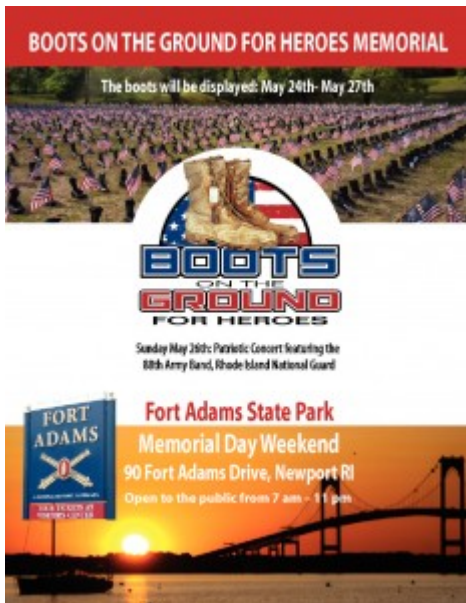


Boots on the Ground in 2019



The Boots on the Ground for Heroes Memorial, honoring soldiers who have died in combat post 9-11 in the Global War on Terror, will be held at Fort Adams in Newport, RI Memorial Day Weekend, May 24-May 27. Hosted by Operation Stand Down and sponsored by Cardis, WJAR and IHeartRadio, the memorial presents almost 7,000 boots and name placards featuring the names of the fallen soldiers, along with other performances and happenings throughout the weekend.

The event is in its fourth year, the first being at Fort Adams. Dee DeQuattro Rothermel, director of development and legal services at Operation Stand Down and creator of Boots on the Ground, has always dreamed of bringing it to different locations and took advantage of the opportunity to move it to a different part of the state.

“This year, we decided that it was time to bring it to a different part of the state,” DeQuattro says of the decision to switch locations from Roger Williams Park to Fort Adams. “This will be a true test of our ability to get the memorial on the road.”

Fort Adams made sense as a location, as it was originally created back in 1799 as an Army post, is one of the oldest parade fields in the country and is in a popular tourist area at a prominent time. This should make for a successful formula to expose the memorial to a more transient population, leading DeQuattro to be optimistic that this year will be their largest turnout yet, complete with a strong military presence because Fort Adams is so close to Naval Station Newport.

“The park has been absolutely wonderful to work with and accommodating to all our needs,” DeQuattro adds. “I am excited to reach a new population and show some tourists from other states visiting what Rhode Island does to honor our fallen.”

Thirty-seven boots and name placards will be added to the memorial, representing the soldiers who lost their lives in the past year. DeQuattro notes that this has been a particularly deadly year in the War on

Terror, even though that number may seem small.

DeQuattro is thrilled to be hosting the Gold Star Gala on the grounds of Fort Adams on Friday, May 24, 2019 from 6:30 - 11 pm. The elegant event will kick off the festivities and be in a wedding style tent overlooking Narragansett Bay and Newport Bridge. The Gold Star Gala, which is a fundraiser for Boots on the Ground and Operation Stand Down, will honor the sacrifice of Rhode Island's fallen heroes with a special ceremony of placing the Rhode Island Boots by Gold Star Families and speech by a local combat wounded Marine. There will also be food, music and a silent auction. There will also be a Patriotic Concert on Sunday, May 26 at 7pm.

The event is working in collaboration with the Newport Chamber of Commerce and an app called Buki, which will offer discounts to local retailers for people who download the app and visit the memorial. The app will also feature information about the Boots on the Ground event, as well as stories of the Rhode Island fallen.

"I am excited to go digital with the Buki app and offer people discounts and information about the Boots," DeQuattro exclaims. "The coordination with the Newport Chamber of Commerce is very exciting because it has helped us generate support from local businesses."

DeQuattro notes that the event has grown with each year, both in attendance and, unfortunately, added boots. She is proud to put on such a compelling memorial that can be overwhelming by its massive size, showcasing and memorializing the sacrifice that many have made for their country.

Boots on the Ground for Heroes takes place at Fort Adams in Newport, RI from Friday, May 24 - Sunday, May 27. The Gold Star Gala fundraiser takes place at Fort Adams on Friday, May 24 from 6:30 pm - 11 pm. Please check the following pages for more information:

[facebook.com/events/1017668425091000](https://www.facebook.com/events/1017668425091000);

[facebook.com/events/2115080711903046](https://www.facebook.com/events/2115080711903046); osdri.org

They are looking for volunteers to help with set up, set down. Please reach out if interested.