



For Immediate Release
March 6, 2012

Ohio World War II Veteran Awarded French Legion of Honor

COLUMBUS – An Ohio veteran who helped liberate France during World War II will be awarded that country's Knight of the Legion of Honor by Lieutenant Governor Mary Taylor in a ceremony scheduled for 2 p.m. Thursday at the Massillon Military Museum, 316 Lincoln Way East.

Bernard P. Ott, 91, of Massillon, will be recognized by an audience of family, friends and veterans. Ohio Department of Veterans Services Director Tom Moe will assist Lieutenant Governor Taylor in the ceremony and present a brief history of the award.

The Legion of Honor was created by Napoleon, and is presented to "...those who have achieved remarkable deeds for France." People who have been named Knights of the French Legion of Honor include those in the military, government, industry and the arts.

Mr. Ott entered the U.S. Army on February 23, 1943. His unit, the 44th Division, landed in France on September 15, 1944. During this time, he was a Private First Class in M Company of the 71st Infantry Regiment. From September 1944 to July 1945, he participated in the Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe Campaigns. Part of his combat service was in France's Vosges Mountains, and on November 17, 1944, he participated in the liberation of Strasbourg, France. Mr. Ott was injured twice during combat in France. He is the recipient of the Bronze Star Medal, the Purple Heart Medal, the Europe-Asia-Middle Eastern Theater Medal with four Bronze Stars, the Good Conduct Medal and the American Theater Ribbon.

U.S. veterans of the liberation of France during World War II are eligible for the award of Knight of the Legion of Honor if they were injured in combat, or received a decoration for valor. For information, contact the Claire March at the French Consulate in Chicago, at (312) 327-5221, or Claire.march@diplomatie.gouv.fr.

-30 -

Media needing more information, contact - Mike McKinney at 614-728-0235 or Michael.mckinney@dvs.ohio.gov.