

HONOR FLIGHT SOUTH FLORIDA

Highlights of the General Meeting - April 13th, 2016

Only 11 days since our last flight and 38 days until our next one. Lots of work to be done.

Here are the highlights from Wednesday's meeting:

NEXT FLIGHT: Saturday, May 21 from Fort Lauderdale
FALL FLIGHT: October date and details to be announced

REVIEWING APRIL 2 FLIGHT: Chairman Rick Asper called the flight an "extraordinary success" and especially thanked Beverley Engler and Stan Bostic, who registered and paired up the World War II veterans with their Vietnam veteran Elite Guardians. The plane arrived in Washington about an hour late and because of the delay time was cut shorter than desired at all the memorials. Rick said we still had 152 "very satisfied veterans." The volunteers agreed that cutting some minutes in each stop was the correct "audible" rather than eliminating one memorial completely.

VOLUNTEER SUGGESTIONS: Each flight is carefully reviewed step by step by the board to see what can be improved to make the veterans' experience even better. Rick Asper asked for suggestions from the volunteers. A few proposed ideas:

- One WWII veteran insisted on driving himself and was the last one to arrive Saturday morning. Board will review our responsibilities for Honor Flight volunteers or staff driving veterans or if that is a guardian or family responsibility.
- Directions in airport for dropoff point. Shuttle bus dropped off its riders too far from Concourse J.
- Staggered exit points out of terminal so wheelchairs don't get in a traffic jam at the end of the parade.
- Training session for volunteers.
- Bigger flight bags -- can we find a sponsor?
- Walkie-talkies for better communication between both sides of security.

WILL THERE BE ANOTHER FLIGHT WITH ELITE GUARDIANS?: Rick Asper said the board will consider future flights with Vietnam veterans serving as guardians. Volunteers appeared to offer strong support for more of these flights. There are questions to be discussed, especially how these flights impact Korean War veterans.

MAY 21 FLIGHT: There are only a few seats left for World War II veterans, so urge any relatives or friends to file their applications. If you haven't yet been a guardian, it's an experience that shouldn't be missed. Applications can be found on the website. Ryan Paton said he anticipates this being our biggest homecoming yet. To build and inform the crowd, Jim Naskrent has all the information on the website -- <http://www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/may21>. If you plan to help with either the early morning or evening Ground Crew, email Tom Christensen -- tchristensen720@aol.com.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Jim Naskrent surprised Chairman Asper with a special photo (see next page). Einstein Espinal, one of HFSF photographers, captured Rick in a private moment at the Vietnam Wall, saluting the memories of seven fallen friends. Jim said the early morning photo booth ran extremely well and presented certificates of thanks to Beth and Harvey Barash, George Caffrey, Dawn Lasky, Elaine Martin, Dole Mollohan and Ken Powers.

BROWARD STUDENTS COME THROUGH AGAIN: The Broward Student Governments, which have been so supportive of Honor Flight South Florida, have convinced their peers around the state to get into action too. Broward Student Government President Brandon Frantz said that schools statewide have donated a total of \$126,000 to their local hubs in support of sending veterans on an Honor Flight trip to Washington. Broward schools led the way with more than \$50,000 donated to our hub. Brandon said the student government association is asking the county school board for a resolution to support Honor Flight. It could increase donations even more than the past few years. George Caffrey thanked nine student government leaders with official red Honor Flight shirts sponsored by his Elks Club.

VIRTUAL HONOR FLIGHT: Brandon announced that the student government association is planning to sponsor another Virtual Honor Flight. The event is scheduled for Nov. 10, the day before Veterans Day, and possibly again at South Plantation High School.

CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC: Stan Bostic announced that Honor Flight South Florida will share proceeds with two other charities from a golf tournament Nov. 5 at Madison Green Country Club in West Palm Beach. He said last year's event raised \$50,000 split between five charities. The event annually includes some athletes and other celebrities. The fee is \$750 for a foursome. There will also be a raffle for a car donated by Rick Case. Raffle tickets are \$50 or three for \$100. Much more to come later.

MISSING HONOR CHAIR: We are missing one wheelchair from the April 2 flight. If you know where it is, please contact Steve Shapiro -- ragst@troyindustries.com.

NEXT GENERAL MEETINGS: Wednesdays, April 27, May 11, May 18, 6:30 p.m. at Broward College, Davie.

GUARDIAN TRAINING: Tentatively planned for Saturday, April 30 and Saturday, May 7.

Tom Christensen,
Volunteer coordinator

