

# HONOR FLIGHT SOUTH FLORIDA

## Highlights of the General Meeting - May 18th, 2016

**ALL READY FOR SATURDAY:** The 77 veterans and their guardians are excited. Final details have been worked out. Mail call is sorted. The Ground Crew and photo staffs have their assignments. And a big homecoming crowd is expected.

Eastern flight 1941 is scheduled to depart Fort Lauderdale for Washington at 6:30 a.m. with an itinerary to visit the World War II and Korean War memorials, Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery and the Iwo Jima monument.

Now all we need is for the weather forecast to improve.

**HOMECOMING:** If you haven't already invited your friends, there's still a little time. Jim Naskrent has flyers, posters and maps to print or post on Facebook -- <http://www.honorflightsouthflorida.org/may21>. Let's see if we can top the estimated 3,500 at our last FLL homecoming in October. Eastern flight 1945 is scheduled to return to FLL Terminal 2 at 8 p.m.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Jed Wolcott said the total cost for the charter flight is an extremely reasonable \$23,000. With almost all expenses paid, the hub maintains a balance of approximately \$132,000.

**A VERY SPECIAL VETERAN-GUARDIAN BONDING:** Volunteer Susan Jowers was involved in Honor Flight even before our hub was formed. She served as a guardian for Melvin Rector of Sebastian, Fla., on her first flight in 2011. Since then, she has become very involved with our hub, donating all caps to veterans, but she remained close with Melvin in what she called a "father-daughter relationship."

Susan recently took Melvin, 94, on the "Masters of the Air Tour" to England. It was his first trip to England since the war ended 71 years ago. Melvin and Susan visited many of the military sites he remembered as a young radio operator on a B-17 bomber. They even saw Winston Churchill's War Room during the Battle of Britain.

But then.....

"He passed away in my arms," Susan said. "It was the most beautiful death, almost like he planned it." Melvin was honored in a special memorial with American and British military.

Susan had this advice for anyone who serves as a guardian: "Stay in touch. They will become a part of your heart."

**OCTOBER FLIGHT:** Final details and logistics for the mega-flight are being worked out with a likely date of Oct. 8. The plan is for a full charter of approximately 400. Special recruiting efforts are

planned, but everyone's help is needed to register 150-180 World War II veterans. Two normal-size charters are being considered as a backup plan.

**FUNDRAISING:** If you would like to be involved in fundraising, contact Stan Bostic -- [stanbostic@rickcase.com](mailto:stanbostic@rickcase.com). Plans are in the works for two golf tournaments and a gala event. Raffle tickets for a car donated by Rick Case Auto are available.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** We need volunteers for two Memorial Day events:

\* Davie Memorial Day Parade: 9:30 a.m. Monday, May 30. We will be carrying the Honor Flight banner down Orange Drive to the Bergeron Rodeo (not too far from where we hold our meetings). It's another good chance to promote Honor Flight.

\* Memorial Day fundraiser celebration: Bokamper's Sports Bar & Grill will conclude its month-long "Tribute to our Heroes" with a grand Memorial Day promotion. Honor Flight will benefit from donations, such as writing letters to the troops and "buy a veteran a beer." Volunteers are needed in the afternoon and evening May 30 to build support for this benefit and promote Honor Flight. Bokamper's, owned by former Miami Dolphin Kim Bokamper, has restaurants in Fort Lauderdale, Plantation, Miramar and two in Collier County.

If you can help with either of these events, email Tom Christensen -- [tchristensen720@aol.com](mailto:tchristensen720@aol.com).

**KEY DATES:**

Tuesday, May 24: Special event honoring World War II veterans at Oakridge Elementary, Hollywood.

Wednesday, June 8, 6:30 p.m.: Next general meeting at Broward College, Davie.

Saturday, Oct. 8: Tentative date for next Honor Flight.

Saturday, Nov. 5: Charity Golf Classic at Madison Green C.C., West Palm Beach.

Wednesday, Dec. 7: Virtual Honor Flight for veterans hesitant to fly, South Plantation High School. And yes, it's the perfect date -- the 75th anniversary of Pearl Harbor.

-- Tom Christensen, Volunteer coordinator