

## VILLAGES HONOR FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 2016

[www.VillagesHonorFlight.org](http://www.VillagesHonorFlight.org)

Serving Lake, Marion, Sumter, Citrus &  
Hernando Counties

**NEXT CLUB MEETING.** THE Villages Honor Flight Club will meet on Monday, 11-Apr-2016 at 12:30 P.M. at the Colony cottage Recreation Center in The Villages, FL. ( We always meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month, so mark your calendars in advance.) We will be doing the Quarterly Review, as well as discussing the upcoming May 18<sup>th</sup> flight and other upcoming events. We will also have a presentation of "What You Don't Know" which will help you better understand the inner workings of VHF. Volunteer opportunities will also be available for sign-up, so be sure to bring your calendars.

### **VHS NAMED "VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR".**

The Villages Homeowner Association has named Villages Honor Flight as their "Volunteer Organization of the Year". The award was presented on March 9<sup>th</sup> at their annual awards ceremony. The award was accepted by VHF President Mark Erdrich, who remarked "I was surprised, but not surprised. We have worked very hard and diligently, and it is nice to be honored." A dozen veterans, as well as many VHF volunteers, were present at the ceremony. Erdrich continued in his remarks by stating "Volunteers play a key role in the success of every flight, because a single Honor Flight mission requires the efforts of more than 100 volunteers. While many volunteers are visible on a flight day, much of the work happens behind the scenes. It is like an iceberg: you see a few people at the top, but there are a lot of people underneath making it happen" he said. Erdrich concluded by stating that "Honor

Flight couldn't operate without those volunteers."

**YEHA BOB CONCERT A HUGE SUCCESS.** Two concerts were held on the evening of February 29<sup>th</sup> at the Eisenhower Rec. Center in The Villages. Mickey's Fanatics, a long-time supporter of VHF, paid for all of the expenses, and donated the receipts from ticket sales to VHF. Debbie Winters, President of Mickey's Fanatics, announced that lots of money was raised by tickets sales to 420 very enthusiastic attendees, as well as an additional \$90.00 in donations. The two crowds enjoyed the high energy antics of singer-dancer-piano player "Yeha Bob", a 20-year Disneyworld favorite, and joined in singing many of the songs with most of them enjoying their own refreshments. One table of 10 ladies in the front had 10 bottles of wine, while right behind them was another table that looked like a tailgate party at a Packers game. We extend our thanks to Mickey's Fanatics for their continued generous support of Villages Honor Flight.

**GUARDIAN'S CORNER.** All Guardians and Veterans for M26 (flight date is 18-May-2016) have been selected and notified. The list for *experienced* guardians (those who have been on at least one previous flight) has only about 30 names. Experienced guardians should download a "Fly Again" form from the website and submit it if they desire to go on another mission. The list for *new/1<sup>st</sup> time* guardians is at approximately 80. The new Pre-Flight format has been initiated, and guardians are able to spend much more time with their assigned veterans. Squad Leaders will arrive for the Pre-Flights at 11:30 A.M. Veterans and the rest of the Guardians will meet and greet at 12:30 P.M, with cookies and coffee (no lunch). Check-In will be by squads, with both Guardians and Veterans checking in together.

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Guardians will remain at the session after the Veterans have been dismissed. All should be completed by approximately 3:45 P.M.

### **UPCOMING EVENTS.**

---Fri., 8-Apr-2016, CPR class at 1PM, La Hacienda Rec. Cen.

---Sun., 10-Apr-2016, M26 Pre-Flight #1, 11:30am for Staff & Sqd. Ldrs., 12:30pm for Vets & Guardians, Colony Cottage Rec. Cen.

---Sun., 8-May-2016, M26 Pre-Flight #2, 11:30am for Staff & Sqd. Ldrs., 12:30pm for Vets & Guardians, Colony Cottage Rec. Cen.

---Fri., 15-May-2016, CPR class at 1PM, La Hacienda Rec. Cen.

---Wed., 18-May-2016, M26 flight to DC. Homecoming greeters needed

### **VHF ATTENDS ANNUAL HONOR FLIGHT**

**NETWORK SUMMIT.** On 20-22-Feb-2016, VHF President Mark Erdrich and VHF Treasurer Wayne Grunewald attended the annual "Summit" meeting in Baltimore for the 130 Honor Flight Hubs from around the country. 300 representatives from 80 Hubs were in attendance. Nationwide, more than 160,000 Vets have flown since the inception of Honor Flight in 2005. Nationwide, in 2015: 21,000 vets were flown, 50% of the Vets were from WW2, 40% from the Korean War, and 10% from Vietnam. Mark made a presentation on the VHF Flightless Prison Flight, which was very well received and which was only a handful of presentations made by the Hubs in attendance. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year VHF had the honor of making a presentation, with last year being about the Flightless program in general. Feedback shows a great deal of interest in the concept, but so far only a few Hubs have started some form of "Flightless" or "Virtual" programs, but many plan to do so.

**VHF BEGINS 2016 "SEASON".** As we go to press, Mission #25 is scheduled to fly on 30-Mar-2016, the first of four planned flights to Washington, D.C. in 2016. At least two "Flightless" missions will also take place. M25 will be our normal 35/35 (35 vets & 35 guardians) mission, with 13 WW2 vets, 19 Korean War vets, 2 vets who served during both Korea & Vietnam, and 1 Vietnam vet. The Service Branches were: Army, 13; Air force, 4; Army Air Corp 2; Marine Corp 5; Navy 10; and Coast Guard 1. The next flight, M26, will be on Wed., 18-May-16.

### **SAVE-THE-DATE FOR THE 3<sup>RD</sup> ANNUAL VHF**

**GOLF SCRAMBLE.** Saturday, 1-Oct-2016 is the date to save, with the event again being held at the Eagle Ridge Golf Course at Del Webb Spruce Creek. This event has always been an early sell-out, so get your team together and submit your application. There will be prizes for Long Drive, Closest to the Pin, as well as a New Car/Golf Cart for a Hole-in-One! There will be "Mulligans" for sale, a 50/50 drawing and a putting contest, as well a huge Silent Auction. Registration cost is \$90.00 per person (\$65.00 for Eagle Ridge members), which includes greens fees, cart rental, lunch and dinner. It all starts with registration and lunch at 11am, followed by the Opening Ceremony at 12:30pm and the shotgun start at 12:45pm. All proceeds, of course, go to support VHF operations. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, or wish to purchase a \$30 sign honoring a particular veteran, please [click here](#) to download and print the "Sponsor" form and submit it. To obtain applications or answer questions, contact John Kane at 201-961-4121, [leftygolf2338@gmail.com](mailto:leftygolf2338@gmail.com) or Frank Moravcik at 586-292-3138, [fpmoravcik@yahoo.com](mailto:fpmoravcik@yahoo.com).

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**VETERAN'S CORNER.** M26 is scheduled for 18-May-2016, and the flight is full, with 3 female and 32 male veterans. 16 are from WW2, 17 from the Korean War, and two from *both* Korea & Vietnam. We continue to receive applications from WW2 veterans, who are given priority in flying. We have approximately 200 veterans from all conflicts currently on our waiting list.

**SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.**

Bronze - \$1,000 to \$2,499

The New Jewish Congregation Sisterhood

Virginia Trace Crusaders for a Cause

Silver - \$2,500 to \$9,999

Amelia Neighborhood

Mickey's "Fan" Atics

Gold - \$10,000 to \$14, 999

William A. Oster, Jr. (In memory of Barbara Oster, VHF's own long-time volunteer and beloved "Cookie Lady".)

Mission Sponsor - \$15,000 +

None in March

**I DIDN'T KNOW THAT.** The concept of the Flightless Honor Flight was conceived and developed by Villages Honor Flight, and now is beginning to be used in some form at other Hubs around the country. It has enabled Veterans who are unable to fly to Washington, D.C. a chance to experience a flight through the magic of "virtual reality" and videos from actual missions. An actual tour guide from D.C. flies here to our Flightless missions to narrate the tour. TSA from Orlando furnishes an Honor Guard and performs pre-flight security checks. A representative from Southwest Airlines checks tickets and welcomes Veterans to the

flight. A large number of motorcycles escort everyone to the American Legion for a full-scale "Homecoming". All of this makes the day as realistic as possible to an actual flight.

**Villages Honor Flight**

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Comments or suggestions may be sent to Newsletter Editor, Harry Miller, at [harryelsucio@earthlink.net](mailto:harryelsucio@earthlink.net) or phone 352-259-9417

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