

## Ken Burns-October 16, 2007

### “Implications of World War II”

In his PBS documentary, "The War," Ken Burns combined oral history with selected film clips to present World War II in a context that stirred our abhorrence of the violent bloodshed while celebrating the selfless courage of our fighting forces—not from the top down, but through testimonies offered by a handful of participants who were either on the battlefields or waiting prayerfully at home.

At the UNF Arena October 16, Burns charmed, horrified and inspired a rapt audience of Council members and other guests with a presentation that included haunting excerpts from the television series as well as an intensely passionate appeal for Americans to reacquire the spirit of shared sacrifice that empowered our eventual success in World War II.

Greeted at his introduction by a long, standing ovation, Burns was storyteller, preacher, and salesman. His manner was neither contrived nor flamboyant, but he used everything he's got—and he's got a lot—to get his message across.

"I am interested in listening to the voices of a true, honest, complicated past that is unafraid of controversy and tragedy," Burns said, "but equally drawn to those voices, those stories and moments, that suggest an abiding faith in the human spirit."

Many of the Council's premier members and sponsors enjoyed an informal reception with Burns on October 15, hosted by Council Advisory Board member Jennifer Johnson at the J. Johnson Gallery in Jacksonville Beach, and also a limited-invitation reception at which Burns spoke before the main October 16 presentation.

-Ronald P. Myers

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