



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rushmore  
National Memorial

13000 Highway 244,  
Building 31, Suite 1  
Keystone, SD 57751

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Ace Crawford  
(605) 574-3185

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## Mount Rushmore National Memorial News Release

### Thousands celebrate at the Shrine of Democracy

(Keystone, SD) – The July 3 Independence Day celebration at Mount Rushmore National Memorial brought over 21,000 visitors to the national icon and proved to be one of the busiest days of the year.

Starting at 9 am on July 3, a full day of patriotic programs and activities were offered to visitors throughout the entire day at various locations on the Memorial grounds. Approximately 21,442 people flowed into the Memorial during the day and into the evening. The evening crowd packed the amphitheater, and visitors were able to reflect on the true meaning of this important holiday by recognizing and honoring America’s active duty military and our veterans. The program included F-16 and B1 flyovers, musical performances, a Veteran’s recognition ceremony, and a military swearing-in ceremony of 72 new recruits representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. New to this year’s program was the emotional POW-MIA ceremony, complete with a bagpipe rendition of “Amazing Grace” followed by the playing of “Taps.”

“It was a picture perfect day for our thousands of visitors who were able to experience Mount Rushmore National Memorial,” said Superintendent Cheryl A. Schreier. “The beautiful weather, combined with the outstanding line-up of patriotic tributes and educational programs available throughout the day, made for a memorable, safe, and enjoyable visit to one of America’s icon parks to celebrate Independence Day. We are already looking forward to a similar celebration in 2012,” added Schreier.

The July 3, 2011 celebration attendance of over 21,000 people was on pace with the 2010 attendance of around 22,000. Creative and innovative planning by the Memorial and its event partners allowed more visitors to experience and enjoy the celebration this year, with less congestion and steady turnover of crowds in more public areas. Memorial officials were pleased with the success of the 2011 celebration that showcased the United States’ rich and diverse history of freedom and independence.

The Independence Day celebration continued through July 4 with performers, re-enactors and presentations throughout the park.

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