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U.S. ARMY MANEUVER CENTER OF EXCELLENCE



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## **MEDIA RELEASE: German and Italian Memorial Day ceremony moved indoors**

**DATE:** Nov. 25, 2013

**FORT BENNING, Ga.** – Due to inclement weather projected for Tuesday afternoon, the German and Italian Memorial Day ceremony will be conducted in the Infantry Chapel annex at 3 p.m. Nov. 26.

Fort Benning conducts this ceremony annually to remember the 44 German and seven Italian prisoners of war who are buried at the Main Post Cemetery.

Thomas Wulfing, deputy consul general for the German consulate in Atlanta, and Maj. Massimiliano Bar, the Italian liaison officer to the Maneuver Center of Excellence, will speak.

The second Sunday before Advent marks the German memorial holiday, Volkstrauertag, the Day of National Mourning which was established in the Federal Republic of Germany in 1952.

On Volkstrauertag, the German people pause to remember and commemorate those in arms who died in World Wars I and II, those who lost their lives because of their race, religion, ideology or political convictions, and those who died while fleeing their homeland.

Each year on Nov. 4, Italians come together to celebrate “*Giorno delle Forze Armate*,” Italian Armed Forces Day. This day is a national day of unity, commemorating the Allied victory in World War I and honoring members of the Italian Armed Forces, past and present.

The German and Italian soldiers buried at Fort Benning all served in World War II and became prisoners of war after they were captured by the Allies between 1943 and 1946. Most of them died of accidental or natural causes while prisoners either in Missouri, South Carolina or Georgia POW camps.

There will be a brief reception in the chapel annex after the ceremony. The public is invited to attend the ceremony and the reception.

Media who wish to attend this event should call the Public Affairs Office during duty hours to coordinate a media escort.

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