



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Navy Pier® Celebrates Armed Forces Day

The USO of Illinois presenting Family Day Event in conjunction with special programming offered by Navy Pier

CHICAGO – Navy Pier® is proud to salute the men and women who have bravely served our country and to honor their families as well by hosting **Armed Forces Day on Saturday, May 19, 2007**. Working in conjunction with The USO of Illinois, Navy Pier will hold a special ceremony dedicated to Illinois residents serving in various branches of the Armed Forces.

The day-long event will feature members of the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and USO. Festivities begin with a special Opening Ceremony on Navy Pier's Grand Staircase at 11 a.m. Other highlights include interactive military displays in Navy Pier's Gateway Park from 12:00 p.m. to 5 p.m., along with live music at Navy Pier's Beer Garden from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

The USO of Illinois expects more than 300 military members and their families to participate in the day's programs, which include IMAX movie screenings, access to Navy Pier attractions, free boat tours and a special performance from the USO of Illinois Troupe.

“Armed Forces Day will allow members of the military and their families to visit historic Navy Pier – a place named in tribute to Navy personnel who served during World War I – and experience all the wonderful attractions it has to offer,” said Juan Ochoa, Chief Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority (MPEA), which owns and operates Navy Pier. “As a former Marine who served in the Gulf War, I am especially proud to work with The USO of Illinois to honor the men and women who serve our country in the Armed Forces with this day of tribute, as well as to give them the opportunity to have fun with their families at Navy Pier.”

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“Navy Pier truly provides the ideal location to celebrate Armed Forces Day and honor those so bravely serving as well as their families. The day promises to be a one of a kind experience filled with entertainment, military pageantry, food and fun on the shore of beautiful Lake Michigan and beside the stunning backdrop of the Chicago skyline. USO of Illinois is proud to stand beside Navy Pier in support and celebration of those wearing the uniform of our nation,” said Lisa Moeller, President and COO of the USO of Illinois.

The day’s events will take place throughout the Pier, including these highlights:

GATEWAY PARK - Navy Pier’s front lawn, will welcome the several military units.

ARMY: Branch activities/apparatus include an inflatable obstacle course, rock climbing wall, recruiting station, GI Johnny (soldier mascot) and an H3 Hummer vehicle fully equipped with plasmas and an Xbox System. Local reserve units will also bring equipment for the public to see.

NAVY: Branch activities/apparatus include an operable flight simulator and Navy recruiters on the premises.

AIR FORCE: Branch activities/apparatus include a KC-135 cockpit boom pad, the RAPTOR recruiting van, a football toss, a special events trailer and the Cadet Falconers (with falcon), special operations Humvee, Ricky the Recruiter and life support equipment.

MARINE CORPS: Branch activities/apparatus include the Marine’s Chin-up Challenge, recruiting booth and Marine display vehicles.

COAST GUARD: Branch activities/apparatus include America’s Waterway Watch Car & Boar Decal (distribution), Marine Domain Awareness speakers and the Sea Partners program with diorama explaining pollution on the Great Lakes.

USO: The USO expects 300 military members and their families to enjoy complimentary transportation/parking, meals, IMAX movie screenings and a special performance from the USO of IL Troupe, access to Pier attractions, and much more.

BEER GARDEN - Visitors will enjoy free, live music/entertainment by the following bands:

11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Spirit of the USO Band (rock)

The entire family will love *The Spirit of the USO Band* - the musical ambassador of the USO of

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Illinois. This group of Chicago-based musicians and entertainers presents material that embodies the ideals of the USO - respect, courage, and compassion.

2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. ***The Navy Jazz Diplomats (jazz/contemporary)***

This band is the heart and soul of jazz at Navy Band Great Lakes. The combo has four horns and an outstanding rhythm section. The Diplomats play many forms of jazz from straight ahead swing to modern fusion.

4:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. ***Déjà Vu (retro rock)***

Déjà Vu is a high energy rock band with performers that possess a wide range of vocals and musical styles. They cover hits from every decade and pride themselves on the ability to mix a variety of songs for a non-stop, crowd pleasing, dance party atmosphere.

7:30 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. ***Centerline (classic rock covers)***

This band does more than play great music...as the headliner artist for Armed Forces Day at Navy Pier, they will bring the party! *Centerline* is an interactive Classic Rock/Blues band with a few originals up their sleeve. They aim to please all audiences with cover songs influenced by Lynyrd Skynyrd, Bad Company, Tom Petty, The Eagles, Joe Walsh, Van Halen and many more!

FAMILY PAVILION STAGE – Indoor stage shows by the following acts:

The Buccaneers 11 a.m., 12 p.m., 1 p.m., 2 p.m., 3 p.m.

Enjoy this pirate-filled theatrical show with plenty of physical comedy and surprises for the entire family.

Dave Herzog's Marionettes 3:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 5:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m.

Dave Herzog, Navy Pier's Variety Performer, will lead patriotic-themed marionette dances to the delight of all guests. Dave is known to audiences throughout the Chicagoland area and is a popular guest at hundreds of schools, preschools, libraries, fairs and festivals each year.

Entertainment and schedule subject to change. For more information, visit www.navypier.com or call 312-595-5282.

FREE SKYLINE BOATS TOURS - Shoreline Sightseeing offers military personnel FREE Skyline Boat Tours on May 19th in Honor of Armed Forces Day.

All military personnel showing current US military ID ride FREE that day on Shoreline's famous Lake Michigan Skyline Tours. Boats depart from Shoreline Sightseeing's West Dock at Navy Pier or from its Shedd Aquarium dock every hour from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For further information, please contact Shoreline at 312-222-9328.

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