

VILLAGES HONOR FLIGHT NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 2016

www.VillagesHonorFlight.org

Serving Lake, Sumter, Marion, Citrus

And Hernando Counties

NEXT MEETING. The Villages Honor Flight Club will meet on Monday, 8-Feb-2016, at 12:30 P.M. at the Colony Cottage Recreation Center. Chris Lipp has edited his videos from the "Grand Reunion" and will show an 8-minute highlight clip.

WW2 HISTORY CLUB FUNDRAISER. This club has traditionally sponsored an Evening of WW2 Music each Feb. with proceeds going to Villages Honor Flight. In 2016, the event is being moved to March with *two* evenings of live entertainment: Wed., 23-Mar-2016 at the Eisenhower Rec. Center and Wed., 30-Mar-2016 at the Seabreeze Rec. Center. Music by Music Mix & Savoy Bands. Doors will open at 5:30 P.M. and the events will start at 6:00 P.M. There will be approx. two hours of live band entertainment each evening. WW2 History Club members and VHF volunteers/vets/guardians will have priority for tickets, which will be \$10.00 and which will be available at VHF and WW2 History Club meetings and events. After March 1st, tickets will be made available to the general public. We need a few volunteers to help with ticket sales and with "usher" duties at the two actual events. Contact Mark Erdrich at (585) 455-2853 or merlin66@ww2hc.org.

YEHA BOB FUNDRAISER CONCERT. This will be on Monday, 29-Feb-2016, at the Eisenhower Recreation Center. There will be two shows, at 6:00 P.M. and 8:15 P.M. Cost is \$10.00 per person, and tables for 10 may be reserved for \$100.00. You may bring your own drinks and snacks to the shows if you wish. The tickets may be purchased at any VHF Club meeting, or by contacting Lavern Holtz at 352-430-0899 or at grammie5@comcast.net. The Mickey's Fanatics Club is paying for the

entertainer's fee, so 100% of the proceeds from ticket sales will go to VHF.

FEMALE VETERANS CELEBRATION. Are you a female veteran from Lake, Marion or Sumter County who served in wartime WW2, Korean, Vietnam or the Gulf Wars? The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 347 in Lady Lake, FL wishes to honor your service on Monday, 07-Mar-2016. Pre-registration is required for this luncheon as seating is limited to 225, and you may do so by contacting Peggy Hearlson at 352-307-8119 (H), 352-875-4454 (C), or phearlson@aol.com.

SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS. At the "Bronze Level" (\$1,000 to \$2,499), the *Italian American Club South*, the *Sumter Singles Club* and the *Vietnam Veterans of America* made contributions. In addition, there were four (4) individuals or couples who also contributed at that level who are individually listed on our web site. Thank you to our contributors at *all* levels!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR UPCOMING

"FLIGHTLESS" HONOR FLIGHT. Our 5th "Flightless" mission will take place on Saturday, 27-Feb-2016 at the Colony Cottage Recreation Center. Volunteers are needed for the event itself. Please contact Flight Director Liza Walters at 352-753-9664 or lizadiana@aol.com to sign up. *We also* need folks to appear with flags, smiles and cheers at:

--Sendoff at the American Legion Post 347 at 10:00 A.M.

-- The simulated arrival in Baltimore (actually at Colony Cottage) at 11:30 A.M.

--The simulated return to Orlando (also actually at Colony Cottage) at 2:30 P.M

--The *REAL* Homecoming at the American Legion Post 347, where entertainment will begin at 1:30 P.M. and the vets will arrive via bus at 3:00 P.M.

Bring your friends, family and neighbors to any of these locations and times and bring folding chairs

and flags to the Homecoming at the American Legion.

VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE. Again this year, the Sons of the American Legion, Squadron 347, are sponsoring a dance on Saturday, 13-Feb-2016 at American Legion Post 347. The doors open at 6:00 P.M. and the dance is from 7-9:30 P.M. The featured entertainer is Johnny Ray McCullah, a local favorite. The ticket cost is \$15.00 per person and may be purchased at the Legion office 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Mon.-Fri. Bring your own snacks, as no food will be served. There will be a Cash Bar, so you *cannot* bring your own drinks. Seating is limited to 210 and has been a sell-out the past two years.

THE SKIPPER & THE TEMPLE SHALOM SISTERHOOD HONOR FLIGHT BENEFIT. This big event will take place on Saturday, 27-Feb-2016 at Temple Shalom, 13563 County Road 101, Oxford, FL. It will be a "Salute to the Songs of Jerry Herman" and will include songs from his shows, such as "Milk & Honey", "Hello Dolly", "Dear World", "Mack & Mabel" and "LaCage Aux Folles". At least five singers and 6 dancers will be part of this gala production, all under the supervision of "The Skipper" himself. Singers include Billie Thatcher, Bill Davis, Carolyn Hoffman, Jan Lavin & Woody Wood. Tickets cost \$12.00 for Temple Members and \$14.00 for others. Call Temple Shalom at 352-748-1800 for tickets or mail your check to the address, above.

2016 HONOR FLIGHT GOLF SCRAMBLE. This 4th annual event will take place on 1-Oct-2016 at the Eagle Ridge Course at Stonecrest. We need people to assist in the planning of the event and for contacting potential sponsors for donations at various levels, merchandise for auction, etc. Please consider working on this event, as it has the potential to earn well over \$20,000. Contact Event Chairman Frank Moravik at 586-292-3138 or fpmoravik@yahoo.com. Frank has a job for everyone at any skill level, so please help out if you can. Frank is also seeking items for possible sale or

silent auction at the event. Collectibles work well, especially golf-related things. The Feb. Golf Committee meeting will be Monday, 8-Feb.-2016 at the Belvedere Library (near the High School) at 9:00 A.M. Anyone interested in helping this committee may attend.

AMELIA NEIGHBORHOODS' TRIBUTE TO HONOR FLIGHT. This Villages neighborhood is sponsoring an event that is *open to Villages Residents, only*, on Monday, 7-Mar-2016 at the Colony Cottage Rec. Center. They will have Music, Appetizers, 50/50 Raffle, Silent Auction and a slide presentation. All proceeds will go to Villages Honor Flight. *There is no admission fee, but please bring your own beverages and an appetizer to share.* For more information, or if you would like to donate a basket or items for the auction, please contact Peg Leonard at 330-565-2127 or mleonard@leonardindustriesllc.com.

HOW OLD ARE OUR VETERANS? Like all of us, our veterans are ageing. We currently find that the average age of the veterans who are awaiting a flight are WW2, 91.3 years old; Korean War, 84.0 and Vietnam War 71.2. This is but one more reason for our mission to fly these honored veterans as soon as possible.

"GRAND REUNION". Almost 700 Veterans, Guardians and other guests attended the "Grand Reunion" at the North Lake Presbyterian Church in Lady Lake on 8-Jan-2016. An eight (8) minute Highlight Video has been prepared by Videographer Chris Lipp. The video has been posted on You Tube. If you'd like to view it, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6AxR-rrVvg>.

I DIDN'T KNOW THAT. We are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization and donations are fully tax deductible. One hundred percent of donations made *directly* to Villages Honor Flight stay with us. Donations made to the National Honor Flight Network have 10% deducted by the national organization to fund their operations. Villages Honor Flight is able to keep expenses down to only about 6%, leaving 94%

for programs directly benefiting the veterans. The low expenses are possible due to so much work being done by our wonderful volunteers.

VETERAN'S CORNER. A large percentage of the vets currently waiting to fly are expected to fly during 2016, assuming they still wish to do so. Our shift towards Korean War veterans continues, with only about a dozen WW2 veteran applications on hand and with all of them scheduled to fly on the next 2 or 3 missions. During 2016 we will be actively seeking Korean War vets who may be interested in Honor Flight. American Legion Post 347, alone, has 1,141 Korean War veterans out of their over 6,000 members (the largest Post in the World), so it is expected more and more veterans from that conflict will be applying to fly.

GUARDIAN'S CORNER.

How Are Guardians Selected? We have a list of people waiting to be guardians (new and experienced) almost as long as our list of vets waiting to fly. We do have age and physical fitness requirements but most people who want to be a guardian will normally pass muster. Like vets, guardians fly on a first come, first served basis.

We exert considerable effort in matching up guardians to vets and consider such things as: military background, gender (easier when it comes time to use bathrooms), vet's mobility and weight (guardian may have to push a wheel chair several miles during flight day), where each lives (more convenient if they live not too far away) and similar things.

Vet-Specific Guardians In the past, some small fraction of guardians have been "vet specific", i.e., they have signed up to be a guardian for a specific vet. This could be a friend or family member. Although this seems appealing there are several problems including: more difficult to schedule a vet on a flight because two calendars are involved, more complexity if one drops out, complaints if the

guardian is from out of town and is required to attend preflight meetings, and more bathroom problems. But the biggest issue is that that one of our major goals – each vet acquires a new "best friend" and a number of new (vet) friends and acquaintances – is often not accomplished. The vet does not make a new friend and vet-specific guardians often hinder the socialization process by which vets talk, exchange stories and "be vets". As of 01-Jan-2016, we will no longer accept vet-specific guardians except in those cases where the vet's medical condition requires it.

Villages Honor Flight

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Comments or suggestions may be sent to Newsletter Editor, Harry Miller, at harryelsucio@earthlink.net or

Phone 352-259-9417

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