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Ravens Coach John Harbaugh joins list of prestigious speakers at Vietnam Veterans event

(PASADENA, MD, Feb. 10, 2017) — Hospice of the Chesapeake is excited to announce that Baltimore Ravens Head Coach, **John Harbaugh**, will speak at its **3rd annual Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration**. The event will be held from 4 to 8 p.m. March 30 at Martin's Crosswinds, 7400 Greenway Center Drive in Greenbelt, Maryland.

The nonprofit asked Harbaugh to speak on behalf of a grateful community because he is well-known for his commitment to the U.S. Military. The NFL awarded him its 2013 Salute to Service Award, acknowledging exceptional efforts by those in the league who honor and support military members. In 2012, he received the Outstanding Civilian Service Award, the Army's third-highest public service honorary award. Along with taking part in the annual NFL-USO coaches' tour and visiting and donating to numerous military bases here and abroad, he also helped institute Military Appreciation Day, an annual event that takes place during Ravens training camp. Since its establishment in 2008, around 8,000 service members have enjoyed preferred seating and opportunities to meet with the Ravens team.

Harbaugh's devotion to the men and women who serve our nation in the U.S. Armed Forces serves well the program's theme of "Warriors Remembered" that is dedicated to honoring Vietnam Veterans by welcoming home those who are still with us and enriching the legacy of those who have passed away.

All of the speakers for the event were as carefully selected to honor Vietnam Veterans and to inspire the community to do the same. Among them are Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary **George W. Owings III**, who will speak on behalf of Gov. Larry Hogan and a grateful state, retired Army Maj. Gen. **James T. Jackson**, Director of the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration, who will speak on behalf of a grateful nation; and Army Sgt. Major **Rodwell L. Forbes**, Fort George G. Meade's former Garrison Command Sergeant Major, who will welcome home the veterans on behalf of a grateful military. A portion of Forbes' speech at

last year's event was posted on the Anne Arundel County government's Facebook page and went viral, garnering over a million hits.

Serving as the master of ceremonies will be retired Army Col. **Bert Rice**, a Vietnam War Veteran and former Anne Arundel County Councilman. Other highlights will include patriotic music performed by the **Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling Gospel Choir** and Honor Salutes performed by Fort Meade's new Garrison Command Sergeant Major **Brian S. Cullen**.

In 2015, at the request of Hospice of the Chesapeake's We Honor Veterans Committee, legislation to make March 30 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day in Maryland was introduced by state Sen. John Astle and was the first bill signed into law by Gov. Larry Hogan. After having to turn people away at last year's event due to overwhelming response, Martin's Crosswinds was selected as it not only is more accessible to the patients and families the nonprofit serves in both Anne Arundel and Prince George's counties, but capable of holding a crowd that is in excess of 1,200. It is their hope that they can accommodate every Vietnam Veteran who wants to attend and receive the thank you and warm welcome they should have received five decades ago.

Tickets are required to attend and can be obtained online at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/3rd-annual-welcome-home-vietnam-veterans-day-celebration-tickets-30663895537?aff=erelexpmlt>. They are free for Vietnam Veterans and one guest, as well as for two family members of deceased Vietnam Veterans. Tickets for additional guests and community members are \$30, plus fees.

Headquartered in Pasadena, Maryland, the nonprofit is a Commemorative Partner in the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration as well as a 4-Star Partner in the We Honor Veterans program, a national hospice initiative honoring the men and women from all branches of the military who have served our country.

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Caring for life throughout the journey with illness and loss is the mission of **Hospice of the Chesapeake**. For more information, please visit www.hospicechesapeake.org.

(Biographies and headshots of the key speakers follow on the next page.)

Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day Celebration Speakers' Biographies

Retired Army Col. Bert Rice -- Master of Ceremonies

Retired Army Col. Bert Rice, 79, served in Vietnam from 1965 to 66 and 1968 to 69; serving as assistant division aviation officer with the 25th Infantry Division before commanding its Company B, 25th Aviation Battalion. He flew armed helicopters during both stints. A 40-year resident of Odenton, he retired in May after wearing a variety of hats at Fort George G. Meade. He was also assigned to Iran during its revolution in early 1979. Upon returning, he served for three years in the Pentagon before returning to Fort Meade in 1982, where he served with First United States Army. His many tours also included serving as the senior army adviser to the Nevada Army National Guard, Carson City, Nevada. Rice was employed by the Department of the Army at Fort Meade from April 2003 until his retirement. He served as project officer and program manager for several projects, including the Base Realignment and Closure. He served as director of transformation for five years and as the acting director of the Directorate of Public Works for more than a year. The highly decorated Rice also served the Anne Arundel County Council from 1994 to 1998 and as its chair in 1998. He has been married to the former Deanna Swenson for 56 years, with whom he has two sons, Stephen and Kevin, both combat veterans of Desert Shield/Storm.



Secretary George W. Owings III: On behalf of a Gov. Larry Hogan and a grateful state

Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary George W. Owings III began his service to his country in 1964 when he volunteered for the Marine Corps. A year later, he arrived in Vietnam and left in 1968 as a sergeant after three tours. Among his awards are the Presidential Unit Citation, Navy Unit Commendation, Navy-Marine Corps Medal, and Vietnam Service Medal. In 1985, at age 40, he re-entered the Marine Reserves and served two years as an active reservist. In 1987 his career in service took a new path when he was appointed by then Gov. William



Donald Schaefer to the House of Delegates. He began his first term in 1988. After 17, 10 of which were as Majority Whip, Owings left the House to join the Ehrlich administration as the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in 2004. As Secretary, he was responsible for getting legislation passed that restructured the agency making it more efficient and accountable and for creating the agency's Outreach and Advocacy department. From the beginning, Secretary Owings launched an aggressive initiative to communicate with the state's 480,000 veterans; the majority of them having no connection to the services and benefits available to them. He instituted land transfers for two of the cemeteries where space was crucial and he made sure that burial sites at the other three state owned cemeteries would be sufficient. After a second appointment, he retired in 2007. When Gov. Larry Hogan was elected, Owings was sworn in a second time as the Secretary for the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs in February 2015.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. James T. Jackson: On behalf of a grateful nation

Retired Army Maj. Gen. James T. Jackson serves as the Director of The United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration. Jackson initially joined the Commemoration staff in 2012 as a senior adviser, helping to develop partnerships with federal, state and local communities, veterans' groups and other nongovernmental organizations. Jackson's military career began in 1971, as an Army Reserve Officer Training Corps graduate from Kent State University. Serving in the Army for 32 years, his assignments took him around the world, including postings with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; the 2nd Ranger Battalion at Fort Lewis, Washington; the Republic of Korea; and as an Army ROTC instructor at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. He also commanded a wide variety of Army units, including the 1st Battalion 505th Parachute Infantry at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; the 3rd Ranger Battalion and 75th Ranger Regiment at Fort Benning, Georgia; and The Military District of Washington/Joint Force Headquarters National Capital Region at Joint Base Myer – Henderson Hall. After retiring from the Army, Jackson worked as a senior executive in the public sector for two different companies and participated in a three-month deployment in Iraq to support the Coalition Provisional Authority. He retired from the public sector after eight years.



Baltimore Ravens Head Coach John Harbaugh: “On behalf of a grateful community”

Super Bowl-winning Baltimore Ravens Head Coach John Harbaugh has led the Ravens to a playoff berth in six of his nine seasons in Baltimore, and in 2012, captured the franchise’s second World Championship. Harbaugh has been an advocate of the U.S. Military. The NFL awarded him its 2013 Salute to Service Award, acknowledging exceptional efforts by those in the league who honor and support military members. In 2012, Army Chief of Staff General Raymond Odierno presented him with the Outstanding Civilian Service Award. Harbaugh took part in the annual NFL-USO coaches’ tour of the Middle East in 2009, has visited numerous military bases in the U.S. and abroad, has purchased school supplies for children whose parents are serving in the military and has sent care packages to troops overseas. In 2008, Harbaugh also helped institute Military Appreciation Day, an annual event that takes place during Ravens training camp. Since its establishment, an estimated 8,000 service members have enjoyed preferred seating and opportunities to meet with Ravens players and coaches each summer. Devoted to his family and his Christian faith, Harbaugh is most active in helping the Baltimore area be better for families. He earned the 2011 “Power of Excellence Award” from the Carson Scholars for “demonstrating excellence in life and being a role model.” Harbaugh lives in Owings Mills, Maryland, with his wife, Ingrid, and their daughter, Alison.



Army Sgt. Maj. Rodwell L. Forbes: “Welcome Home on behalf of a grateful military”

Army Sgt. Maj. Sergeant Rodwell L. Forbes has more than 26 years of military experience, most recently as the Fort George G. Meade Garrison Command Sergeant Major. His many assignments took him around the world, and included participation in Operation Desert Storm/Shield, Bosnia Peace Keeping Mission, Sarajevo Peace Keeping Mission, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Unified Protector in Libya. Highly educated as well as highly decorated, he currently is pursuing a master’s degree in pastoral counseling. Army Col. Brian P.



Foley, who served as Fort Meade's Garrison Commander until August, told *Fort Meade Soundoff!* that he called Forbes "one of the best noncommissioned officers I have worked with in my 26-year career." He and his wife Patricia are actively involved in the Fort Meade community. He plans to retire on June 14 – the date of the Army's birthday. The couple will then relocate to North Carolina.