

HONOR FLIGHT SOUTH FLORIDA

Highlights of the General Meeting - April 5th, 2017

READY FOR WASHINGTON: In only a few more hours, our Spirit Airlines charter will be on its way to give 79 veterans the Honor Flight experience.

Thank you to all those who have worked so hard to get ready for this day and all the guardians and volunteers who will be in action Saturday.

Chairman Rick Asper said there were quite a few changes in arranging the flight, including some in the past few days. "There were some security challenges. We've worked through all those challenges," he said.

The morning flight is scheduled to depart Fort Lauderdale by 6:30 a.m. and arrive at Baltimore-Washington International at 9 a.m. Veterans are then scheduled to head to the World War II and Korean War memorials, Changing of the Guard at Arlington Cemetery and the group photo at Iwo Jima. Rick has said he is striving for a 5:15 departure from Baltimore with an intended, earlier arrival of 7:45 in Fort Lauderdale.

ONE MORE TERMINAL REMINDER: The early-morning check-in and departure will be from the lower level of Terminal 4. The arrival and homecoming will be on the upper level of Terminal 2.

"GROUND CREW" VOLUNTEERS: Honor Chairs staff and check-in staff should be at Terminal 4 by 4 a.m.; others by 4:30. The goal is to have the check-in process move as smoothly as possible, greeting and caring for veterans, directing them to the photo booth and up the elevator to security. The night shift arrives at 5:30 at Terminal 2 to hang posters, set the parade route and welcome the crowd. After the parade, it's important that all volunteers are either attending to veterans at the curb or cleaning the terminal.

PARKING: Parking vouchers will be available for guardians and for those volunteers who are working. Go through the hourly lane of the Palm Garage. Take a parking ticket. **DO NOT USE THE SUNPASS LANE.** As you depart, go through a lane with an attendant available.

HOMECOMING: Even if you're not scheduled as part of the "ground crew," still plan on coming out for homecoming. For those who have never been to homecoming, this is the emotional highlight of the day -- for the veterans, guardians, volunteers and the thousands who come out to celebrate this moment in living history. Everyone can help -- invite your friends and school groups, Scouts and other organizations. To assist in recruiting people to homecoming, Jim Naskrent has prepared flyers (attached) and maps -- www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/homecoming/.

MAIL CALL: What a great surprise this is for the veterans. Final mail call sorting was going on during the meeting and Mike Miskew estimated that each veteran will receive 30-40 letters. ... We will need more mail for the May 20 flight. Encourage any schools or groups to write letters to the veterans. For the students, it's a great writing and history lesson.

RECRUITING WORLD WAR II AND KOREAN WAR VETERANS: Bev Engler has started inviting veterans on our May 20 flight out of Miami. So far we have only six World War II veterans available for this flight. We have taken a few Korean War veterans on previous flights and

one-third of the veterans on Saturday's flight served in Korea, including 10 who were also in World War II. There is one veteran flying Saturday who served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam.

We are happy to serve our Korean veterans too, but we still want to take more World War II veterans. "We need to reach out before it's too late," Rick Asper said. Rick said he recently heard that there is an estimated 12,000 World War II veterans still living in Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

Jim Naskrent has flyers available on the website -- [www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/support material/](http://www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/support%20material/) -- to assist in recruiting for our other three scheduled flights:

May 20 -- Miami to Reagan National.

Sept. 9 -- Fort Lauderdale to Reagan National with Vietnam veterans serving as Elite Guardians.

Oct. 28 -- Miami to Washington Dulles.

GUARDIANS: If you haven't seen the day in Washington firsthand, then consider going as a guardian. There are guardian spots available for May 20. Applications are on the website -- www.honorflightsouthflorida.org.

HOME HELP FOR VETERANS: When volunteer/guardian Ruth Ludwig recently went to meet her veteran, she noticed a broken window at the house. Ruth called Rebuilding Together, a national organization that helps home owners in need with repairs. Robin Martin, chairman of the Broward chapter, explained that Rebuilding Together assists veterans and other with "the focus on safety and health." If you know a veteran who needs help, call 954-772-9945 or email robin@rebuildingtogetherbroward.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Saturday and Sunday, May 6-7: Volunteers needed to work at concessions stand at Air & Sea Show on Fort Lauderdale Beach. It's part fundraising, part promoting Honor Flight.

Sunday, May 7: Fundraiser, noon-9 p.m., Lincoln's Beard Brewing Co., 7360 SW 41st Street, Miami. Lincoln's Beard is brewing a special beer for the day with proceeds being donated to Honor Flight.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, April 26, 6:30 p.m.

-- Tom Christensen, Volunteer coordinator