



# Iwo Jima Monument West

www.marinesoniwojima.com

3535 E. Coast Highway, #180 Corona Del Mar, CA 92625-2404

Email: marinesoniwojima@gmail.com Phone: 844-IWO-JIMA

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Date:** February 14, 2017

**Event:** Iwo Jima Veterans Tribute Dinner sponsored by Iwo Jima Monument West 501c3 to be held on Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup> in Carlsbad, CA (in conjunction with the first joint meeting of the Iwo Jima Association of America (Quantico, VA) and the Iwo Jima Commemorative Committee (San Diego, CA) February 15-19, 2017 at Camp Pendleton, CA).

**Program:** 5:45 p.m. - 6:45 p.m. - Reception / interviews with veterans of Iwo Jima (35+ expected to attend). 6:45 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - Nagasaki A-Bomb Story. 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. - Veterans Panel on the Battle itself, etc. followed by: Dr. Kori Schake, Research Fellow, Hoover Institution with former Hoover Fellow and co-editor General James Mattis (USMC Ret.), Secretary of Defense, on civilian attitudes impacting national defense/ security in "*Warriors and Civilians*" (Hoover Institution Books), and inherent benefits of Iwo Jima Monument West to inspire and educate generations for hundreds of years.

**Location:** Carlsbad's Grand Pacific Palisades Resort (Ballroom), 5805 Armada Dr. Carlsbad CA

**Press:** One-on-one rare interviews with Iwo Jima veterans on the need to fund monument with the public's help through the media in the next few months to start construction ASAP.... and Iwo Jima Monument West founder, Laura Dietz, and Col. Michael Naylor USMC Ret. Former Deputy Cmdr., Camp Pendleton (MCI-West) and a former chief of staff to General Mattis. Press kits available with hard data, etc.

**Contact:** Laura Dietz at 714-606-8384 or [Laurabdietz@gmail.com](mailto:Laurabdietz@gmail.com)  
[www.Marinesoniwojima.com](http://www.Marinesoniwojima.com)

---

## Background:

Iwo Jima battle Marines did not know about the famous Joe Rosenthal photograph or the enormous impression it made on average Americans until *after* the war. Sgt. Major "Iron Mike" Mervosh (Pittsburgh) explained that he didn't even see the flag(s) go up; "No. I was too busy saving my butt" but sternly adds that every man on that island put up that flag. He's right.

At home there were the ensuing flag raising monuments, the most famous by Felix deWeldon who was an Austrian immigrant serving in the USN when first inspired at the Patuxent Naval Air Station, MD to sculpt the image. But to *Iwo Jima Monument West* non-profit founder, Laura Dietz, there was so much more to the story as the image took on a life of its own *that endeared the Marines to Americans!*

-more-



# Iwo Jima Monument West

[www.marinesoniwojima.com](http://www.marinesoniwojima.com)

3535 E. Coast Highway, #180 Corona Del Mar, CA 92625-2404

Email: [marinesoniwojima@gmail.com](mailto:marinesoniwojima@gmail.com) Phone: 844-IWO-JIMA

-page 2-

“I was very surprised to learn that the monument at Arlington VA, the Marine Corps War Memorial, was paid for by Marines after the war. Their paychecks were docked to raise the necessary funds, about \$8 million today to pay the tab for the 80,000 ton bronze. That was startling”. says Dietz.

“The initial fundraising effort resulted in “theft” by the executive director, a friend of the DC Mayor, who was properly prosecuted. Ergo, I surmise that Marine leadership to save the mission decided that the Marines would do whatever it took to get the monument completed and dedicated (as it was in 1954 by Arlington National Cemetery) where it sits majestically every day with 1.2 million visitors per year.

The research at the **National Archives and Records Administration** (College Park, MD) led to more discoveries that explained why it was the **most reproduced image in WWII**. The three flag raisers in the famous photo were returned home to promote war bond sales as ordered by FDR, a few weeks before his death. The flag raising by Marines had rallied Americans who donated more in that bond drive than any other!!! It foretold that the war would be ending soon!!!

“Recognizing that Camp Pendleton did **not** have a significant Iwo Jima flag raising monument, like that at Marine Base Quantico VA, it seemed as an historian that this needed to be corrected,” noted Dietz. “Not only that but I wanted it to be the **first** facing the Iwo Jima coordinates, seen by 14 million Americans driving by the base at Oceanside on Interstate 5.” Dietz notes that all the Marines who fought in the Pacific went through Camp Pendleton, ~425,000.

“With lighting at night time, it will shine like a beacon of freedom, from the land, air or sea.” It will finally bring this national image *coast to coast*. The flag raisers were all Pendleton **5<sup>th</sup> Marines** Division.

The plans being reviewed for approval by the USMC and the Navy for the base monument will take some months for final approval. Certain design features will make history, especially the effort to ensure the longevity - *at least 500 years*, of the new monument, using glass. **Fentress Architects (Denver)**, who has already completed the spectacular **National Museum of the Marine Corps (Triangle VA** near WDC) came up with a “glass fin” design that is actually composed of doors of glass and can provide additional aesthetic enhancements with the use of proper lighting. The new “flag raising monument” based on the photograph will be created by **Bollinger Atelier, Tempe, AZ**.

The non-profit seeks to gain national support for funding this effort that speaks to “celebrating courage, the same ***courage that makes America great and the envy of the world***” said Dietz. A short program on the subject with the Iwo Jima veterans will include their thoughts on the planned monument.

We need the media to get the word out so that the project can be funded (~\$10 million) this year and completed by Nov. 2018 for the “last reunion.” Patriotic Americans from all over the country are called upon to help! **Visit the website to make a donation: [www.marinesoniwojima.com](http://www.marinesoniwojima.com)** or call **844-IWO-JIMA**.

-more-



---

# Iwo Jima Monument West

---

www.marinesoniwojima.com

3535 E. Coast Highway, #180 Corona Del Mar, CA 92625-2404

Email: marinesoniwojima@gmail.com Phone: 844-IWO-JIMA

-page 3-

## Local Iwo Jima Veterans confirmed to attend:

Rancho Santa Fe:	Chuck Bahde (USA)
El Cajon	Bill Behana USMC
Oceanside	"Iron Mike" Mervosh USMC
Carlsbad	Jim Scotella, Walter Valentine USMC
Spring Valley	Robert Bergen (USN)
Huntington Beach	Damaso Sutis

35+ Veterans of Iwo Jima expected to attend.

Contact numbers provided by IJMW: (714-606-8384)

## Attachment: photos courtesy of Fentress Architects, Denver CO

- (1) Overhead of location on base adjacent to I-5
- (2) Nighttime view, a "beacon of freedom"

## Share your stories

Iwo Jima Monument West is looking for the families of Iwo Jima Veterans to share their stories, pictures and artifacts. Contact IJMW at [marinesoniwojima@gmail.com](mailto:marinesoniwojima@gmail.com) or toll free at 1-844-IWO-JIMA.

## For more information, or to RSVP, please contact:

Laura Dietz  
Founder  
Iwo Jima Monument West  
714-606-8384  
[Laurabdietz@gmail.com](mailto:Laurabdietz@gmail.com)