

HONOR FLIGHT SOUTH FLORIDA

Highlights of the General Meeting - May 17th, 2017

FINAL UPDATE FOR SATURDAY'S FLIGHT: There was one more major change this week. On Monday afternoon, the Miami Air CEO called chairman Rick Asper and told him we would be flying on a larger, newer plane. The new plane will carry 168 passengers, instead of 150. With the late notice, we were able to add four more veterans, plus their guardians, and return to our normal staffing. Because of military support in Washington, our hub usually flies with less staff than most hubs. With the 150-seat plane, we had cut back even more. Returning to our normal staff makes it "a lot safer," Rick said.

Ken Powers, who coordinates the military support with Fort Meade, said our Honor Flight days have become so popular that so many soldiers volunteered that a raffle was held for the 32 who will be joining the tour with us. The active military assist in helping the veterans up and down the steep bus steps, unloading Honor Chairs and serving drinks and lunch.

Final "mail call" sorting was going on during the meeting with each veteran assured a large packet of mail.

HOMECOMING: Even if you're not working at homecoming, there's still plenty of time to invite your friends for the big celebration. Miami Air 1945 is scheduled to arrive at 8 p.m. at Concourse J at the very end of the long U-shaped Miami terminal. Several flyers are attached here to print or post on Facebook and more can be found at www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/homecoming/. Jim Naskrent described how much veterans especially liked seeing all the kids. "It changes your life," he said.

"GROUND CREW" VOLUNTEERS: Assignments have been emailed to all who have volunteered to help at early morning check-in or evening homecoming. We can still use a few more volunteers. If you can help, email Tom Christensen -- tchristensen720@aol.com.

HOTEL AVAILABLE AT MIA: A block of rooms has been reserved at Miami International Airport Hotel. The hotel is right in the terminal and convenient for the early morning departure. The Honor Flight rate is \$89, plus tax. Reservations for either Friday or Saturday can be made by calling 1-800-327-1276 and asking for the Honor Flight discounted rate under Confirmation 10700.

PARKING: Free parking will be available for guardians and volunteers who are scheduled to work. Departure and arrival will be from Concourse J, the very end of the long "U" of the Miami airport terminal. As you enter the Flamingo garage, take a ticket. **DO NOT DRIVE THROUGH THE SUNPASS LANE.** Bring your ticket with you and it will be stamped for your exit.

MORE T-SHIRTS FOR SALE: Check out our new T-shirts at homecoming. We are expanding our T-shirt selection in light blue, sand/tan, pink and green shirts. We will also be selling some military and patriotic shirts.

STUDENTS COME THROUGH AGAIN: Jay Wein, representing Honor Flight, received the donation of \$20,219 from Broward Schools at a recent school board meeting. Additionally, Pines Charter had already donated \$3,825. Jay read the resolution of the school board in support of Honor Flight. He thanked the schools for their continuing support in fundraising, letter writing, homecoming and our two Virtual Flights at South Plantation High School. Rick Asper said the students support was "the ultimate act of patriotism -- teenagers and younger doing charity work for those old enough to be their great grandparents."

FUTURE FLIGHTS: Rick Asper said that "able-bodied" Vietnam veterans can start applying to serve as Elite Guardians for World War II and Korean War veterans on the September 9 flight. It will be a joint day of honor for

veterans of several generations. The usual guardian fee is waived for Elite Guardians.... Rick encouraged everyone to keep recruiting World War II veterans for the October flight. Air France is donating a 523-passenger Airbus 380, but we have to register at least 200 World War II veterans for the flight. A recruiting poster is attached and more can be found on the website -- www.honorflightsouthflorida.org. Click on Media and then click on Support Materials.

HOLLYWOOD SCHOOL TO HONOR VETERANS: Honor Flight has been invited again to bring veterans for a special event Wednesday, May 24 at Oakridge Elementary School, 1507 N. 28th Ave., Hollywood, 33020. Veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan are invited. If you would like to invite a veteran or can drive or have questions, contact Ryan Paton -- ryan@capitolg.com or 954-445-4285.

SPECIAL MEMORIAL DAY EVENT AT BOKAMPER'S: Bokamper's on the Intracoastal is planning a Memorial Day celebration to support Honor Flight. World War II and Korean War veterans are encouraged to be at the restaurant by 5:30 for a special ceremony and buffet dinner. Honor Flight will have a table with brochures, application forms, donation bucket and T-shirts for sale. Reservations are needed by Wednesday, May 24. If you would like to bring your veteran or can work at the table, email tchristensen720@aol.com. Bokamper's is located at 3115 NE 32nd Ave., Fort Lauderdale.

COCKTAILS WITH HEROES: Ryan Paton is planning a special event with World War II veterans at 11 a.m., Saturday, June 10 at Capital Grill in Boca Raton. Veterans will be honored with a police escort. It will be a seven-course meal, with each course plus accompanying wine representing another nation liberated by U.S. troops. Tickets are \$150 with proceeds benefiting Honor Flight. Email ryan@capitolg.com for ticket information or if you can help.

WORTH NOTING: Buddy Galvin, one of our original Honor Flight veterans, will be honored as a Broward County "pioneer" Saturday. The program begins at 1 p.m. at Parkland City Hall, 6600 N. University Drive. ... If you would like to join other volunteers in Davie's Memorial Day Parade, email tchristensen720@aol.com.... Kim Coulter, Tony Palmieri and Carl Mendola had a productive day registering veterans and guardians at the Successful Aging Expo on May 13.... Vietnam veteran and loyal volunteer Gunny Slagle is generating publicity in The Keys....Tamarac is issuing a special proclamation in support of Honor Flight on Wednesday.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, May 31, 6:30 p.m.

-- Tom Christensen, Volunteer coordinator