



HONOR FLIGHT®

ROCHESTER NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3

AUGUST 2014

IN THIS EDITION:

LATEST NEWS

Honor Flight
Week in Victor

Missions
35 and 36

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

John Burns

UPCOMING EVENTS

2014 Flying
Schedule

Talks & Ground
Events

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Honor Flight Week in Victor

The 3rd Annual Honor Flight Week in Victor took place in May. Many Victor merchants participated in this year's fundraiser by donating a portion of their sales to Honor Flight. The Victor Hills Golf Course along with Apparel Printers Plus and Turner Automotive also participated by sponsoring a golf tournament to benefit HFR on May 25th.

A clever banner (*photo right*) was used to track the progress of the fundraising effort. Nearly \$14,500 was raised—enough to send nearly 30 veterans to D.C.!

On June 23rd, Mike Stockman, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation for Victor, presented

a check to HFR with the funds raised by the merchants. A large contingent of HFR veterans and volunteers (*photo below*) gathered at Victor Town Hall for the presentation. During the town board meeting, C. P. Maloney, Ground Events Coordinator for HFR, read a very moving poem by an anonymous Honor Flight veteran.



Many thanks to Mike Stockman, to the Victor Hills Golf Course, to the Victor merchants who participated, to our many volunteers who walked the streets of Victor and staffed the table at Eastview Mall, and to all of our veterans who came out to support HFR!

Missions 35 and 36



Please visit our photo site at:

HonorFlightRochester.Shutterfly.com

for more photos of these and other missions!



“A veteran is someone who at one point in his life wrote a blank check payable to The United States of America for an amount up to and including his life.”

Gene Castagnetti, Director of the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific



Volunteer Spotlight: John Burns

In business, a vice president of operations with a responsibility for 150 people would easily be earning a six-figure income along with perks. For Honor Flight Rochester's Vice President of Operations John Burns, his compensation is the smile on veterans' faces as they enjoy and return home from their Honor Flight missions and his perk might be an HFR shirt or cap. "Honoring our veterans is reward enough," said Burns.

Burns became the vice president of operations in 2011. "Honor Flight Rochester had become a very large organization and there were too few people doing too many jobs. Then HFR President (Col. Edwin E) "Woody" Mench asked me to assist Michelle Unger with her many duties. I learned a great deal from both of them," he said. HFR co-founder Col. Mench and Ms. Unger have passed away.

Burns was a guardian for his father Edward Burns, Jr., on Mission 9, June 5-6, 2010 (*photo right*). The elder Burns enlisted in the U.S. Navy on his 17th birthday. The signalman 3rd class saw action aboard an LCS (landing craft, small) at the epic WWII battles at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. "An LCS operates parallel to the shore firing rockets and machine guns in support of the invasion forces," Burns explained about his father's service. "And they also fought off kamikaze attacks."

After Mission 9, Burns volunteered on the departure and homecoming committees. "My big break," he laughed, "came when (HFR co-founder) Vince Hope asked me to coordinate volunteer training for the WXXI telethon."

As vice president of operations, Burns is now responsible for many day-to-day activities and with the committees that make each mission a success. He heaps all the credit on the committee leaders and volunteers. "I try to stay out of their way and let them do what they do best. I offer support," he said. The photo below shows John at the Mission 35 homecoming.



HFR President Richard Stewart offers a less modest perspective. "John's enthusiasm, commitment and mastery of operations are instrumental in providing our veterans with the best experience possible with Honor Flight," he said. "Through his tireless team efforts, John continually builds Honor Flight's reputation for truly delivering the trip of a lifetime to our veterans. John is great to work with and I appreciate all that he does."

Burns learned some of managerial skills during high school when he managed concessions at the old Silver Stadium on Norton Street. Fourteen days after graduating from Aquinas in 1973, Burns enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served aboard the U.S.S. *John King* in the Mediterranean. He spent eight years on active duty and 14 years in the reserves. As a recruiter, he enlisted more than 200 men and women into the service. Burns received the Gold Wreath with 10 stars for Excellence

and the Navy Achievement medal. He earned a Naval Unit Citation in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In civilian life, he had a 30-year career as a chemical technician at Eastman Kodak Company.

Burns and his wife Yvonne have a son Brian, an HFR volunteer, and a daughter Shelley and two grandsons. Grandson Justin, 14, is an HFR volunteer while Isaiah, 5, "helps grandpa with Honor Flight."

For his future HFR plans, Burns has his own mission. "Honor Flight was originally established for World War II veterans," Burns said. "I'm pleased we've decided as a hub to continue on with the Korean War and Vietnam War veterans. I'm committed to making sure every Rochester-area veteran who wants to go on an Honor Flight Mission goes. The community is behind us and we have the volunteers who can make it happen."

Thanks to Rick Meier for writing this profile!

Upcoming Events

Nazareth College Office of Veterans' Affairs
and Prime Time Brass Present a

Benefit Concert for HFR

at 7 pm on Saturday, August 16th

Nazareth College Arts Center

Callahan Theater (air conditioned)

Tickets are \$15 Pre-Sale or \$20 at the door

Call (585) 389-2170 or visit boxoffice.naz.edu

Tickets also available at Hatter's Pub in Webster

or by calling C.P. Maloney (cash only)

PTB's special guests include:

News 8's Maureen McGuire (M.C.)

Rochester Metropolitan Jazz Orchestra

Mighty St. Joe's Drum Corps

Image City Sound of the Sweet Adelines

All proceeds to Honor Flight Rochester!

2014 Flying Schedule



Sept 6/7 Mission 37

Sept 27/28 Mission 38

Oct 18/19 Mission 39

Lakeshore Country Club

Annual Golf Outing to Benefit HFR

1165 Greenleaf Road

Friday August 1st

Entrance fee of \$100 includes golf, lunch, dinner,
dance band, and awards ceremony

Please contact Gary and Mary Jo Torrey
at (585) 216-5976

Letters from Veterans & Their Families



Upcoming Talks & Ground Events

- Aug 1 Lakeshore CC Golf Benefit
(see details above right)
- Aug 16 Prime Time Brass Benefit Concert
(details above left)
- Aug 11-17 LPGA
- Sep 19 Canandaigua VA Lunch for POWs
- Oct 17 Canandaigua VA Health Fair
- Oct 25 Elvis Night
- Nov 21 Sky Coasters Turkey Bash

"I wish I were able to express the 'in our hearts' emotions and gratitude for my Dad's honor flight. He will never forget what that flight meant to him. And it was an honor and privilege for me to attend as his guardian.

From the breakfast first thing Saturday morning, to the Harley escort, the band, the greeters, and the Memorials--it was all perfect. And the staff was so attentive.

Thank you so very much for everything you do to make the flights possible. It was just such an awesome experience for Dad and for me."

A Message from Rich

Greetings. I hope that your summers are going well.

So far in 2014 we have completed four missions with three more still ahead of us. By the end of the year Honor Flight Rochester will have flown seven times. This is a very full schedule as typically we do six missions a year.

Presently our missions are comprised of a mix of World War II and Korean War veterans. This will continue until the remaining WWII veterans who are willing and able take their Honor Flights. Their ages are in the high eighties and older. We want to take them as soon as possible. Please help us find those World War II veterans who have not gone on an Honor Flight. Maybe there is someone in your neighborhood who has a family member who still needs to fill out an application. Please make an overture.

Yes, we have already started taking Korean War veterans and the list is growing of those ready to go. The Korean War Veterans Memorial is a very special place for reflection. It has the powerful message engraved in stone which reads, "Freedom Is Not Free."

On a closing note I would like to say thank you to everyone who helps support Honor Flight Rochester. Your enthusiastic and tireless efforts are greatly appreciated.

Best Regards,

Rich Stewart
President



Have a question, comment,
or something to share?

DROP US A LINE!

VolunteerHonorFlightROC@gmail.com

Thank
a
Veteran!