



NDSWM AND GULF WAR VETERANS MARCHING IN THE NATIONAL MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Washington, DC, May 26, 2016 – This weekend over 500 Desert Storm Veterans, families and supporters will travel to Washington D.C. to march in the National Memorial Day Parade at 2:00 PM on Constitution Avenue hosted by the American Veterans Center to honor the 25th anniversary of the Gulf War.

We hope you will join us or follow our weekend activities on our social media channels using the hashtag **#DesertStorm25DC**

We will post information about the parade and updates on this page for those who are attending or following along throughout the weekend.

Here is information for those attending and the media:

- **Participant and Family inquiries:** Jill Etter at desertstorm25th@gmail.com
- **Parade Information:** American Veterans Center: <http://www.americanveteranscenter.org/2016/04/2016-national-memorial-day-parade/>

If you are unable to attend you can watch online or TV:

- The Parade will be televised live on REELZ: <http://www.reelz.com/>
- Televised locally on Channel 8, Washington DC: <http://wja.com/newschannel-8>
- The parade will be streamed on: <http://www.military.com/memorial-day/memorial-day-parade.html>

More information about our participation and why we will march from the National Veterans Day Parade Handbill:

25 years later, the legacy of Desert Storm lives on

By Lauren Jenkins

Picture people by the hundreds of thousands lining the streets of Washington, DC, waving small American flags on a hot, humid summer's day as American veterans wave back, humbled by the outpouring of support from a grateful nation.

It's now a common sight on Memorial Day, but a similar parade of heroes also took place nearly 25 years ago to the day. On June 8, 1991, almost 9,000 service members marched in the National Victory Celebration for the Gulf War, parading along Constitution Avenue and crossing the Memorial Bridge into Arlington National Cemetery where they could pay their respects to the 383 men and women who would not be welcomed home.

Twenty-five years and two long wars later, it is easy to forget the service and sacrifices that secured victory and restored freedom in just 43 days of combat during Operation Desert Storm.



“The last fifteen years, our young men and women have deployed so many times, year after year, that some Americans may not remember what a huge moment in history it was when more than 600,000 troops deployed in the Gulf War,” said Scott C. Stump, an Operation Desert Storm veteran and founder of the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association.

“Operations Desert Shield and Storm were our country’s first major military engagements since Vietnam,” said Stump. “But this time, our neighbors rallied around us. They tied yellow ribbons around trees, they sent care packages, they embraced the families we left behind.”

What would become known as the Gulf War began in August 1990, when Iraq, led by then president Saddam Hussein, invaded its much smaller neighbor Kuwait to gain access to its economic resources and threaten Saudi Arabia. Unwilling to stand by as its ally Kuwait was pillaged, the United States led diplomatic action at the United Nations to condemn Iraq’s invasion and began military deployments to fortify and sustain its allies in the region.

“The servicemen and women who deployed to Saudi Arabia and the region in 1990 and 1991 faced threats like no other generation of troops before them,” said Stump. “There was the potential for chemical, biological, and nuclear war, incoming missiles and mortars day and night, and Iraq maintained the fourth largest military in the world at the time.”

For months, America and a coalition of 34 countries worked on a diplomatic solution to end the crisis. When Saddam Hussein failed to abide by diplomatic agreements, the United States—and the world—had no choice but to act.

Led by General Norman Schwarzkopf Jr., a massive air campaign began on January 17, 1991. The unrelenting strikes were a joint effort with the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines each contributing pilots and aircraft in a mission to destroy enemy command and control capabilities, deadly long range missiles targeting Saudi Arabia and Israel, ground forces, and equipment. Despite the brutal air campaign, Hussein would not relinquish his stranglehold on Kuwait. The coalition led by the United States would not settle for less than liberation.

Thirty-eight days of strikes paved the path for the ground assault, what is known as the “Great Left Hook” which spanned 300 miles along the Iraqi border.

For 100 hours beginning on February 24, 1991, seven Army divisions, two Marine divisions, and numerous other units from allied nations and other services poured across the borders to eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait.

“The ground assault was the most one-sided battle of the 20th century,” said Stump. Coalition forces, led by American troops and warplanes, annihilated the Iraqi military. The intensity of the war was equaled only by the joy of victory. Kuwait was free of its aggressor and American values prevailed as mightily as its military.



“We can’t forget Operation Desert Storm simply because it turned out to be a surprisingly short war. Those who deployed were prepared to dig in for the long haul,” said Stump. “We should remember the war for its overwhelming success in ending quickly and losing as few men and women as possible. And we are duty bound to always honor those men and women who did not come home.”

That is the calling Stump answers to today. The veteran of Operation Desert Storm founded the National Desert Storm War Memorial Association to ensure a permanent monument to the 383 fallen servicemen and women of the war stood in the nation’s capital.

In 2014, Stump and the association secured the backing of Congress and the president and today the group works every day to raise the capital necessary for constructing the memorial. “The legacy of Desert Storm is still felt today, in our military and in our nation,” said Stump. “We are committed to teaching future generations about that legacy— and about the 383 men and women who sacrificed everything defending the lives and freedom of others.”

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