Pilot Who Flew Last Combat Mission of WWII to Speak at Air Force Memorial and Appear in National Memorial Day Parade to Raise Awareness About Annual Day Honoring "Greatest Generation"

(Washington, D.C. May 20, 2013) The man who flew the final combat mission of the most destructive war in history will be in Washington, DC on Memorial Day to honor his fallen comrades and help raise public awareness about an annual day honoring the World War II generation.

Jerry Yellin, of Fairfield, IA, was flying a P51 fighter plane over Japan on August 14, 1945, the day that President Harry Truman announced that the war had ended and spontaneous celebrations broke out across America. Yellin, now 89, is a national spokesman for "Spirit of '45 Day," a national day of remembrance honoring the men and women of the WWII generation that was passed by Congress in 2010 and is now observed on the second Sunday in August. www.Spiritof45.org



Jerry Yellin Army Air Cops 1943

"August 14, 1945 was my generation's greatest day," said Yellin. "But it was a sad day for the thousands of families whose loved ones never returned." Yellin lost his wingman, Phil Schlamberg of Brooklyn, that historic day. He will lay a wreath in Schlamberg's honor at the Air Force Memorial where he will speak at 9:00 AM on Monday, May 27.

Earlier in the day, Yellin will lay a wreath at the National Memorial to Japanese American Patriotism in World War II (Louisiana Ave. and D St) on behalf of the late Senator Dan Inouye, honoring the more than 600 Japanese American soldiers who were killed in combat during WWII. A recipient of the Medal of Honor for his service in WWII, Senator Inouye co-sponsored "Spirit of '45 Day" which passed unanimously in Congress in 2010.

"As a WWII veteran, I am deeply grateful to Senator Inouye for his life of service, and for assuring that there will always be a day each year when all Americans – especially our youth – will remember and be inspired by the extraordinary achievements, courage and shared sacrifice represented by his generation," said Yellin.

At 1:00 PM, Yellin will appear on the steps of the National Archives with Kaylie Jones, the daughter of famed WWII novelist James Jones, author of "From Here to Eternity," as part of the opening ceremonies for the National Memorial Day Parade. They will be joined by hundreds of youth who will march to the National World War II Memorial carrying photos of some of the 418,000 Americans died in WWII who are represented on the Wall of Gold Stars. The Parade begins at 2:00 PM

For more information visit www.Spiritof45.org or contact Warren Hegg, (408) 857-5252, Warren@Spiritof45.org



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