

SALUTING AMERICA'S WAR HEROES

PBS' National Memorial Day Concert Commemorates 60th Anniversary of D-Day

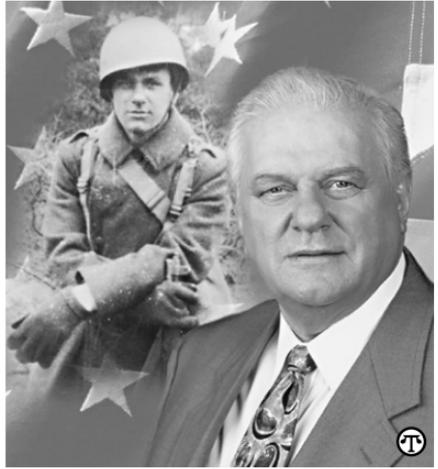
(NAPSA)—For 12½ weeks, two million men fought in the fields of Normandy. This year, PBS' critically acclaimed National Memorial Day Concert will commemorate the 60th anniversary of D-Day, the World War II Allied landing at Normandy.

Charles Durning, one of America's premier character actors and a U.S. Army veteran of Normandy, will bring to life the moving stories of the men who participated in the valiant campaign. The program, broadcast live from the West Lawn of the U.S. Capitol airs on Sunday, May 30, 2004 from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. ET (check local listings).

As a 21-year-old infantryman, Durning was among the first wave of men to land on Omaha Beach. During that campaign and later in the war, he was wounded three times and awarded three Purple Hearts and a Silver Star. His impressive 50-year acting career has been crowned by a Tony Award and nominations for two Oscars and four Emmy awards.

In 1990, when Durning was making his Tony-winning star turn in the Broadway revival of Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, he opened up in a *People* magazine feature. "There's only so much you can witness," he said of his time overseas. Indeed, his war decorations were hard-earned. He was the only man from his company to survive the landing on Omaha Beach.

In the months that followed, he was wounded several times in action but was released from hospital in time to fight in the Battle of the Bulge, where he was taken prisoner. After escaping, his tour of duty came to an end when he was wounded again, beginning



Renowned actor and World War II veteran Charles Durning will honor America's servicemen and women in PBS' multi-award winning holiday special, live from the U.S. Capitol on Sunday, May 30, 2004 at 8:00 p.m.

four years of hospitalization for his injuries. He credits acting with helping to heal the scars of war.

His remarkable career includes more than 150 films ranging from *The Sting* to *Tootsie* and *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* His equally impressive stage credits include Broadway turns in *The Gin Game*, *Inherit the Wind* and his Emmy-nominated role in *Queen of the Stardust Ballroom*.

In addition to Durning, this year's concert will feature Amber Tamblyn, Alison Krauss and Union Station featuring Jerry Douglas, Jason Ritter, Brad Paisley, Joe Mantegna, Brian Stokes Mitchell and Joshua Bell with The National Symphony Orchestra conducted by Erich Kunzel. The nation's premier holiday event will once again be hosted by renowned actor and World War II veteran Ossie Davis.