

Information about Memorial Day Weekend, May 23 – 25, 2009 in Washington DC on the can be found on the following website:

<http://dc.about.com/od/hoildaysseasonalevents/a/MemorialDay.htm>

<http://dc.about.com/od/touristattractions/u/Thingstodo.htm>

Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for those who have died serving our country. This is a great time to honor our veterans and famous Americans by visiting the monuments in Washington DC. - <http://dc.about.com/cs/sightseeing/a/Monuments.htm>

The Memorial Day weekend also marks the beginning of the busy summer season and the Washington, DC region celebrates with family friendly events and special services. Here is the 2009 Memorial Day event schedule.

PBS' National Memorial Day Concert - Sunday, May 24, 2009, 8 p.m.

<http://dc.about.com/od/specialeventphotos1/ss/MemDayConcert.htm>

PBS sponsors a FREE concert on the West Lawn of the U. S. Capitol. A bugler plays Taps at the U.S. Capitol to honor the nation's veterans during the National Memorial Day Concert. The 2009 event will pay special tribute to the veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam and the sacred war memorials built in their honor in Washington, DC. The concert will feature a mix of dramatic readings, documentary footage and live musical performances, along with an all-star line-up of dignitaries, actors and musical artists. The concert features actors Joe Mantegna, Gary Sinise, and Charles Durning, and other guest artists along with conductor Erich Kunzel and the National Symphony Orchestra.

National Memorial Day Parade - Monday, May 25, 2009, beginning at 2 p.m.

The National Memorial Day Parade in Washington, DC is a flag-waving event with patriotic marches and floats. The Parade is sponsored by the World War II Veterans Committee and is an annual tradition of remembrance for those who have died serving our country. The parade of Marching Bands and Veterans units from all 50 states begins at 2 p.m. at the corner of Constitution Avenue and 7th Streets, NW and proceeds along Constitution Avenue, past the White House, ending at 17th Street. This year's parade will feature Ernest Borgnine, Lee Greenwood, Edith Shane, and Gary Sinise.

Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Rally - Sunday, May 24, 2009.
Departure from the Pentagon at 12 p.m.

<http://dc.about.com/od/specialeventphotos1/ig/Rolling-Thunder-Pictures/bikesparade4.htm>

Rolling Thunder is an annual motorcycle rally that is held in Washington, DC during the Memorial Day weekend to call for the government's recognition and protection of Prisoners of War (POWs) and those missing in Action (MIAs). About 400,000 veterans will roar across Washington, DC on their motorcycles as a tribute to American war heroes in an annual demonstration seeking to improve veteran benefits and resolve POW/MIA issues. Participants assemble at the Pentagon and ride their motorcycles across the Arlington Memorial Bridge, down Constitution Avenue towards the Capitol Building, turn at 3rd Street and again at Independence Avenue proceeding around the National Mall and ending near the Lincoln Memorial. Speaker Program and Musical Tribute 1:30 p.m. at the Reflecting Pool across from the Lincoln Memorial.

Rolling Thunder History

Rolling Thunder began as a demonstration following the era of the Vietnam War, which was a difficult time in America's history. Similar to today's political climate, our nation was divided over issues of peace and war. However, many of America's military were killed or missing in action and their remains were not being brought home to be respectfully buried and honored.

In 1988, Artie Muller and Ray Manzo, two veterans of the Vietnam War, rallied together their families, fellow veterans, and veterans' advocates to organize a demonstration at the Capitol Building in Washington, DC during the Memorial Day weekend. They announced their arrival with the roar of their Harley-Davidsons, a sound not unlike the 1965 bombing campaign against North Vietnam named Operation Rolling Thunder. Approximately 2500 motorcycles participated in this rally, demanding that the U.S. government account for all POW/MIA's. The group became known as Rolling Thunder and has each year since held an annual "Ride for Freedom" to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

Rolling Thunder Today

Rolling Thunder was incorporated as a class 501 C-4 non-profit organization and today has more than 7,500 members throughout the United States, Canada, Australia and Europe. The group is actively involved year-round in promoting legislation to increase veteran benefits and resolve the POW/MIA issue from all wars. They also provide financial support, food, clothing and other essentials to veterans, veterans' families, veterans groups, and women's' crisis centers. For more information about Rolling Thunder, visit their website at www.rollingthunder1.com.

Arlington National Cemetery - Monday, May 25, 2009, 11 a.m.

<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.org>

A wreath-laying ceremony and concert will be held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in honor of Memorial Day. Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia, serves as a cemetery and a memorial to America's war heroes. More than four million people visit Arlington National Cemetery each year, attending graveside services and special ceremonies to pay tribute to veterans and historical figures. The best way to get to the cemetery is to take Metro to the Arlington National Cemetery Station or walk in across the Memorial Bridge. The cemetery is also a stop on most Washington, DC sightseeing tours.

More than 250,000 American servicemen as well as many famous Americans are buried at the 612 acre national cemetery. Among the notable Americans buried here are Presidents William Howard Taft and John F. Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, and Robert Kennedy. More than four million people visit the cemetery each year and approximately 20 graveside funerals are held here each day.

The Tomb of the Unknowns, also known as the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, stands on a hill overlooking Washington, DC. The tomb was dedicated in 1921 and contains the remains of soldiers from WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam. The tomb is guarded 24 hours a day and each hour (each half-hour in summer) there is a changing of the guard ceremony with a special march and salute.

Arlington House, the former home of Robert E. Lee and his family is located atop a hill, providing one of the best views of Washington, DC. George Washington Parke Custis, Lee's father-in-law, originally built the house as his own home as well as a memorial to George Washington, his step-grandfather. Arlington House is now preserved as a memorial to Robert E. Lee, who helped heal the nation following the Civil War. Arlington House is open daily from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Arlington House grounds are open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. between April and September and from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. between October and March.

Arlington National Cemetery Hours:

Open daily except December 25. April through September hours are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. October through March hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free. Guided tours are available for \$6 or visitors can walk the grounds on their own. The tour bus allows you to hop on and off at the most popular sites, so this is a good option for those who want to avoid too much walking. Allow several hours to explore the grounds. Driving into the cemetery is only allowed for handicapped visitors and those attending a burial or visiting a private gravesite. A special permit is required. It is located across the Potomac River from Washington at the west end of the Memorial Bridge, Arlington, Virginia. (703) 607-8052.

Navy Memorial - Saturday, May 24, 2009. 11 a.m.

www.navymemorial.org

The Rolling Thunder visits the Navy Memorial and holds a wreath-laying ceremony. Monday, May 25, 2009, 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. - wreath-laying ceremonies; 12:30 p.m. - Navy Band concert; 2:00 p.m. - Film screening of a PBS documentary about the last reunion of Air Group 16 at the dedication of the WWII Memorial.

The Navy Memorial and Naval Heritage Center in Washington DC honor and commemorate the sailors of the United States Navy. The memorial is an outdoor public plaza and the Heritage Center serves as a place to learn about the history and heritage of the men and women of the sea services. The circular outdoor plaza, located in the heart of Washington, DC, features a "Granite Sea" map of the world, surrounded by fountains, pools, flagpole masts, and sculpted panels depicting historic achievements of the United States Navy. A statue of the Lone Sailor represents all people who ever served in the sea services.

Adjacent to the memorial, the Naval Heritage Center houses interactive naval exhibits and a movie theater with daily screenings of the award-winning film *At Sea* and the Discovery Channel's *A Day In the Life of the Blue Angels*. The Commemorative Plaque Wall is a permanent memorial dedicated to individuals, groups, ships, squadrons, commands, battles or events within the U.S. Sea Services. Also onsite is a Media Resource Center, which provides a library of historical documents on the Navy. The Navy Log room provides a computerized registry to search for Sea Service members and veterans. The Ship's Store sells nautical souvenirs and clothing.

The address is 701 Pennsylvania Ave. NW. between 7th and 9th Streets. The memorial is located just steps from the Archives/Navy Memorial metro station. The Navy Memorial is accessible 24 hours a day. The Naval Heritage Center is open daily 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial - Monday, May 25, 2009, 1:00 p.m.

<http://www.nps.gov/vive> **See Photos of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

This year's annual Memorial Day ceremony includes Presentation of the Colors, remarks by a special guest and wreath-laying service.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a black granite wall inscribed with the names of 58,209 American's killed or missing in the Vietnam conflict. The veteran's names are listed in chronological order of when the casualty occurred and an alphabetical directory helps visitors locate names. A life size bronze statue depicting three young servicemen is located near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. Nearby is the Vietnam Women's Memorial, a sculpture of two women in uniform tending to the wounds of a male soldier while a third woman kneels nearby. Visitors often leave flowers, medals, letters and photos in front of the memorials. The National Park Service collects these offerings and many are displayed at the Smithsonian Museum of American History.

Air Force Memorial - Monday, May 25, 2009, 9 a.m. - wreath laying ceremony.

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley is the keynote speaker at this ceremony, which is open to the public.

www.airforcememorial.org

The Air Force Memorial, honoring the millions of men and women who have served in the United States Air Force, was officially dedicated on Saturday, October 14, 2006. The inspiring new memorial is situated in a prime location in Arlington, Virginia overlooking the Pentagon, the Potomac River and Washington DC.

The design of the Air Force Memorial symbolizes flight and the flying spirit with three stainless steel spires that soar 270 feet high and represent contrails of the Air Force Thunderbirds as they disperse in a "bomb burst" maneuver. The United States Air Force "star" is embedded in granite beneath the spires. The Memorial also has a paved Runway to Glory at

the entrance, an 8 foot tall bronze Honor Guard statue, two granite inscription walls, and a Glass Contemplation Wall for visitors to pay tribute to fallen airmen.

The United States Air Force Memorial was designed by James Ingo Freed, the internationally renowned architect who also designed the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC. The project was funded almost entirely by private contributions of more than \$30 million.

The address is One Air Force Memorial Drive, Arlington, VA, 22204. The memorial is located off of Columbia Pike near VA-244. The Pentagon Metro station is within walking distance of the memorial.

Wolf Trap Farm Park - Sunday, May 24, 2009, 8:00 p.m.

The park for performing arts kicks off the summer season with a free performance by the U.S. Marine Band followed by fireworks.

www.wolftrap.org

Wolf Trap Farm Park is America's National Park for the Performing Arts and hosts a wide range of performances ranging from pop, country, folk and blues to orchestra, dance, theater and opera. Wolf Trap Farm Park holds performances and offers educational programs all year long.

Filene Center is a 4,000-seat concert pavilion that is ideal for summer concerts. The seating is under cover with open sides that look out onto the rolling hills of the park. Lawn seating provides an area where patrons can relax and enjoy picnics before and during the performance. The Filene Center is a venue for a variety of education programs, artist master classes, special events, and a Holiday Sing-A-Long.

The gates open one and a half hours before all performances. You are allowed to bring in your own food and drink and chairs are allowed on the lawn (though you will be asked to sit in the back, so you will not impair the view of other patrons). Lawn seats are first come first serve and performances are held rain or shine.

Wolf Trap Farm Park is located about 20 minutes from downtown Washington, DC at 1624 Trap Road, Vienna, Virginia. (Close to where Eva and Arne's house).

Fort Ward Park, Alexandria, Virginia - Monday, May 25, 2009, 1-7 p.m.

The annual Memorial Day Jazz Festival features big band, swing, and contemporary jazz music. Picnics are allowed and food and beverages will also be for sale.

<http://oha.alexandriava.gov/fortward>

Fort Ward Park is the home of the Fort Ward Museum and a 41.4 acre historic park located on the west end of Old Town Alexandria. The land was used as a union fort from 1861-1865 to defend Washington, DC during the Civil War. Walk the grounds and you'll see cannons, underground bomb proofs which sheltered 500 men, and reconstructed quarters of the high-ranking soldiers.

Fort Ward Museum, a replica of the building that existed on the grounds during that time, features Civil War exhibits, interpretive programs, tours, lectures and living history activities. Artifacts on display include uniforms, diaries and letters, weapons and military equipment, surgeons' tools, musical instruments, and photographs. There is a film providing historical information and a gift shop selling books, postcards and other items.

Museum Hours: April-October: Tues.-Sat. 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun. Noon to 5 p.m.

November-March: Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.- 5 p.m.; Sun. Noon to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays.

Fort Ward Historic Park includes two shelters, a playground, picnic areas, and a dog exercise area. Special events are held on the grounds including Civil War and Revolutionary War re-enactments and live musical concerts.

Park Hours: Open daily, 9 a.m. to sunset. Address is 4401 West Braddock Road Alexandria, Virginia.