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NEWS RELEASE

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**23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celebrate Freedom Veterans Parade set for Saturday, November 7**

VANCOUVER, Wash. — The 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Celebrate Freedom Veterans Parade presented by the Frank and Joanne Lough Legacy begins on Saturday, November 7 at 11:00 a.m. with the firing of the Howitzer cannons on the Parade Ground at the Fort Vancouver National Site. The parade starts at the corner of East Reserve Street and Evergreen Boulevard and proceeds west along Officers Row toward downtown and ends at Esther Short Park. Street closures will occur starting at 8 a.m. in the parade lineup areas along Evergreen Blvd. and at 10:30 a.m. along the parade route. The parade will take place rain or shine. Participants and parade goers should be prepared for all weather conditions.

“Honoring the 160<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Army at Vancouver Barracks” is the theme of this year’s parade. This Department of Defense sanctioned annual parade is organized by The Fort Vancouver National Trust as one of the Celebrate Freedom programs.

The parade’s reviewing officer is retired Major General Curtis Loop. Major General Curtis A. Loop served as the Deputy Commander for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs, US Army, Pacific from 1999 until his retirement in 2003. He served in various Regular Army and US Army Reserve positions, primarily in Washington State, culminating in his command of the 104th Division (Institutional Training) in Vancouver from 1995-1999. As reviewing officer, he will salute participants from the reviewing stand located on the front lawn of the Marshall House, 1301 Officers Row. Citizens are encouraged to gather near the Marshall House for a 10:00 a.m. ceremony, which will include comments from Major General Loop and other local officials followed by the national anthem.

The Grand Marshals for this year’s parade are Wes and Nancy Lematta, wonderful community philanthropists and long-time supporters of the Fort Vancouver National Site through their generous donations to the Pearson Air Museum. The Wells Fargo stage coach will transport the Grand Marshals along the parade route.

Approximately 2,500 individuals representing more than 100 groups will participate in the parade. Participants include numerous veterans service organizations representing all branches of the service; local high school marching bands; several college and high school ROTC groups; Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops from throughout the region and a variety of equestrian units. Many military and civilian vehicle collector clubs will participate as well. The 40 et 8 group’s familiar red locomotive mascot, “Loco” will make an appearance along with the Southwest

Washington AFIFI Shrine Clowns and many other entries. The parade will be broadcast on CVTV several times in the coming weeks.

Thanks to a substantial gift from the estate of Frank and Joanne Lough, the future of Vancouver's Celebrate Freedom Veterans Parade is guaranteed in perpetuity. Frank, a 22-year Navy veteran, had a special place in his heart for veterans of all ranks and services. He wanted to ensure that today's and tomorrow's youth have the opportunity to appreciate the sacrifice and heroism of veterans.

For additional information refer to the Fort Vancouver National Trust's Web site at [www.fortvan.org](http://www.fortvan.org).

### **About Celebrate Freedom**

*Celebrate Freedom is a series of festive and educational events and programs aimed at inspiring all generations and strengthening community values of leadership, public service, patriotism and lifelong learning. The Fort Vancouver National Trust organizes the Celebrate Freedom programs, which include the Marshall Public Leadership Award and the Marshall Youth Leadership Award, the Marshall Lecture series, Flag Day Ceremony presented by Veolia Water, Independence Day at Fort Vancouver and the Veterans Parade presented by the Frank and Joanne Lough Legacy.*