

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Ellie Hebert, 225-929-9661,

[ellie@peacockcommunications.com](mailto:ellie@peacockcommunications.com)

**\$1 MILLION AWARD-WINNING VETERANS MEMORIAL TO BE DEDICATED  
WITH PARADE, CEREMONY ON VETERANS DAY**

Iberville's award-winning Veterans Memorial will be dedicated in grand and fitting style on Veterans Day, November 11, with a parade and performances by the 40-piece Marine Corps Reserve Band, the 156<sup>th</sup> Army Band, military color guards, an F-15 Air Force fly-over, a military equipment display and moving ceremony.

The parade begins at 3:30 p.m. and the ceremony will begin at 4:30 p.m. Veterans who wish to ride in the parade will ride in military vehicles as honored guests.

There will also be a special seating area for veterans at the ceremony.

The parade will begin on Main Street at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church. It will travel down Main Street and turn left onto Railroad Avenue, continuing to the memorial site. The Marine Corps Reserve Band, a 40-piece unit, is a highlight of the parade. It will be joined by Army, National Guard, Navy and Coast Guard Color Guards, ROTC units, the Plaquemine High Band, veterans and the Freedom Riders in the parade. The public is urged to line the route to greet the parade and then walk to the memorial for the ceremony.

The ceremony will include patriotic music by the 156<sup>th</sup> Army Band, the anthems of each of the military branches, recognition of veterans, POWs, MIAs and those who lost their lives in service, and taps, played by Iberville's own veteran Johnny Wilbert. Judge Alvin Battiste, who is the highest-ranking veteran in Iberville Parish as a Navy Lieutenant (03), will give the keynote address.

“This memorial is Iberville’s way of saying thanks to our veterans, and we want everyone to come out and show their appreciation by attending,” said Parish President J. Mitchell Ourso, Jr. “This is really a rare opportunity for people to see military bands, color guards and equipment in person, and we are very proud to hold this event on Veterans Day. We are expecting a large crowd of not only Iberville residents, but many others from throughout south Louisiana for this event, so please come out. We are planning an event that you won’t forget!”

The Iberville Veterans Memorial has already won one major award for design, and its stunning effect is expected to bring more awards. It won a prestigious Honor Award in competition with 58 other design projects in the Louisiana chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) design competition in September.

The memorial was designed to be a fitting and moving monument honoring Iberville veterans without using the names of those who have served. Its composition also was required to reflect Iberville Parish and its people. This was accomplished through the use of a variety of materials and effects. The reflection and use of materials to represent aspects of these design goals will be noted during the ceremony and in a brochure on the memorial to be released at the dedication.

For more information about the dedication events, call the Iberville Tourism office at 225-687-2462 or go to the Iberville Parish website at [www.ibervilleparish.com](http://www.ibervilleparish.com).

#### About the Iberville Parish Veterans Memorial

The Iberville Parish Veterans Memorial was designed to be a fitting and moving monument honoring Iberville veterans without using the names of those who have served, while also reflecting Iberville Parish and its people. This was accomplished through the use of a variety of materials and effects.

The memorial’s hard concrete foundation and walls reflect both the stark reality and harshness of war, and the strength of our military. The four conflict markers of the

memorial are reminders of the tremendous human costs of World War I, World War II, the Korean and Vietnam wars. Those markers are set within a water element, making them untouchable and unchangeable.

At this point the memorial is broken, where the conflict markers transcend from the past to the present. Another lone marker represents all current and future conflicts. It is symbolically on the other side of the memorial wall and out of the water element to remind us that we can change both our present and future to avoid the horrors of future wars.

The divider above the water element represents the role of the great Mississippi River and Bayou Plaquemine, which both served as critical portals to south Louisiana in much of the 1800s and 1900s. The concept for the divider is the Plaquemine Lock, which played a tremendous role in the parish's growth and economy from the late 1800s until the 1960s.

Another wall of the monument includes letters from service personnel to loved ones back home while they were thousands of miles away, often in very dangerous combat and service roles. These letters reflect the trying difficulties, sadness and concern for loved ones that our veterans experienced while serving and defending our country.

Perhaps one of the most stunning aspects of the memorial is the use of translucent block and markers for the various branches of the military. The markers are underlit so that they slowly light up as dusk turns to darkness. With the translucent block sections, they provide a complete transformation from night to day, signifying a beacon of hope for the future given to all Americans through the selfless service of our veterans.

Bronze sculptures of people reflecting at the memorial are presently being created, and will be added to the memorial next year. They will be a further representation of this great gift of freedom.

The inscription on the memorial, etched in bronze, reads simply, "In honor of those whose strength and courage we owe the freedom of this nation."