



**VILLAGES HONOR
FLIGHT
NEWSLETTER
June, 2016**

www.VillagesHonorFlight.org

Serving Lake, Marion, Sumter, Citrus &
Hernando Counties

NEXT CLUB MEETING. The Villages Honor Flight Club will meet on Monday, 13-June-2016 at 12:30 P.M. at the Colony Cottage Recreation Center in The Villages, FL. (We always meet on the 2nd Monday of each month, so mark your calendars in advance.) Our featured speaker will be Benjamin (Ben) Mack-Jackson, a middle-school student from the Orlando area who has created the "World War 2 Veterans History Project" which has a goal of capturing interviews of our veterans, many of whom have flown with Villages Honor Flight. Ben also collects WW2-era memorabilia with a hope of creating a travelling educational display later this year. He will bring a few pieces to the meeting, and will gratefully accept any donations of memorabilia you might have. Check out Ben's project at www.WW2VeteransHistoryProject.com. You will also have the opportunity to sign up for any number of volunteer activities, so be sure to bring your calendars to the meeting.

UPCOMING DATES & EVENTS.

--10 June, CPR class at 1pm at La Hacienda Rec. Center
--13 June, VHF Club monthly meeting, 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--23 June, Flightless Honor Flight, Lexington Park, Homecoming greeters needed

--8 July, CPR class at 1pm at La Hacienda Rec. Center
--11 July, VHF Club monthly meeting, 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--24 July, M28 Pre-flight #1 at 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--8 Aug., VHF Club monthly meeting, 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--13 Aug., CPR class at 1pm at la Hacienda Rec. Center
--20 Aug., Spring Reunion for March & May flights, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--21 Aug., M28 Pre-flight #2, 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--3 Sept., M29, Flightless Pre-flight, 12:30 p.m., Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--7 Sept., M28 Flight to DC, Homecoming greeters needed
--9 Sept., CPR Class at 1pm at La Hacienda Rec. Center
--12 Sept., VHF Club monthly meeting, 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--24 Sept., M29 Flightless Honor Flight, Amer. Legion & Colony Cottage
--25 Sept., M31 Pre-flight #1 at 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--10 Oct., VHF Club monthly meeting, 12:30pm, Colony Cottage Rec. Center
--14 Oct., CPR class at 1pm at La Hacienda Rec. Center
--23 Oct., M31 Pre-flight #2, 12:30pm at Colony Cottage
--2 Nov., M31 to D.C., Homecoming greeters needed

A MESSAGE FROM ONE OF OUR FLIGHT

DIRECTORS. Barb Cooksey, one of our Flight Directors, recently completed M26, our 2nd flight to D.C. in 2016, and offers some of her thoughts to the many volunteers for Villages Honor Flight.

“You show up at 2am in the morning to be sure our veterans get the send-off they deserve, and then come back at 11pm and wait almost 3 hours to be sure our veterans get the welcome home they deserve.”

“You are the villages Honor Flight volunteers who work behind the scenes, making sure that:

- The traffic flows as needed, both cars and people!
- The tables are covered with the proper color table clothes
- We don't have any knives, guns or grenades in our pockets
- We have snacks to eat on our journey
- Our vets have a lap quilt to keep them warm and to remember their day
- There is a bugler to play reveille and Taps
- There is a chaplain to pray for our safe journey
- There is an honor guard at both ends of our trip
- There are wheelchairs at the ready for our vets who need assistance
- There are chairs ready for our supporters and give them flags to wave while waiting for our veterans to return
- There is mail for each of our vets from grateful Americans
- Each veteran gets a hug and feels the love of Villages Honor flight”

“I was on Mission 26. When the veterans realized the same people who “saw them off” at 3am were there to greet them when they got back 22 hours later, they were amazed, humbled and eternally grateful. When the buses came into view of the American Legion at 1:30am on May 19th, I wish all of you could have heard the veterans’ reactions. They were so excited to have a police escort and motorcycle escort into town, and the icing on the cake was to see the crowd waiting for them. The veterans couldn’t believe that people other than their families would be up at that hour to welcome them home.”

“Thank you to each and every one of the Villages Honor Flight Volunteers, from the bottom of my heart, for your hard work that made our mission a success. I may be the person with the microphone at the end of the trip, but I am not the reason our mission are successful. It takes many people, working together, to make our missions successful. I thank you. The veterans thank you. God bless you all.”

Sincerely, Barb Cooksey, Flight Director, M26.

GUARDIAN’S CORNER. We continue to experience a shortage of *Experienced Guardians* (guardians who have been on at least one previous flight to DC). If you have flown before with Villages Honor Flight as a guardian and would like to consider flying again, please visit our web site at www.VillagesHonorFlight.org and download, fill out and mail the “Fly Again Application” and mail it to Villages Honor Flight, P.O. Box 490, Lady Lake, FL 32158-0490.

VETERAN’S CORNER. M29 will be a “Flightless” Honor Flight and will be held at the Colony Cottage Rec. Center on Saturday, 24-Sep-2016. Eleven veterans are currently scheduled, but we expect a few more to apply during the summer. Our Fall flights will be M27, to D.C., on Wednesday, 7-Sept.-2016, with 35 veterans

currently planned for. M31 will also be to D.C. on Wednesday, 2-Nov.-2016, again with 35 veterans. We continue to give WW2 veterans priority, but also are scheduling a significant number of Korean War veterans.

TWO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE MAY FLIGHT, M26.

Participants in this mission observed, for the first time, a *female* "Sgt. of the Guard" at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery. Like all of her fellow soldiers in the unique group, this young lady continued the proud traditions of the Changing of the Guard Ceremony. It was noted that she was also highly decorated with a Bronze Star. One of the veterans with our group, Bobby Harris, is a veteran of both the Korean War and Vietnam. Mr. Harris considered his tour as Commander of the Guard one his most memorable, and proudest, assignments in his long and distinguished career in the Army. The 2nd interesting change was the lunch location, which was moved from the Air Force Memorial to the Women's Memorial at the main gates to Arlington National Cemetery, due to the possibility of rain. At the women's Memorial, our group was honored to be greeted by Brigadier General Wilma L. Vaught.

VILLAGES WW2 HISTORY CLUB MAKES SIGNIFICANT FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION.

The WW2 History Club (WW2HC) has supported Villages Honor Flight (VHF) since VHF was formed in 2011. Support has included involving VHF in WW2HC's open houses each year, sponsoring VHF initiative within The Villages (before the VHF Club was formed), promoting VHF at every WW2HC meeting and substantial financial donations. The recent donation of \$10,000 came from our annual "pass the helmet" at the WW2HC Feb meeting and the proceeds from two WWII Music Concerts in March.

VILLAGES HONOR FLIGHT

P.O. BOX 490

Lady Lake, FL 32158-0490

WWW.VillagesHonorFlight.org

352-432-1382

Comments or suggestions may be sent to Newsletter Editor, Harry Miller, at harryelsucio@earthlink.net, or phone 352-259-9417.

P.S.: PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!