



Iwo Jima Monument West

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE, MAY 15, 2017

ATTN: **MEMORIAL DAY/WEEK PLANNING PRODUCERS**

America's most famous flag raising monument, Marines on Iwo Jima (1945), to be recreated for CA Marine Corps base; Iwo Jima vets need US public to support and find more Iwo battle veterans

Press Contact:

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Call to schedule interviews with Iwo Jima Veterans.

Video links for previous interviews, quotes and photos attached

The famous Iwo Jima flag raising monument, which serves as the Marine Corps War Memorial, is planned for Camp Pendleton on the coast of California, the **first** to face the Iwo Jima coordinates in the Pacific Ocean.

"We are thrilled that this very important American symbol of courage will be on each coast for all Americans to see and acknowledge the sacrifices made." says Laura Dietz of Newport Beach, CA, who founded a non-profit to finance the \$10 million project.

Dietz, an historian, found new insights: "It was a national phenomenon across the USA. Everyone wanted that photo. It is important because it symbolized that the US was winning the war and that our men would soon be coming home."

In the course of the research she met many Iwo Jima veterans, mostly Marines but also Navy and Army. "It was an all-American force of 75,000 + that secured that small island for its airstrips. One story line doesn't get mentioned enough." opines Dietz.

"The Marine Corps' bloodiest battle (with casualty rates of 80 – 90%) saved the lives of as many as 26,000 US airmen, who otherwise would have ditched and died in the cold Pacific waters." That means that some possibly 2 million Americans exist today because of the Marines unbelievable courage and determination.

"There were so many unselfish, unrelenting acts of bravery, courage and heroism that occurred routinely, on a daily basis, as a true and keen sense of duty, that it was taken for granted..." **Sgt. Major "Iron Mike" Mervosh** (Pittsburgh), Honorary National Chair of Iwo Jima Monument West. Video Link: <https://youtu.be/iYMNuNo0Oml>

The Department of Defense is completing its signoffs to accept the monument as a gift. The Iwo Jima veterans are excited that, with funding, the project will be completed by November 10, 2018, the Marine Corps birthday. (Arlington's massive bronze sculpture was dedicated Nov. 10, 1954 by **President Eisenhower**. **President Trump** would do the honors in 2018.)

The funding is expected to come from foundations, trusts, etc. over the next 6 months. The funding must be secured before construction can begin to ensure completion on time.

The budget with a 15% contingency figure is \$10.7 million. Dietz declares: "This is a bargain. The land was paid for in 1942 dollars, not today's ocean view, near the coastline, real estate valuations that saves millions. It will be a tremendous recruiting tool for the USMC." **Oceanside's Mayor Jim Wood** became involved in 2015 as collateral projects will create jobs and city revenue.

The design by the brilliant **Curt Fentress (Denver)**, who designed/built the spectacular National Museum of the Marine Corps Quantico base, provides for the monument to be protected from the elements in a glass enclosure. Glass doors will provide for entry and exit. This design will mitigate for hundreds of years the damage that is caused naturally by weather. The monument will be visible to some 14 million drivers on Interstate 5 (which parallels the shoreline for 17 miles through the base) to ships off shore, and military aircraft flying over.

The new bronze, sized to replicate the version at Quantico, will be designed/cast by **Tom Bollinger, Bollinger Atelier (Tempe, AZ)**. His uncle was killed on Iwo Jima. Bollinger has cast Ira Hayes, flag raiser from AZ.

When the first flag was raised on 23 February 1945, ships honked their horns, and Marines yelled triumphantly. As veteran **Damaso Sutis (Huntington Beach)** said to Ms. Dietz, "Once that flag was up, boy, we took that airstrip (Moto #1) after days of fighting. I like that."

Today the Arlington VA memorial is being repaired thanks to philanthropy of **David Rubenstein's** donation of \$5.37 million through the **National Parks Foundation**. Rubenstein's father was a USMC gunner on the USS Tennessee, one of 485 ships.

Donors will be memorialized, and dedications may be made in honor of a loved one. Major donors will receive a special accommodation at the site. To continue to inspire and educate, other kiosks will include the name of every man who died in the battle < some 7,000 names, battle footage, and engravings that the USMC will select for the granite walls around the monument itself.

TO CONTACT / DONATE:

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EIN #: 46-7128553 (2013)

Note: Most Iwo Jima veterans are not on the internet, but family members are. Please help us find these Veterans and their families.

ADDITIONAL CONTENT / ASSETS FOLLOW AND AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST