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MEMORIAL DAY PROGRAM AT PARA'S VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

Tuscaloosa, Ala. ~ Tuscaloosa County Park & Recreation Authority's Veterans Memorial Park Association VMPA, in conjunction with the Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center and the University of Alabama Office of Veteran and Military Affairs will host a joint Memorial Day Program on May 30 at 9 a.m. in Veterans Memorial Park.

The Park is located at 1701 McFarland Blvd. East and the event is free and open to the public. The rain venue is Magnolia Shelter located one block south of the Veterans Park in Snow Hinton Park on 10th Avenue East.

According to VMPA Chairman Col. Duane Lamb, "Memorial Day is a federal holiday in the United States for mourning the U.S. military personnel who have died while serving in the United States armed forces. We are honored to present this program in our local Veterans Memorial Park for all members of the community."

The guest speaker is Forrest Fitts, Chairman of Alabama Marines Foundation. After completing Officer Candidates School, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant. He earned the rank of Major in the United States Marine Corps while serving on active duty with 1st Battalion 5th Marines – Camp Pendleton CA, Marine Corps Recruit Depot - San Diego, CA and in the reserves with 4th Battalion 14th Marines in Bessemer, AL. He now serves as Chairman and CEO of Fitts Agency, Inc. and has earned designations as a Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter and Associate in Marine Insurance Management.

Additional remarks will be heard from LTC John Merkle, U.S. Army, Retired and Director, Tuscaloosa V.A. Medical Center and SGM David Blair, U.S. Army, Retired and Director of the UA Veteran and Military Affairs. Audrey Watts and Clara Parker of the Alabama Choir School will perform the National Anthem. Student cadets from Paul W. Bryant High School, JROTC will present colors.

At the conclusion of the service, association members will lay a wreath in honor of all men and women who have given the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country at the Military Order of the Purple Heart Monument.

State and local elected officials, Veterans and Veterans Committee members are expected to participate.

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