



**INAUGURAL
EDITION**
DECEMBER, 2018

**212 Veterans Flown
in 2018:
94 WWII
77 Korean War
41 Vietnam War**



CELEBRATING

IN THIS ISSUE:
OUR MISSION
LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN
2018 FLIGHTS
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A HISTORICAL GATHERING
UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2019
MAIL CALL & REFLECTIONS



YEARS



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, regardless of branch, 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

Greetings!

Honor Flight Bluegrass is proud to be one of over 130 regional hubs dedicated to transporting WWII, Korean, and Vietnam Veterans to see their memorials in Washington, D.C. As part of the Honor Flight Network, over 200,000 Veterans across the nation have been escorted to Washington since 2005, all at no cost to the Veterans.

On behalf of the Board of Honor Flight Bluegrass, we want to thank all of the 212 Veterans that flew with us in 2018. We could not have accomplished this without all of the volunteers, supporters, and Honor Flight Board Members who graciously contributed their time and dedicated efforts to make this possible.

2018 has been a unique year for many reasons. We kicked off the year flying 62 WWII Veterans on June 5th for a special 2 day trip. The highlight of the trip was being at the WWII Memorial on June 6th, the 74th anniversary of D-Day. We followed up this flight with two more that included Veterans from WWII, Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

We found other ways to honor our WWII Veterans by flying a WWII-era B-25 Bomber to Western Kentucky on a barnstorming tour. This promotional event brought awareness to the Honor Flight Program which helped us recruit Veterans who may not have heard about us. We wrapped up the year hosting a historical gathering of eight 100-year-old WWII Veterans at Mission BBQ.....809 years of experience before our eyes!

We look forward to 2019 as we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 1944. Our first Honor Flight of the year will take place on May 28, 2019, nine days before D-Day. If you know of WWII Veteran who has not been on an Honor Flight please contact us because it is imperative we fly them to Washington, D.C. while they can still travel. Plans are in the works for a D-Day 75 Week of Gratitude in Louisville from June 3-7 to honor our WWII Veterans.

I want to thank all of the donors and funding organizations who have contributed to Honor Flight Bluegrass over the last 10 years. Without your generous support we could not have flown over 2,000 Veterans from Kentucky and Southern Indiana to Washington, D.C. It is because of your support that we have made a difference to a Veteran, and so many times creating one of the best days of their life. Thanks to everyone who has been or is currently involved in keeping our missions flying. We owe you our deepest gratitude.

Last but not least, thanks to all of the Veterans, past and present, who have served our country. It is because of you we have our freedom. When you see a Veteran, thank them for their service!

Best regards,

Jeff Thoke
Chairman



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.

JUNE 5-6, 2018

62 World War II Veterans took a historic two-day flight to see the memorials in Washington, D.C.



JUNE 27, 2018

17 World War II Veterans, 19 Korean War Veterans, and 31 Vietnam War Veterans



SEPTEMBER 12, 2018

15 World War II Veterans, 58 Korean War Veterans, and 10 Vietnam War Veterans



A YEAR IN REVIEW



Hebron Middle School presents Honor Flight Bluegrass with a check



Bowman Field Aviation Festival



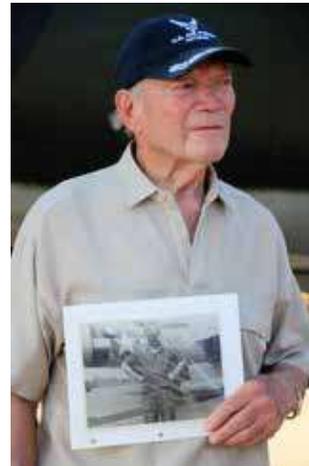
The B-25 Mitchell "Show Me" from St. Charles, MO visits Owensboro



Participating in the Veteran's Day Parade



WWII Navy Veteran Edith Pitzer visits with Hebron Middle School and North Bullitt High School JROTC



2,265 total Veterans have flown to date



"A History at Play" will be held on December 14th at Treyton Oak Towers. Call 502-296-3951 for info.



Volunteers have logged over 21,000 hours helping our mission

A HISTORICAL GATHERING



On September 10th we had the unique honor of hosting a lunch for eight WWII Veterans who were at least 100 yrs old. This rare and historical gathering of members of the Greatest Generation at Mission BBQ in Louisville kicked off Honor Flight Week as we prepared for the upcoming Honor Flight to Washington D.C. on September 12. The youngest of these WWII Veterans had just turned 100 while the oldest was turning 103 three weeks later. All were proud of their service to their country and enjoyed being in the company of other centenarians. It was a day none of us will forget.

UPCOMING 2019

Stay tuned for more details on these events as we get closer to the date!



**First Flight of 2019
on May 28th!**

**D-Day 75th Anniversary
Gratitude Week
June 3rd through June 7th**



HONORING AMERICA'S VETERANS  FOR ALL OF THEIR SACRIFICES

TIME IS CRITICAL! WE NEED YOUR HELP!

First, we need your help to find WWII Veterans!
We only have about 3,000 WWII Veterans left in Kentucky.
Of the 16 million who served in WWII, only about 375,000 remain
and we are losing them by the hundreds each day.
When you find them, sign them up here on our website:

<https://www.honorflightbluegrass.org/applications/veteran>



REFLECTIONS

I Met The Flag At Iwo Jima

By Dale Faughn, WWII Veteran & Ky Poet Laureate

"What we have returned from our flight with is a profound sense of the loss of lives, buddies whose lives were cut short, the enormous cost of freedom, and gratitude that we are still alive and here. We know we are the lucky survivors. To have someone, indeed, whole rows of people, hundreds, thank us for the price we and our brothers paid for our freedoms is moving beyond words." --Paschal B. and Charlie E.

"In my opinion you do a GREAT service for the men and women who have served our country with their military service. It is the most rewarding experiences I have seen afforded to our veteran community." --Gerald F.

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart for each and every detail that makes this experience so priceless! I was and still am most amazed at the investment of the time, work, heart and soul of the volunteers that have spent countless hours before and after this trip to take care of EVERY detail to ensure that it be a day of honoring our veterans beyond what anyone could ask or imagine." --Angela H.

When I was just a lad in school,
I never disobeyed the rule-
To burn the flag
And treat it as a common rag;
I never would have torn it down
Or mocked its meaning over town,
Or spat upon the stripes there
Or wiped my feet on stars fair;
In no way now that I recall
Would I have damaged it all,
But on the other hand you see-
It meant not very much to me.
I pledge allegiance as the rest
Just idle words from my chest;
I sang about the "Banner" too,
But never felt constrained to do
A deed to honor those who gave
Their lives the flag to bravely save;
And though its history oft I'd heard,
Yet still my heart was not much stirred.
My training all had hit a snag;
I'd never really met the flag;
But then it all did change one day
When I was very far away-
It happened back in '45
Where some were dead or half alive;
The morning sun was shining bright
Where there had been a bloody fight—
Up to the Mount I looked, and there,
A sign of triumph in the air!
Our precious flag was waving high,
Announcing victory to the sky.
Though I had seen the flag before
And said allegiance times galore,
The flag meant more that morn to me
Because it heralded victory;
It waved a message back and said,
"For me to fly, your friends are dead."
And then it all made sense to me—
The flag's the symbol of the free!
That special morn on Iwo's Isle,
I stood and gazed a long, long while;
My heart leaped up—gone was the sag,
For there I truly met the flag.

"On the way home there was a 'mail call.' I received some beautiful letters that I did NOT know were coming. These were the letters I never received while in Vietnam. I cried as I read them all. This was the most emotional day of my life. Thank you for the welcome home I think I needed." --Robert G.

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