Mark J. Hendrickson
Director of Governmental Affairs

2222 "M" Street
Merced, CA 95340
(209) 385-7636
(209) 385-7673 Fax
www.co.merced.ca.us

Equal Opportunity Employer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE November 7, 2008

CONTACT: Katie Albertson, 209.385.7334

VETERANS' PARADE GRAND MARSHALS ANNOUNCED

MERCED – The Merced County Veterans Council announced today the eight grand marshals for this year's Veterans Day Parade, which will be held on Tuesday, November 11, 2008. The celebrations begin at 12:00 pm with an Opening Ceremony at Bob Hart Square, followed by the parade at 1:00 pm on Main Street in Merced. The eight men serving as grand marshals this year include members of the United States Army, Navy and Air Force, with a wide range of duty assignments and overseas experience.

"Our grand marshals this year represent over 14,000 Merced County veterans," commented Darren Hughes, the County Veterans Service Officer. "They also represent the countless men and women who have served in defense of our nation since it founding, more than 230 years ago. Their selfless sacrifice in defense of our freedom is to be commended, and we are so grateful that they have agreed to serve as our grand marshals in the 2008 Veterans Day Parade."

This year's grand marshals are listed below.

Name	Age	Rank, Service	Duty	Overseas Locations and Battles
Lloyd Sparks	92	Technician, 4th Grade U.S. Army	Tank Crewmember	Normandy, France and beyond; Czechoslovakia; Germany
Vernal Addington	80	Colonel, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)	KC-135 pilot	Vietnam
Daniel Silveira	87	Chief Warrant Officer 4, U.S. Navy (Ret.)	Damage control and repair	Philippines
Louis Popke	81	Senior Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)	Aircraft maintenance	England
Frank Taylor	80	Chief Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)	B-29 radar operator; B-52 tail gunner	Korea; Vietnam
Harry Kauffman	81	Senior Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)	Boom operator	
Earl McIver	88	Major, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)	Armaments system officer	Korea; Guam
Jack Tucker	88	Master Sergeant, U.S. Air Force (Ret.)	Aircrew instructor; courier	Pacific; Okinawa; Guam

November 11th was originally celebrated as Armistice Day, marking the end of the First World War. In 1954, Congress passed new legislation changing the name to Veterans Day in response to Raymond Weeks, a World War II veteran, who had organized parades and festivities to honor veterans in Birmingham, Alabama.

The Merced County Veterans Council consists of members of local veterans' service organizations, political representatives, business owners, and service providers. The Council welcomes new members interested in promoting the care and well-being of our community veterans who have served our nation. For more information, contact the County Veterans Service Office at 385-7588.

– 30 –

For more information regarding Merced County, please visit our website at www.co.merced.ca.us