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Subject: Press Event: POW Commission and Presentation of POW Medals
Location: 1st Floor Lobby, Statehouse
When: 9/3/2015 11:00:00 AM - 11:30:00 AM

APPROVED BY: NH on 7/31

INVITED BY: Howard Metcalf

EVENT: Press Event: POW Commission and Presentation of POW Medals

DATE: Thursday, September 3, 2015

TIME: 11:00 AM

LOCATION: 1st Floor Lobby, Statehouse

LOCATION SET-UP: Flag, podium, backdrop

ON-SITE LOCATION CONTACT: Internal.

SCHEDULING CONTACT:

Howard Metcalf

Howard.metcalf@va.gov<mailto:Howard.metcalf@va.gov>

Cell: (803) 727-8676

PRIMARY STAFF: Ashton Lee

ADVANCE STAFF: Zach Pippin

PURPOSE: Governor Haley will award the first official South Carolina Prisoner of War medal.

PRESS: Yes.

PUBLIC: Yes.

ATTENDEES:

(The number of men attending to receive their Medal is in flux. Due to their age and their physical ability to travel, some were not able to firmly commit to attending. Will have this number in the morning.)

- Howard Metcalf - Director of the S.C. Division of Veteran Affairs.
- T.J. Martin – Former Commander of the S.C. American Ex-POW Commission
- Adjutant General Livingston
- Sen. Wes Hayes (Sponsor of the bill that created the medal)

INTRODUCED BY:

Howard Metcalf

SPEAKING ORDER/LINE-BY-LINE:

- Howard Metcalf (Howard will emcee the event and introduce each speaker. He will also ask that the audience observes a moment of silence for the POW's who are no longer living.)
- T.J. Martin – Former Commander of the S.C. American Ex-POW Commission (worked directly with Howard, Adjutant General's Office, and Sen. Hayes to introduce and pass this bill)
- Adjutant General Livingston
- Gov. Nikki Haley

(Following the remarks, Howard will read the name of each veteran from the podium and Gov. Haley will present the veteran with the Medal, pinning the medal to his shirt/jacket.)

BACKGROUND ON THE MEDAL:

- The South Carolina Prisoner of War Medal was created by S.1173 (sponsored by Sen. Hayes), passed unanimously, and was signed into law by Gov. Haley on July 2, 2014.
- The Medal is awarded to all South Carolinians who have been officially designated as prisoners of war by the Department of Defense.
- The Medal was designed by the Ex-POW Commission, S.C. Division of Veterans' Affairs, and Adjutant General's office.
- For the purpose of this event, Gov Haley will be presenting award to only the living WWII veterans who have agreed to attend the event, or their families if the veteran is being awarded the medal posthumously.

BACKGROUND:

Head of the POW Commission, Mr. T. J. Martin

He stated he would like the medals to be presented on 3 September, which is the birthday of the oldest POW in the state. They would like for him to be presented the medal along with others on that date.

National POW/MIA Recognition Day will be observed on Friday, September 18, 2015. This event is taking place on September 3 because it is the birthday of the oldest POW in the state.

Wednesday, September 2 was also the 70th anniversary of the formal Japanese surrender during WWII.

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS:

- Today, we really can say that it is a great day in South Carolina.
- We are here to honor the best of us. Some of the bravest, most selfless men in our country's history are here to receive the newly-created South Carolina Prisoner of War Medal.
- South Carolina is a state that loves our veterans – we do everything we can to show our military men and women how appreciative we are for the sacrifices they made on our behalf and on our country's behalf.
- This is just another example of South Carolinians coming together to wrap our arms around our veterans and show them just how much they mean to us.
- I want to thank Sen. Hayes, and the entire General Assembly for supporting the bill that created this Medal as it moved through the legislature.
- It passed both chambers unanimously and I was proud to sign it in 2014.
- The men here today represent so many who will be awarded this medal for their service to our country.
- Every former POW, from every war, who calls South Carolina home will receive this medal – including those whose families will receive it on their behalf posthumously.
- But yesterday marks the 70th anniversary of the official surrender of the Japanese in WWII, so today, we recognize POWs from that war.
- But the men we are honoring today aren't simply veterans - they are part of a generation that showed our country what sacrifice means.
- This generation showed us all what it means to love your country, to love your state, and to love your neighbors enough to sacrifice your life for it.
- They are part of the Greatest Generation – a group of men and women who we all look up to.
- I will tell you all that I am truly humbled to be your governor and to present you with these Medals today