



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
APRIL 16, 2004**

**NORTHERN VIRGINIA LAUNCHES
THE 'CRADLE OF VICTORY'
WORLD WAR II HERITAGE TRAIL**

**Initiative to Complement 100-Day Tribute
To America's Greatest Generation**

NORTHERN VIRGINIA, APRIL 16, 2004—Of the thousands of visitors each year who drive down the George Washington Memorial Parkway on their way to Mount Vernon, how many realize as they pass Fort Hunt Park they are also passing what was once a top secret World War II German prisoner of war interrogation camp? Chances are, not too many. Hopefully, with the launch of Northern Virginia's 'Cradle of Victory' World War II Heritage Trail, this will change.

The Northern Virginia Visitors Consortium today announced its newest heritage tourism initiative, the "Cradle of Victory" World War II Heritage Trail, a self-guided tour highlighting 17 World War II historic sites located throughout the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William and the Cities of Alexandria and Fairfax. This program is being launched to complement the America Celebrates the Greatest Generation 100-day Tribute currently being launched by the Washington DC Convention and Tourism Corporation. This celebration will begin Memorial Day weekend with the dedication of the National World War II Memorial located on the National Mall.

-more-

World War II Trail, page 2

“When it comes to World War II history, Northern Virginia was really the home of strategic operations,” said Congressman Frank R. Wolf. “This heritage trail honors America’s Greatest Generation by encouraging visitors to truly understand how our landscape was transformed and how lives were affected during this amazing period in our history.”

To complement the World War II Heritage Trail, NVVC has also organized a centralized event calendar outlining scores of World War II themed events taking place in Northern Virginia throughout the summer to honor the veterans and civilians who served during what is known as the Greatest Generation. These events will be available in a printed brochure as well as on the regional website. (See World War II Event Calendar Attached and www.visitnorthernvirginia.com).

“This calendar is designed to help visitors make the most of their time in the Greater Washington area. If a visitor is planning a trip to see the new World War II Memorial, why not plan the visit to coincide with a World War II era concert at Wolf Trap, or an air show featuring World War II vintage planes in Leesburg, or a production of a 1940’s play in Alexandria?” said Jo Ann Mitchell, president and CEO of the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association and spokesperson for the NVVC.

Over 30 venues are hosting close to 100 cultural events themed to honor America’s Greatest Generation. These events will take place from Memorial Day through Labor Day and will offer a broad range of activities from concerts and musicals to miniature battle reenactments and WWII retrospective exhibitions.

-more-

“The region has worked collaboratively to make it easy for travelers interested in historic and cultural venues to plan a wonderful vacation experience,” said Mitchell. The tremendous size of this segment of the traveling public is of great economic benefit to this region. According to *The Historic/Cultural Traveler, 2003 Edition*, 81 percent of travelers in the United States are considered “historic/cultural” travelers and this group spends more money as compared to the average U.S. trip (average \$623 vs. \$457, excluding transportation costs).

There are 17 historic and cultural sites listed on The ‘Cradle of Victory’ World War II Heritage Trail. To make it easy for the traveling visitor, NVVC has listed these sites on its website, www.visitnorthernvirginia.com, and is producing a printed pamphlet which will be distributed through the local tourism offices along with the summer World War II Event Calendar.

The ‘Cradle of Victory’ Trail highlights the following destinations:

- The U.S. Naval Torpedo Station (now the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria)
- Arlington National Cemetery and Fort Meyer
- The Women’s Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery
- The U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Memorial)
- The Netherlands Carillon
- Frank Lloyd Wright’s Pope Leighy House
- The Pentagon
- Quantico National Cemetery
- Quantico Marine Corps Base
- Mount Vernon

-more-

World War II Trail, page 4

- Herndon- Artifacts from the U.S.S. Herndon
- General George C. Marshall's Residence in Leesburg
- National Air and Space Museum's Udvar- Hazy Center at Dulles Airport
- Prince William Forest Park – the Training Ground of the OSS during WWII
- National Museum of the Marine Corps
- Fort Belvoir
- Fort Hunt Park (the former WWII Prisoner of War interrogation camp)

The Northern Virginia Visitors Consortium is comprised of the tourism bureaus from the cities of Alexandria and Fairfax and the counties of Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William. The 'Cradle of Victory' World War II Heritage Trail is the newest of four trails being promoted through the "Pursuit of Happiness" campaign. Over the past year Northern Virginia has introduced three other tourism trails: The Northern Virginia Golf Trail featuring 22 golf courses; the Northern Virginia Heritage Trail featuring 35 cultural and historic sites in the region; and the Northern Virginia Shopping Trail mapping out the 18 major shopping areas from historic Leesburg and Alexandria to Potomac Mills in Prince William County and Tysons Corner in Fairfax County. Visitors to the region can request a Northern Virginia Trail Map by visiting the region's website: www.visitnorthernvirginia.com or by calling 703-396-7130.

-30-

PRESS CONTACTS: Olwen Pongrace, 202-253-3190, 301-983-3531

Or Cate Magennis Wyatt, 540-882-4929