



Villages Honor Flight

Serving Lake, Sumter and Marion, Citrus and Hernando Counties

February-March 2014

OPERATIONS

The restructuring of our flight model is complete. The size of the flight has been expanded to 50 veterans and 50 guardians; an orientation about the required duties for new guardians has been completed; CPR certification is now required and completed for Squad leaders and is encouraged for all guardians; the medical team on each flight has been doubled; medical equipment has been acquired; 2014 flight dates have been set as 27-April, 25-Jun and 4-Sept (Nov date is pending).

The first pre-flight meeting for the April flight was held 16-Mar'14. It was an active day with the increased flight size, but all went well. The enthusiasm of vets and guardians when they met for the first time was palpable and was a wonderful experience to see. All are looking forward to the experience of this mission. Departure and return will be at the American Legion Post 347 as in prior flights. Save the date and plan on attending the Homecoming event which begin at 9:30 pm.

Formation of the manifest for the 25-Jun'14 flight is underway.

The Fall 13 Mission Reunion was held 17-Jan'14. A very moving poem about the Honor Flight experience was written and read by John Trongon, a WWII vet. You can find his poem and pictures of the gathering on our website, under "Pictures/Videos". Check it out and see what a great time these vets had.

HOW CAN I HELP??????

The **Red Hat Volunteers** are present at **VHF** events assisting vets, directing traffic and offering support. They provide a most valuable service by keeping things moving and ushering people to the proper place. If you can provide assistance in this area contact Bob Bauer, Red Hat Coordinator at 352-874-4665 for information.

The next Villages Honor Flight Club meeting is 12:30 pm, 14-Apr'14 at Colony Cottage Recreation Center in The Villages. Attendance is open to anyone who wishes to support our mission. Guardians, past and future, are encouraged to attend as their opportunity to directly interact with a vet during a flight is a unique experience.

MEDICAL UPDATE

Safety of veterans and guardians while on a mission has always been an essential priority and concern. In order to be in a better position to respond to medical emergencies while on a flight we now require all leadership personnel to have CPR/AED training and certification. In addition we purchased two (2) automated external defibrillators (AED'S) which will accompany us each flight. For those veterans who may require oxygen we have purchased an airline/FAA approved portable oxygen concentrator. These items, while expensive, were considered to be necessary given the advanced age and medical condition of many of the vets. Several individuals have made contributions specifically to assist in the purchase of the equipment and we are thankful for their contributions. If you wish to assist in funding these expenditure, information on how to donate can be found on our website, under "Donate", or send me an email.

A **Speakers Bureau** representative is available to make a presentation to clubs, community or veteran groups, church groups or similar organizations. Call 353-432-1382 to arrange a presentation.

UPCOMING EVENTS

25-Mar'2014 Villages Parrot Heads and Cody's Original Roadhouse will sponsor a Salute to **Villages Honor Flight** as a fundraising event. The event at Cody's starts at 4:00 pm is open to the public, music and food provided and admission is only \$5.00. Check our website under "Fundraisers" for more information.

8-12-Apr'2014 KC Productions will present the Broadway Musical *Cabaret*. The proceeds from this event will be shared with **Villages Honor Flight**. Details and ticket availability are on our website, under "Fundraisers".

THANKS TO A SPECIAL FRIEND



American Legion Post 347, Auxiliary Unit, SAL Squadron and Honor Guard are staunch supporters of **Villages Honor Flight**. They allow us to use their hall for sendoff and homecoming, support us through fundraising activities and the Honor Guard greets veterans when they arrive early in the morning of flight day and when they return for Homecoming. Thank you American Legion Post 347 members for your support. You truly make a difference.

P.S. Please share this newsletter with friends.