

April 14, 2008

Dear United States Navy Veteran,

This year the Mercer Memorial Day 500 is featuring the U.S. Navy and her veterans and we want you to be a part of it. The event is located just twenty miles east of the Pennsylvania-Ohio border and half-way between Pittsburgh and Erie, PA in western Pennsylvania. The Mercer Memorial Day 500 honors veterans every Memorial Day with a 4 hour event from 9:30 to 1 o'clock Monday, May 26th. We are called the 500 to highlight 500 American flags with dog tags attached that line our parade route and cemetery every Memorial Day.

Our event includes a military concert at 9:30 at the Mercer County Court House Bandstand presented by the 28th Division Pennsylvania Army National Guard and a Veterans Reception nearby, followed by a Parade and Memorial Salute.

This year we are featuring the U.S. Navy in general and the U.S.S. Intrepid in particular. The Reception provides a place for veterans to sit, eat, sign up for prizes, relax, talk or listen to the band music. Free drawings will be available there for the Navy and for all veterans. Prizes include Hot Air Balloon rides and 2 all-expense paid trips for two to New York City to attend the Intrepid's rededication in November. If you plan to attend and need assistance a golf cart can carry you from your car to the Veteran Reception. We can provide parking maps upon request.

The Parade, begins promptly at 11 a.m. with an all-Navy Veteran Color Guard from Franklin, PA. There will be six bands and a flotilla of ship representations for Navy Vets to ride on, or behind with other former crewmembers. 80 ship names have been received for publishing that day on the transports. We've ordered 80 ship names, 6" by 18", to be displayed on the Navy transports. You may bring something you've made to be included.

The noon to one Memorial Salute will feature, along with 2 other musical groups, the Penn-Ohio Singers singing The Navy Hymn. Ray Stone, Intrepid plank owner and author of "My Ship-the USS Intrepid", will speak. (Ray's book is available through Amazon.com).

We regularly provide a New Recruit transport so the public may put a face on those going out to serve them; three honorees chosen to lead off the parade, sitting high, in red, white and blue convertibles, and, a black car representing a deceased veteran.

We have a beautiful venue for the event. The center of activity is the Mercer County Court House named one of the ten prettiest in the nation. The parade follows a half-mile, shaded Victorian street to the Memorial Salute at a cemetery reminiscent of Shenandoah.

If you'd like to come and stay overnight we offer you a \$60 plus tax package that includes room, breakfast, and a reception the evening before the event at a nearby Comfort Inn. Mark and I would like the opportunity to thank you in person for your service to our country. Please contact us with any questions you may have.

Patriotically,

Mark and Linda Brown Organizers