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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Nov. 4, 2024

City of Miami Beach to Host 16th Annual Veterans Day Parade and Celebration

—And unveil a three-month exhibition: *Boot Camp in Paradise: WWII in Miami Beach*—

Miami Beach, FL – Join the City of Miami Beach for the **16th annual Veterans Day parade and celebration at 11:11 a.m. on Monday, Nov. 11**. The event features veteran and military groups, marching bands, an F-16 flyover, local businesses and community organizations along iconic **Ocean Drive beginning at 5 Street**.

The start time of the parade coincides with the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, which was originally intended to commemorate the armistice ending World War I. Veterans Day was later expanded to honor American veterans of all wars.

This year's celebration will also mark the opening of a **free, three-month outdoor exhibition: "Boot Camp in Paradise: World War II in Miami Beach."** The exhibit will include 30, state-of-the-art panels featuring a selection of photographs and printed materials from 1942-1945, when Miami Beach hosted over 600,000 U.S. troops training for combat in WWII. Curated by the Office of the Mayor and City Commission in cooperation with the Wolfsonian-FIU and with support from the Miami Beach Visitors and Convention Authority, it will run through the end of January in Lummus Park along Ocean Drive between 11 and 12 streets in a space being called **Galería Ocean Drive**.

"The 'Boot Camp in Paradise' exhibition, sponsored by the Office of the Mayor and City Commission, is a long-overdue recognition of the immense contributions made by the service members who trained here during World War II," said Mayor Steven Meiner. "We are prouder today than ever to honor their legacy. This exhibit serves as both a tribute and a reminder of Miami Beach's vital role in preparing these heroes for the challenges ahead, ensuring their legacy lives on."

The beaches and hotels in Miami Beach served as a training center for military troops during World War II. Many service members fell in love with Miami Beach and returned after the war. The Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion organized parades for more than 50 years to salute the troops who sacrificed so much to defend our nation's freedom. The city has continued this tradition for more than a decade, even holding a virtual celebration in 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic made it impractical to hold the usual celebration.

The largest parade of the day in South Florida takes route on Ocean Drive from 5 to 15 streets. At noon, the festivities move to Lummus Park as the All Veteran Parachute Team takes to the skies over South Beach for a demonstration. CJ's Crab Shack and Starbucks will provide

breakfast for the veterans. The event continues in Lummus Park with a wreath-laying ceremony. Dippin' Dots ice cream will be available for purchase.

Parade participation has grown from approximately 50 people to more than 1,000 over the years — including students, organizations, businesses, military groups and public officials. The event includes a presentation of the colors by the Miami Beach Police and Fire Department Honor Guards, a recital of the Pledge of Allegiance, the national anthem and a moment of silence in honor of our First World War Armistice Day tradition. There will also be addresses by military officials from Southern Command, an MBPD Honor Guard 21-gun salute and a performance by a Taps bugle.

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WHAT: 16th Veterans Day parade and celebration

WHEN: Monday, Nov. 11, 2024 at 11:11 a.m.

WHERE: 5 Street and Ocean Drive

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