NEWS RELEASE

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The Woodlands Township honors veterans at Veterans Day Tribute

THE WOODLANDS, TEXAS (November 11, 2013) – More than 350 people came out to Town Green Park in The Woodlands today to honor veterans in the first annual Veterans Day Tribute in The Woodlands.

"We are very grateful of your service to our country and want to personally let you know," said Bruce Tough, Chairman of the Board of The Woodlands Township to the large audience of veterans. "Your service allows us to have the freedoms in the country unlike anywhere else in the world. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you."

This first annual event was created when Township Director Nelda Blair and Montgomery County Commissioner James Noack wanted to create an event to honor recent veterans.

"We established this event to honor our local veterans from all branches of service along with welcoming back veterans who have recently returned home," said Nelda Luce Blair, Director on The Woodlands Township Board of Directors and Chairman of The Woodlands Convention & Visitor Bureau.

In addition to honoring all veterans, The Woodlands Township is beginning a tradition to honor veterans who have returned home in the past year. Four residents were honored:

- Isaac Shareef, a resident of Alden Bridge, joined the United States Navy in January of this year and remains active today. Isaac has also served a tour in Afghanistan this year.
- Rick Menard, a resident of Grogan's Mill, joined the United States Marine Corps in 2009 and remained active until 2012. Rick also served our country on a tour in Afghanistan.
- Bill Thatfield, a resident, retired from the United States Army in 2013 after 24 years of service. Bill's most recent tour was three years in Germany.
- Kentisha Aidi, a resident of Grogan's Mill, joined the United States Army in 2010 and remained active until November 8, 2013. Kentisha also served in Afghanistan.

The event featured organizations assisting veterans in recognition and many other ways, including the Greater Woodlands Public Art Foundation; Texas Red, White & Blue; Texas Sentinels Foundation; and Operation Holidays for Heroes. And to support and honor U.S. military service members currently serving, a military care package drop-off booth was set up during the event to accept donations of recommended items to be shipped to the troops.

Speakers were Township Chairman Bruce Tough, Township Director Nelda Blair, U.S Congressman Kevin Brady, Texas State Representative Steve Toth and Montgomery County Precinct 3 Commissioner James Noack.

A special musical performance by the Goldenaires Senior Adult Choir, a Presentation of Colors by the Patriot Guard and a giant 40 foot by 20 foot American flag raised high above Town Green Park by The Woodlands Fire Department also were part of the event.

A special announcement was made about The Way Home, a Veterans Memorial sculpture that will be placed in Town Green Park in 2014 and will honor veterans who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defending freedom.

For more information on the Veterans Day Tribute event, please contact The Woodlands Township at 281-210-3800 or visit Veterans Day Tribute.

For more information on The Woodlands Township government, please call 281-210-3800 or visit www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov.

PHOTO: The Woodlands Township Board of Directors honored four recently returned home Veterans at the Veterans Day Tribute on November 11, 2013 at Town Green Park. Front row, from left, are Rick Menard, Bill Thatfield, Isaac Shareef, and Kentisha Aidi. Back row, from left are Township Director Gordy Bunch, Township Director Jeff Long, Township Chairman Bruce Tough, The Way Home Steve Montgomery, Township Director Mike Bass and Township Director Nelda Blair.

PHOTO: Residents attending the Veterans Day Tribute at Town Green Park on November 11, 2013, watch in amazement as a giant 40 foot by 20 foot flag is raised high above Town Green Park by The Woodlands Fire Department.

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