



anthem
community council

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photos: Veteran songwriting with Operation Song; Dalager sings National Anthem, Los Angeles Dodger's game, July 4, 2023, Musical Theatre of Anthem Outreach Group Veterans Day, 2022, AVM.

MUSIC PARTNERS CELEBRATE VETERANS, ACTIVE DUTY, AND THEIR FAMILIES at ANTHEM VETERANS MEMORIAL 2023 VETERANS DAY CEREMONY, NOV.11.

Anthem, AZ- The public is invited to Honor, Salute and Support our veterans, the men and women serving active duty and their families at the Anthem Veterans Memorial (AVM) Annual celebration and ceremony. The patriotic event for the entire family includes music and videos, charity assistance and more. Tributes to the United States Coast Guard, the 70th anniversary of the armistice to end the Korean War, the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and the 50th anniversary of US Naval women aviators are not to be missed.

While every Veterans Day ceremony at the AVM is memorable, this year the AVM brings special music, videos, and meaningful photomontages thanks to new and long-time partners.

The AVM proudly announces its newest partner, Operation Song. Operation Song is a national nonprofit, based in Nashville TN, that pairs professional song writers, veterans, active duty, and military families to turn their stories of service, camaraderie, and bravery into songs. Operation Song has served over 2100 veterans and families and written over 1400 songs, and counting, since their formation in 2012.

The cathartic writing process helps Veterans unlock and express deeply personal sentiments. By turning memories into lasting mementos, veterans gain a way to "talk" to friends and family about their feelings. Participating veterans write with songwriters, see their stories performed in public, and receive a recorded copy of their songs, free of charge.

"We are honored to provide the 'soundtrack' to AVM's programming with songs from those who have served, written with the help of some of Nashville's top songwriters. Stories are the lifeblood of any song and the men and women who have served give their own deep meaning to these compositions to create lasting mementos to share," said Mike Byer, Executive Director of Operation Song, and retired Army First Sergeant.

Operation Song works with **North Country Troopers Assisting Troops**, the **Dept. of Veterans Affairs, Warriors Heart**, and others who serve veterans across the country. The organization was founded in 2012 by Grammy & Dove Award nominated songwriter **Bob Regan** (11-time recipient of ASCAP's *Most Performed Song Award*). Please visit operationsong.org or download their app at <https://get.theapp.co/kjxn>.

Singing the National Anthem will be Petty Officer Michael Dalager with the United States Coast Guard. Dalager is currently stationed at Sector San Diego, assigned to the Facilities Engineering unit. One of his additional duties is performing the National Anthem. It has taken him to over two hundred occasions that include Change of Command Ceremonies, retirements, maritime events, memorials, funerals, and an impressive list of professional sporting events for the National Football League, National Basketball Association, National Hockey League, and

Dalager's performance at Game Five of the World Series before the Boston Red Sox defeated the L.A. Dodgers to win the best of seven series garnered attention from the then Commandant of the Coast Guard, Admiral Karl Schultz, a lifelong Red Sox fan, who called Dalager to congratulate him on his performance and thank him for inspiring the Red Sox victory. We hope his energy will provide the AVM with a cloudless sky for the 11:11 a.m. solar spotlight!

Musical Theatre of Anthem (MTA) Outreach Group, under the artistic direction of Jackie Hammond, will return to the AVM. MTA has performed at the AVM for the Veterans Day and Memorial Day ceremonies since 2011. The youth choir will share their talented voices to lead the annual military branch sing-along and perform "America the Beautiful" and fan favorite, "God Bless America." MTA also will perform a special tribute song to military families, "Found/Tonight." Visit MusicalTheatreofAnthem.org.

Additional musicians sharing their music include Ralph McTell, Jimmy Flynn, Buddy Brown, Dale Ash and the Texas Tenors.

Bringing even greater meaning to the lyrics again his year are the talented students at Boulder Creek High School TV Media Production class, under instructor and US Army veteran, Christy Johnstone. The students are making the photomontages to accompany this year's music.

"The AVM has been fortunate to share incredible music, video and photomontages at each of our ceremonies," tells Elizabeth Turner, ceremony organizer. After planning sixteen ceremonies at the AVM, it is truly inspirational to work with such dedicated and talented professionals who join us each year to honor, salute and support our veterans."

Schedule: Veterans Day at the AVM will begin with breakfast available for purchase on the south lawn starting at 8:15 a.m. The music and videos will begin at 9:00. Vietnam War era (November 1, 1955 – Nay 15, 1975) veterans and surviving spouses are invited to the north lawn, adjacent to the AVM, to receive the Vietnam War Commemoration pin. ***The public is encouraged to attend the pinning in support of these veterans and surviving spouses.*** Vietnam War veterans' stories will be told through the accompanying music provided by Operation Song. At 10:00, the Veterans Day ceremony will begin, culminating with the solar spotlight at 11:11 a.m., the exact time on November 11, 1918, in which the armistice was signed to end W.W. I.

SUPPORT OUR CHARITABLE EFFORTS. YOUTH FOR TROOPS TENT. 8:15 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. South Lawn.

- **HELP DECORATE CARDS/BOXES** to send to troops oversea. Family Fun.
- **COLLECTION DRIVE:** Assist **Youth for Troops** efforts to provide eight hundred holiday care packages for troops stationed overseas by donating small new puzzle and sudoku books, card games (UNO, Phase 10), full-size holiday cards, candy canes, lip balm. Help our troops by donating care package items. Youth4Troops.org
- **HELP DAISY MOUNTAIN VETERANS (DMV) HOLIDAY HELPERS:** This DMV program provides holiday meals, stocking stuffers and presents for local children/families in need. Donate items for all ages this morning. Especially needed are stocking stuffers for teen girls and boys. Be a holiday helper and donate goods at the Veterans Day event. Email: Holidays@daisymtnvets.org for item list.

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ANTHEM VETERANS MEMORIAL. The award-winning Anthem Veterans Memorial (AVM), a project of the Anthem Community Council (ACC), is in Anthem's Community Park. The Memorial was dedicated Nov. 11, 2011, to honor the service and sacrifice of our country's armed forces. It is a place of honor and reflection for veterans, their families, and friends, and also is a place to show respect to those service men and women who have and

continue to courageously serve our country. The AVM received Arizona Historic Landmark status in May 2012.
www.OnlineAtAnthem.com/AVM