival committee would like to invite all chapters and services men and women to ride in the parade the following day on Sunday at 1pm. Please contact as many chapters and services branches to get the word out on this day of honor on Saturday and the chance to ride in our parade Sunday.

WE WILL BE (at least)FEEDING LUNCH TO THE THE MANTENO VETERANS, (any helper veterans assisting the event)AND THE GREAT LAKES NAVAL BAND FOR SURE! The lunch menu at this time is pizza and pop but it may have more variety as time goes.

Please contact Jerry Downs Chairman for the Service dedication Saturday at 815-939-1687 or e-mail me at jerrydowns@comcast.net if you can help support the day with your attendance and if you or your chapter would like to ride in the parade on Sunday at 1pm. Please help us get the word out for a noble and memorable day for all the deserving Patriot's of America to be honored.

NOTE___If you plan on being in the parade, we must have a form filled out to be in the parade so we know how many and your location in it. Thanks

Best Wishes

Jerry Downs- Co- Entertainment Director and Chairman of the "Armed Services Day Celebration"- Saturday June 25th, 2011