**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Wreaths Across America Announces 2018 Escort to Arlington Itinerary**

*President of American Gold Star Mothers, Becky Christmas, to serve as Grand Marshal;* *Chevrolet to provide 12 wrapped vehicles to transport Gold Star Families and Veterans*

**COLUMBIA FALLS, Maine – Nov. 14, 2018 –** The Wreaths Across America annual escort of handmade, balsam wreaths heading to Arlington National Cemetery from Maine has become known as the country's longest veterans’ parade, and this year, the weeklong journey kicks off on Saturday, Dec. 8. Grand Marshal – National President of American Gold Star Mothers Inc. (AGSM), Becky Christmas – will lead the caravan as it travels down the East Coast stopping at schools, memorials and other locations along the way to spread the mission to REMEMBER, HONOR and TEACH.

The escort is scheduled to make stops in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland and Washington D.C. before arriving at Arlington National Cemetery on the morning of Saturday, Dec. 15 – National Wreaths Across America Day. To view the schedule, please visit [www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/arlington-escort-information](http://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org/arlington-escort-information).

“American Gold Star Mothers have long partnered with Wreaths Across America to blend our similar missions toward one goal: to remember and honor as many of our fallen American heroes as possible,” said Becky Christmas, President of AGSM, and this year’s grand marshal. “I lost my son, Todd, an Army Captain, in a helicopter crash in 2004. My goal is to continue Todd’s legacy in service to our country and ensure that no fallen soldier, or their family, is ever forgotten,” she continued. “Our involvement in this touching escort further unifies our organizations and it is an honor to lead the group through Arlington’s gates this year.”

Chevrolet, who has generously sponsored the escort vehicles transporting participating Gold Star families and veterans for the last four years, will again provide 12 wrapped vehicles in addition to sponsoring 4,000 wreaths for Arlington.

“Our support of the Wreaths Across America mission to Remember, Honor and Teach has become a touching annual tradition to Chevrolet and its employees,” said Dan Adamcheck, regional director, sales, service and marketing for Chevrolet. “There is nothing like the patriotism we experience during the escort to Arlington and we are truly looking forward to this year’s events.”

Escort participants include American Gold Star Mothers, Blue Star Families, Gold Star Wives of America, veterans and the Wreaths Across America extended family. Members of the Patriot Guard Riders, Patriot Riders of America and Rolling Thunder will flank the escort along with law enforcement from departments in Maine to ensure safe transport for all participants throughout the week.

Twelve tractor-trailers representing Walmart Transportation, Schneider National, Load One, Witte Bros. Exchange, Inc., Hartt Transportation Systems, Inc., Delhaize Transportation LLC (DBA Hannaford Supermarkets), American Trucking Associations – Share the Road Truck, Pottle's Transportation, Cargo Transporters, Inc., Nestle Waters North America, Inc. (DBA Poland Spring Bottling Company), North State Transportation driven by Gold Star father Scott Harris, and WAA’s first ever HONOR TRUCK (tractor donated by Freightliner and trailer donated by CLC) will haul a portion of the 253,000 sponsored wreaths heading to Arlington National Cemetery for placement on Dec. 15.\*

What began as a pilgrimage by Maine wreath maker, Morrill Worcester, in a single truck to deliver 5,000 wreaths he donated to Arlington in 1992 has become a national mission more than 25 years later to Remember, Honor, Teach.

National Wreaths Across America Day is a free event and open to all people.

*\*Wreath sponsorships for all participating cemeteries, including Arlington National Cemetery are needed and will be accepted through Monday, Dec. 3. Please consider giving the gift of remembrance this holiday season by sponsoring a wreath for $15 by visiting* ***www.wreathsacrossamerica.org****.*

**MEDIA CONTACT:**

Amber Caron  
(207) 513-6457

[acaron@wreathsacrossamerica.org](mailto:acaron@wreathsacrossamerica.org)

**About Wreaths Across America**

Wreaths Across America is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded to continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, begun by Maine businessman Morrill Worcester in 1992. The organization’s mission – Remember, Honor, Teach – is carried out in part each year by coordinating wreath-laying ceremonies in December at Arlington, as well as at more than 1,400 veterans’ cemeteries and other locations in all 50 states and overseas. For more information, please visit [www.wreathsacrossamerica.org.](http://www.wreathsacrossamerica.org.)

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