



NEVER FORGET

WWW.HONORFLIGHTBLUEGRASS.ORG

Our Mission

Our sole mission is to fly our heroes to Washington, DC to visit their respective memorials and reflect upon their service, sacrifices, and memories. Every service member deserves a THANK YOU and a WELCOME HOME in the first class and grandest style ever. Honor Flight Bluegrass honors our heroes, recognizes their sacrifices, and takes extreme pride with our unwavering gratitude and utmost respect to provide this service to World War II, Korean, and Vietnam Veterans who served during that time.



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LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

2019 was a fabulous year for Honor Flight Bluegrass! Not only did we have 3 flights to Washington, D.C. this year, we hosted additional events...all with the same goal in mind, to honor our Veterans.

We were honored to fly 43 WWII Veterans, 100 Korean War Veterans, and 146 Vietnam War Veterans to D.C. during the year. We want to thank all of the Veterans we had an opportunity to serve throughout this year. We owe so much to them for their service to our country and the sacrifices they made.

It takes hundreds of hours of time to coordinate a mission and I want to thank our 2019 mission directors Mike DiGuio, Angela LaPierre, and Doug Foster for a job well done. We owe them our deepest gratitude. As a reminder, Honor Flight Bluegrass is a non-profit all volunteer organization with no paid staff. We take great pride in directing our funding (98.7%) to fly Veterans to Washington, D.C. to see their Memorials that represent what they sacrificed so much for.

Thank you to all of our 2019 donors and sponsors. Without you, we could not fly at all. It costs over \$100,000 for each flight, which includes the plane, buses, police escorts, food, etc. We cannot do this without your support. Our goal is to make this the very best experience of a Veterans' life and we can do this because of you.

And a big thanks to all of our Veterans' families that entrusted us to fly their loved ones to Washington, D.C. and back. It is sometimes difficult to turn over your most treasured possession to someone else for a day. We realize this and appreciate the opportunity to honor those that you love, hoping to make a difference in their lives.

In addition to our 2019 flights, on June 6th, the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, we honored 109 WWII Veterans for their service during WWII. We also had a gathering of 28 WWII Veterans on Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day at Frazier History Museum. These extra events took countless hours of effort and would not have been possible without the help of our volunteers, so a big thanks to you!

2020 is a big year for our WWII Veterans as it marks the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII. On May 8, 1945, Winston Churchill announced the Allies had secured Victory in Europe. Later that year, Japan would finally surrender, and World War II came to an end. Of the 16,000,000 men and women of the "Greatest Generation" who served in WWII, roughly 300,000 remain. Over 300 WWII Veterans pass away each day and as a result of this we also lose their memories and stories. It is critical we locate any WWII Veteran who has not been on an Honor Flight so they can go on one. If you know of a WWII Veteran, please let us know. TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE.

We are kicking off 2020 in high gear with our first two flights scheduled for April 21, and June 2. Please note that WWII and Korean War Veterans automatically go on our next flights. Please contact us ASAP or apply online at www.honorflightbluegrass.org if you know of Veterans from these eras. We would like an opportunity to honor them!

Finally, I want to thank our Honor Flight Bluegrass Board Members who demonstrate such a strong commitment to our organization. Many on the Board give hundreds of hours of their time during the year to honor our Veterans. They often go unrecognized and work behind the scenes to make us successful. Thank you for all you do. I am proud to be part of such a wonderful organization.

Jeff Thoke, Chairman

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Your Gift

Makes it possible for
OUR VETERANS
to visit their memorials
in Washington, D.C.

www.honorflightbluegrass.org

Every service member, regardless of age, branch, or duty station deserves a thank you in the style that Honor Flight Bluegrass is legendary for.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



Heather French Henry



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Room

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SEPTEMBER 4, 2019 FLIGHT

80 plus Veterans took a flight to Washington, D.C. to see their Memorials and reflect on their service.



Korean War Veteran, Rondell DeVore, an 86-year-old Cave City native, and 96 year old WWII Veteran, Albert Wess Sr., from Paris, Kentucky, gathered at the Korean War Memorial to see Mr. DeVore's photo etched on the Korean War Memorial. He's forever thankful for this latest honor, which includes a picture from 1952 that was selected from the National Archives to appear on the memorial wall (below, right). Mr. Wess was part of the Red Ball Express and fought in the Battle of the Bulge.



The Ladies for Liberty always bring a smile to the Veterans faces.

A guardian's sole mission is to take care of their Veteran.





We flew 13 WWII Veterans, 32 Korean War Veterans, and 43 Vietnam War Veterans in September.



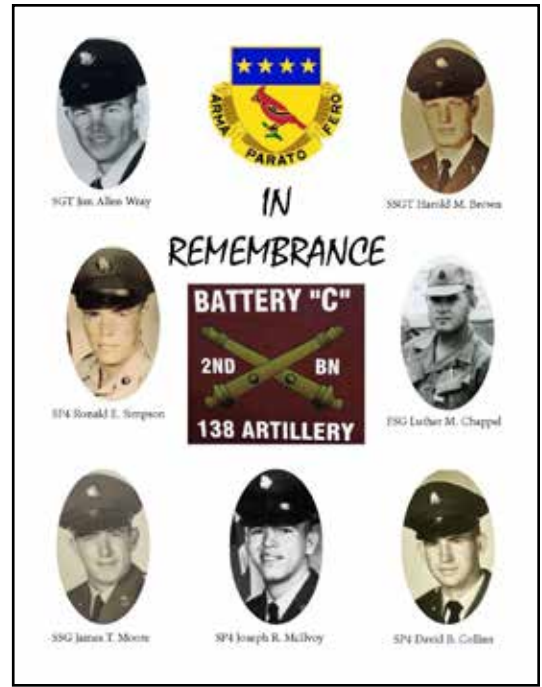
Volunteers from the Honor Flight Network greet Veterans as they step off the plane. Our Medical Team (shown above in red shirts) is comprised of nurses, doctors, and other medical professionals who take time out of their busy schedules to volunteer.



OCTOBER 16, 2019 FLIGHT

110 Veterans visited their Memorials on October 16th, including 10 WWII, one of whom is a 94-year-old Marine, Clarence Zirnheld, who fought at Iwo Jima. Another is 95-year-old, Bob Campbell (pictured below, right), who flew on 35 missions on a B-17 from England to Germany. In addition, 7 Korean War Veterans joined their comrades. Thank you to Old National Bank for being a sponsor and thank you to Daviess County Sheriff's Department for bringing 20 Veterans from the Western Kentucky area.



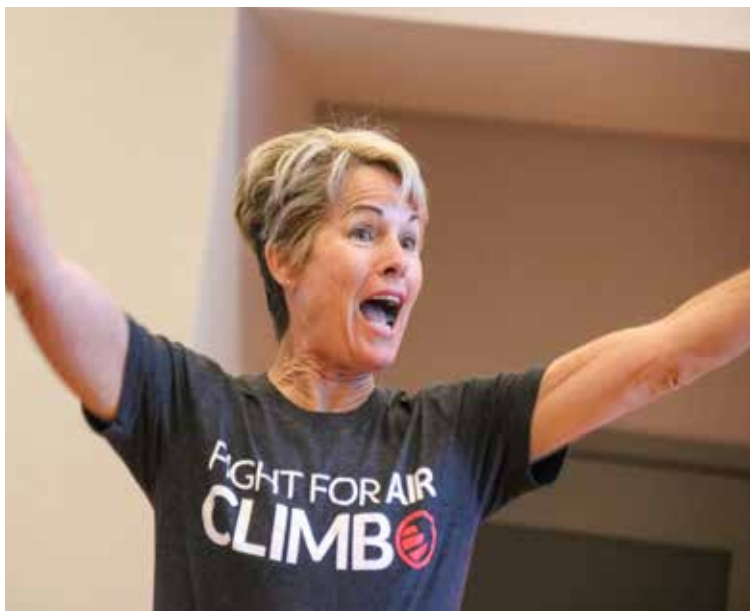


Members of Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 138th Artillery from Bardstovn traveled on our October flight. They brought with them the flag that was flying when their unit was attacked by North Vietnamese on Tomahawk Hill on June 19, 1969. It was a special trip for our largest group of local Vietnam Veterans, in honor of their return to Bardstovn 50 years ago and for their comrades who did not make it home, some of whom are pictured above, right. Of the 93 who served in Vietnam, 35 are from Bardstovn with Battery C, known as the Sons of Bardstovn. Their unit suffered the greatest loss of any other small town per capita in America at the time. The Senior Commander in Vietnam at the time, General Creighton Abrams, had said the 2nd Battalion 138th Field Artillery, was "one of the best trained, and absolutely the best maintained battalion-sized unit in Vietnam."



HUMANA 'TOP FLIGHT' CHALLENGE

Thank you to Humana's Top Flight Challenge and all of the participants for raising over \$2,400! Step by step, nearly 150 people conquered a challenge to honor America's veterans. Participants climbed 25 flights of stairs at Humana Tower in downtown Louisville.



VETERAN'S DAY PARADE

The Veterans Day parade in Louisville is in its 9th year. It started at 11 a.m. to signify the hour the ceasefire was implemented to end World War I on Nov. 11, 1918. None other than our Greatest Generation served as the Grand Marshals! Our 10 WWII Veterans led the parade with Kilroy military vehicles.



PEARL HARBOR REMEMBRANCE DAY

28 WWII Veterans and their families gathered Saturday at the Frazier History Museum in remembrance of the attack on Pearl Harbor 78 years ago. Honor Flight Bluegrass also announced the dates of its first two 2020 trips to Washington, D.C. — April 21st and June 2nd. Visitors also got to see the exhibit "White Christmas" which celebrates the 65th year since the movie was released.



VETERAN TESTIMONIES OF THE PEARL HARBOR ATTACK ON DECEMBER 7, 1941

William Bennett: Originally from West Tennessee, Mr. Bennett recalls that it was snowing. He heard the news around 2 in the afternoon when he heard it from his father. He later operated out of Pearl Harbor. He served for three years in the Navy.

John Brown: Mr. Brown remembers hearing the news on the radio when he was 16. His father, who was an isolationist, immediately turned off the radio and said, "Now we have to go to war." He enlisted in October of 1942. He officially started in the Army on January 10. He completed his basic training in New Orleans. He was then shipped to Europe. He was 2 or 3 days from Europe when he heard about the D-Day invasion. After completing intensive combat training in England, he went to Belgium. He later found himself in the Ardennes Forrest and in the midst of the Battle of the Bulge. He served two years.

Howard Griffin: Mr. Griffin heard the news while he was playing football at age 13. He enlisted as quickly as possible and, by age 16, was fighting in North Africa. Mr. Griffin served 25 years in the Army.

James Largen: Mr. Largen didn't hear about the attack until December 8th on the school bus since his family did not have a radio. At the time, he was in the 8th grade around the age of 14. He joined the Army Air Corps and attended radar school. He later ran radar for the Berlin Air Lift. He served three years.

Ernie Micka: Mr. Micka was already in the Army and was within a few months of finishing his enlistment. He came out of a movie theater to be surprised there was no one in the streets. He went to the PX to get a drink and discovered it to be packed with people talking about the attack. His service was extended and he was soon sent to North Africa, then on to the invasion of Sicily. He was then sent to England to be reoutfitted and went into Europe on D-Day plus 2, continuing on with his outfit until the end of the war. He was gone for over 4 years.

William Tooley: Mr. Tooley heard the news in school the next day. He enlisted in the Army at the age of 18. He trained at Fort Benning for two days before heading to Europe. He fought in France, Germany, and Austria. When the war was over, he was too young to come home and therefore remained in Europe for a year as part of the occupational forces. He served with a MASH unit making sure that the generators stayed running in addition to transporting the wounded. At the end of the war, he helped to liberate concentration camps. He served for three years.

Clyde Warner: Mr. Warner was at home with his dad listening to football on the radio when the news interrupted the game. He is proud to say he heard the original broadcast. At age 17, he joined the Navy and served four years. He served in Okinawa for a year following the end of the war.

Joe Wheeler: Mr. Wheeler was 14 or 15 years old walking down Eastern Parkway here in Louisville when he heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor. He enlisted in the Navy at the age of 18. He found himself aboard the *USS Tacoma* in Luzon. He recalls walking up the plank to the ship with his bag when he heard about the atomic bomb. He served two years.



★ ★ 2020 ★ ★
HONOR FLIGHTS
APRIL 21
JUNE 2

*Help us find
WWII and
Korean War
Veterans!*



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