



NEWSLETTER

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VETERAN'S SALUTE - MIKE PALMESANO



Honor Flight Rochester's tagline is, "We leave no veteran behind." Yet, all too often we hear "I'm not worth it", "I wasn't in combat" or "others deserve it more than me." It is one of the most common misperceptions about HFR's services to veterans - ALL veterans - agnostic of service, position, or rank. If you served in the USA Armed Forces, you have earned the services of Honor Flight Rochester.

Take, for example, US Army Reservist Mike Palmesano. Twenty-six years of service to his country as a radio operator, drill sergeant, and tank commander. And yet, Mike openly shares how he felt before joining Honor Flight Rochester: "I didn't see myself as a Vet because I never deployed." To most people this makes no sense, but to Mike Palmesano and other veterans this perception is sadly common.

Mike Palmesano joined the Army National Guard in Hornell, New York in 1965. His military career, like many others, is told in soundbites of humor and irony. He languished without any increase in rank for two years until attending Basic Training. Stepping off the bus at Ft. Jackson, SC, the drill sergeant immediately seized onto Mike and made him, and him alone, run laps around the barracks. Mike admits that after a number of laps he was intent on going AWOL right then. Then the drill sergeant pulled him aside and made him acting 1st Sergeant of all the new arrivals!

Later, at Ft. Gordon, Mike was one of 12 graduates out of 136 entries to pass radio training at the Signal School. But after six years in the Army National Guard, Mike finished as a Staff Sergeant (E-6 rank) and focused on his family. But the Army Reserve wanted him, offering him a position one below that which he'd held! Mike was canny enough not just to demand his previous rank, but a promotion to E-7, which, to his shock, he was granted.

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**WE LEAVE NO
VETERAN BEHIND**

Through the years, with all postings stateside, Mike rotated through various bases. During the Kent State crisis Mike and his military colleagues virtually hid at SUNY Geneseo out of concern for violent anti-military activists. In 1987, Mike was nominated to Sergeant Major, where he supervised many combat veterans, all the time finding ways to apologize for not being one himself. He retired from the military in 1994 after 26 years of service. Yet Mike continued working for ABB for another five years, during which his work took him to 26 countries.



Mike’s description of how he felt all those years includes “unworthy” and “not a combat veteran.” He refrained from participating in veteran organizations and events. It wasn’t until a couple of years ago, when Veteran’s One-stop Center of Steuben County advocated for his self-recognition as a real veteran, that got him thinking otherwise.

In 2019 Mike encountered Honor Flight Rochester at a festival in Avon. At that point he says he was “still in my shell” but became interested. Like Many vets, Mike sat out COVID until finally he was able to join Honor Flight Rochester on Mission 82 in April 2024.



It was a turning point for Mike, a repositioning to where he rightfully always should have been. He felt “welcomed even though not a combat veteran”, “felt like one of the soldiers”, and finally(!) it was the “first time I felt equal.” He felt rejuvenated and proud. The Welcome Home reception moved him to tears.

Mike and his wife Suzy currently reside in Hornell, New York. They have collected Corvettes since 1970 and raised a family. Today, despite retiring from both the US Army Reserves and ABB Mike Palmesano continues to work as a community liaison for a NYS Assemblyperson.



Mike Palmesano now knows - as should everyone - that ALL veterans are true veterans who deserve the thanks and recognition for their part in the security of our country. Spread the word to all veterans: Honor Flight Rochester welcomes ALL veterans: “We leave no veteran behind.”

MISSION 82





MISSION 83





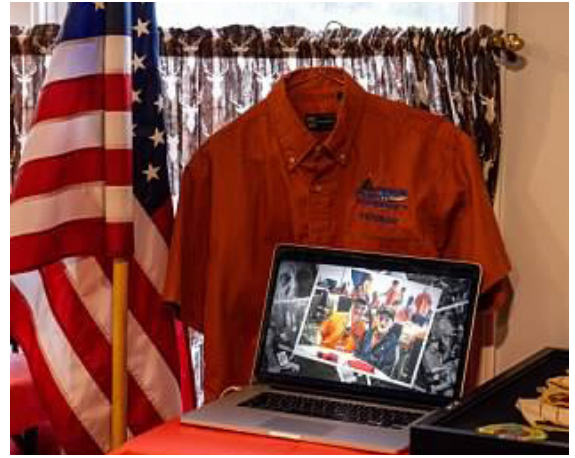
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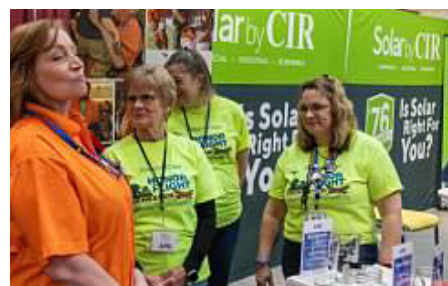


WE LOVE WHAT WE DO!

APPLE BLOSSOM SHOOT



ROCHESTER HOME & GARDEN SHOW



FAIRPORT CANAL DAYS



VFW AMERICAN LEGION MUSIC EVENT



MAIL BAG - WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

To all of Honor Flight Rochester's hundreds of volunteers – THANK YOU! The 2024 HFR Flying Season is off to a fantastic start with Missions 82, 83, and 84, and none of it would be possible without all of you.

Thank you for your selflessness and dedication - here are just a few examples of "Why We Do What We Do."

Dear Honor Flight 79

I'm writing this letter because I want to let you know how you changed my life, with the experience you gave me, by taking me and my son and the other Veterans to Washington, seeing the Memorials of all the different Wars, most of all the Viet Nam Wall brought tears to my eyes. But most of all was the home welcoming we received in Baltimore and in Rochester made me cry. It was so you over do, it brought me to peace and I forgive the people of the past that made me feel ashamed, thank you and all your members for what you did for me, again thank you for the peace you've given me.

Love you all,
Mr Michael Caldarello
SP/4 ARMY

2/13/2024

To Whom it may Concern.
all staff & volunteers,

It has been a great pleasure to serve the veterans and you since I started at Mission 10. I have enjoyed meeting you all as volunteers and veterans and hearing all the stories of your adventures and good and bad memories. But I will miss all of you and your camaraderie we have all shared. It is time for me to pass the baton to the younger generation. I started this program with my Dad in mind, because you see he went on the first Honor Flight of the Country with John Marsh in Springfield Ohio. This has been a very rewarding adventure of my life and its time to say Good-bye or see you soon. Thank you Pat for your leadership & friendship as so many volunteers & Steve Rapp. I will still be a part of Honor Flight Rochester thru my donations. May God Bless, Guide & give you all Peace.

Love, Hugs
& friendship
Mary F. Weld

Hello, last year I flew on a mission. I want to make an annual donation to Honor Flight Rochester from my IRA required minimum contribution. I need your identification number for my check as documentation that I am contributing to a nonprofit 501(c)(3) tax exempt charity. I can be reached by phone, text or email.

Thank you,
Flown Veteran M78
(edited transcription)

Mission 75

yes.... it was an experience of a lifetime and especially sharing it with one of my sons. Everything was top notch from get go until the emotional and fantastic airport reception when we got back. I can't speak highly enough, every chance I get, on how well organized, professional, and friendly the entire staff was no matter where we

were. I look forward to following HFR future events and missions. Keep up the excellent work honoring us veterans and May God bless you all in the coming year. Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!

Miko Hermeman
230 Lyell Avenue
Spencerport, NY

Eric and Honor Flight Crew,

I want to thank you for the outstanding trip to Washington this past weekend on Mission 78.

Just can't imagine the planning that you all must put into the trip.

Seemed to flow

The weather was

great, had only in pictures. Hotel

meals outstanding. I will definitely spread the word to other vets and get them to sign up. My daughter was my companion and she enjoyed it as much as I did.

And the greetings that we got both in Baltimore and Rochester were unbelievable. Couldn't get over all the people.



Everything just with no hitches, great so we didn't about it. visited were seen them before was also great,

Thanks Again
Thomas J. Tiede

Dear Sirs,

Please see my donation for your good works, and in honor of my late father, China-Marine: Mr. Salvatore Galliechio, whom I had hoped would take one of your trips - but was unable to do so.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Galliechio

ACCESS TO HFR MISSION & EVENT PHOTOS



Rochester Honor Flight Photo Webpage

To view Mission photos and photos from HFR events, navigate to the HFR homepage and click on the camera icon.

From there, you can view and download photos.

Sign up for our Newsletter

If you are not on the HFR Newsletter distribution list and would like to be, please send an email to: HFRnewsletter@gmail.com and let us know your email address. We will put you on our mailing list to receive our newsletter. You

can also find the newsletter on the Rochester Honor Flight News page <https://honorflightrochester.org/news/>.

Honor Flight Facebook Page

Please also join us on Facebook at:

<https://www.facebook.com/HonorFlightRochester>. You can view current posts on the HFR Facebook page.

REAL ID UPDATE

The Secretary of Homeland Security announced that the federal government is expected to begin enforcing the Real ID requirements on May 7, 2025. As the deadline approaches, below are helpful tips for New York residents to note:

- New Yorkers with a valid enhanced driver's license do not need to obtain a Real ID to fly domestically or enter federal buildings or military bases.
- Real IDs must be obtained via in person appointments at a DMV location. Monroe County DMV locations include the below:
 - Greece - 152 Greece Ridge Center inside The Mall at Greece Ridge
 - Henrietta - 1225 Jefferson Road.
 - Rochester - 200 E. Main St. (downtown)
- You must bring (a) proof of identity (such as a driver's license), (b) proof of Social Security (Social Security card) and (c) proof of date of birth to the DMV to obtain a Real ID compliant document. Two different types of documentation proving New York state residence are also required (such as a utility bill).



HONOR FLIGHT ROCHESTER FUNCTIONAL AREA DIRECTORY

The FAM Directory can also be found on our website under the Leadership heading at HonorFlightRochester.org.

Board Of Directors

Peter Glennon: Chairman, Co-Founder & Legal Counsel
Rich Stewart: President & CEO
Frank Vavrck: Treasurer

Functional Area Management

Accounts Payables: Marianne Peckham
Donations/Mail Coordinator: Tammy Roberts
Events Coordinator: Mary Gavigan
Mission Operations Director: Eric Young **
Mission Staffing Director: Bruce Philpott
Purchasing Coordinator: Morrey Goldman
Registrar: Mary Ellen Brooks
Safety Coordinator: Amy Dickason
Secretary: Dave Timmons**
Travel Planner: Tracy Williams
Treasurer: Frank Vavrck **
President & CEO: Rich Stewart **
Volunteer Resource Committee Coordinator: Randy Prader

Functional Areas (Alphabetical by Title)

Accounts Payables: Marianne Peckham
Advance Team/Mission Supplies and Lunch: Amy Quartieri
Backpacks: Jean Kelly
Chaplain: Reverend George McKnight
Data Systems Support: George O'Gara
Departures: Elmer Brown, Lisa Larkins, Nicole Brown
Donations/Mail Coordinator: Tammy Roberts
Events Coordinator: Mary Gavigan
Facebook Administrator: Heather Henry
Flags of Our Heroes: Rich Stewart
IT Database & System Coordinator: Karen Zilora
Living History: Cindy Rickett
Mission Operations Director: Eric Young **
Mission Staffing Director: Bruce Philpott
Mission Safety Equipment: Steve Reiter
Newsletter Editor: Alicia Stoklosa
Newsletter Distribution: Lee Begy
Newsletter Graphic Design: Jill Yanus
Newsletter Veteran Salute Writer: Chuck DeRoller
Name Tag Coordinator: Amy Lissov
Photography Coordinator: Frances McCabe
Photo Mission Books: Chris Reddy
President & CEO: Rich Stewart **
Purchasing Coordinator: Morrey Goldman

Quartermaster Merchandise: Sally Mustaca
Registrar: Mary Ellen Brooks
Safety Coordinator: Amy Dickason
School Liaison/Mail Call: Toni Stevens-Oliver
School Mail Call Pickup Driver: Morrey Goldman
Secretary: Dave Timmons **
Speakers Bureau Coordinator: Steve Wendell
Survey Monkey: Colleen Shallenberger
Travel Planner: Tracy Williams
Treasurer: Frank Vavrck **
Volunteer Resource Committee Coordinator: Randy Prader
Volunteer Resources Committee/Vol G Mail Account: Elmer Brown, Randy Prader, Marie Wraight
VRC Committee Support: Elmer Brown
Volunteer Events Leader: Jean Kelly, Mary Beauchamp
Volunteer Orientation: Karen Zilora, Kevin Prinzing
Veteran Mailings: Donna Prader, Steve Wendell, Randy Prader
Veteran Visits Book Program: Oksana Robinson
Veteran Visits/Book Delivery Members: Steve Mumby, Tom Lee
Veteran Volunteer Liaison, Morrey Goldman
Veteran Calling Coordinator, Tracey Reiter
Veteran Safety Advisory Council: Amy Dickason, Laura Johnson, Carole Ann Lee
Website Assistant: Cathy Kester
Welcome Home Community Celebration Liaison: Cindy Baker
Welcome Home Coordinator: Jen Finewood
Welcome Home Coordinator Asst: Karen Darrow
Welcome Home Specialists: Lani Post, Mary Milani-Newby, Kim Shelley
Welcome Home Veteran Not Flying Coordinator: Mary Beauchamp
Welcome Home Celebration Support for Dignitaries: Marsha Lempert
Welcome Home Celebration Support Assistants: Lee Begy, Heather Henry, Laura Habza, Tom McCarthy, Janice Perri
Welcome Home Merchandise: Sally Mustaca, Marianne Peckham
Wheelchairs: John Zink

*** Denotes Officer*

AUXILIARY SUPPORT ORGANIZATION

HF Dolls: Amy Mooney

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear Volunteers:

Bob Persichitti's Honor Flight was Mission 29 in June 2013. He was accompanied by fifty-three local heroes from WWII and the Korean War.

Sadly, 102-year-old Bob passed away recently. He was in Europe and traveling to Normandy for the June 6th ceremonies commemorating 80 years since D-Day. Bob became a national news story carried by more than a dozen media giants including: The New York Times, People, CNN, NBC, The Washington Post, Fox News, USA Today, AP, Washington Examiner, CBC+NPR (Canada), WXXI and the Democrat and Chronicle. In addition, the White House contacted Honor Flight Rochester to learn more.

Bob was a WWII Navy radioman proficient in Morse code on the U.S.S. Eldorado. This was the command ship at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. It had advanced communications equipment and was the floating command post for amphibious operations. Years later Bob attended reunions where stories were told and retold amongst his shipmates and new acquaintances made. For instance, at one of the reunions, Bob met Joe Rosenthal of the Associated Press who took the famous American flag-raising photo on Mount Surbachi. Photographer Rosenthal had been on the ship with Bob.

Funeral arrangements were in East Rochester at Harloff Funeral Home and St. Jerome's Church.

Bob will be missed.

Sincerely,

Rich Stewart
President & CEO
Honor Flight Rochester

