



VETERAN MEMORIAL SPOTLIGHT: David Hanning

Written by Karen Zilora



David Hanning's family lived in a log cabin near Moody's Pond outside Saranac Lake, New York, when he was born. He was drafted into the Army upon graduation from high school in 1945. During basic training, which was quite severe (e.g., they had to dig foxholes while a tank came down the line firing live ammo), he saw a notice asking for volunteers to apply to become interpreters. This was appealing to David since he had lived in Montreal for a time during his childhood, so he applied and was sent to Yale University to begin learning Japanese. It was a 12 hours per day, six days per week total immersion program.

After four months of training, he was sent to Japan (where the war had just ended) to act as a translator between the American occupation force and Japanese civilians. He was first attached to an engineering battalion with the 24th Infantry Division on Honshu whose objective was to destroy Japanese fortifications and armaments. About 90% of the workers were Japanese and David says relationships were very tense. Later, he was sent to the island of Kyushu where his job was primarily as a peacekeeper. David was housed in a former armory which had avoided bombing because its roughly 30 buildings

were all linked together and had rooftop gardens, making it look like farmland from the air. They tried to send some machinery from the armory to South Korea as war reparations but the Soviet Union confiscated it for North Korea.

By the time David was sent back to the U.S. in January 1946, he was a staff sergeant. They landed at Ft. Lawson and he boarded a train back to Ft. Dix for his discharge. He was encouraged to join the reserves to preserve his rank, and he retired after 32 years in the Army as Lt. Colonel of the 98th Infantry Division in Rochester (now the 98th Training Division based at Ft. Benning).

After his regular Army discharge, David attended Paul Smith's College for two years and worked summers for the NY State Conservation Department (now DEC) as a conservationist where he helped fight forest fires, etc. He later attended St. Lawrence University and graduated in 1951 with a degree in Chinese History. David was on the ski team at both colleges—as he puts it, he “loved and lived for skiing”. He also served on the Ski Patrol at local ski areas for many decades.

Upon graduation, David applied to Eastman Kodak which was looking to hire engineers. While he was not an engineer, his experience before being drafted led them to give him an engineering slot. He moved to Rochester and later retired from Kodak as a unit director.

David traveled to DC with HFR on M21 in April of 2012. His son Stephen was his guardian. David particularly enjoyed seeing the architecture of the buildings in DC as his father was an architect. He also enjoyed traveling to New Orleans to see the WWII Museum with Gary Sinise's Soaring Valor Foundation.



David passed in July. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and friends.

Mission 91



Mission 92



Mission 93



View Event Photos

View all of our mission and event photos! Go to <https://honorflightrochester.org/missions-2/> and click on the "View Mission Photos" button to see more!

YCS Honors our Veterans

York students presented a patriotic tribute to our community veterans, led by our area Boy Scouts.

About 80 veterans and their families attended the program that started with breakfast and conversation, followed by a school-wide program that featured several patriotic musical pieces performed by the Middle/High School Band and Chorus, and the Elementary School Chorus.

We welcomed local, county, and state representatives Senator Pamela Helming, NY 54th District, Assemblywoman Andrea Bailey, NY 133rd District, and York Town Supervisor Jerry Deming.

Representatives from Honor Flight Rochester attended to thank Fifth-Grade student Iva Christiano for her donation of \$2,838, the proceeds of selling one of her livestock at the 4H auction at the Hemlock Fair in July 2025.

"We fly veterans to Washington DC to see the memorial built in their honor. Everything we do is funded by private donations and fundraisers. We couldn't do what we do without donations like Iva's. It was an honor to be included in your Veterans Day ceremony this year" said Steve Wendell, from Honor Flight Rochester.

To conclude the program, the veterans lined both sides of the gymnasium as students and staff members thanked the veterans for their service. Afterward, it was lunch for the veterans and some of them stayed for the afternoon to read in elementary school classrooms.

York Central School is proud to host the veterans, and we look forward to continuing this tradition in the future. This program is made possible by Mrs. Sandy Streb and many of our wonderful staff. Thank you all.



Hilton Speaking Engagement



Morrey Goldman speaking to students at Hilton.

Mail Bag

Hi Kim,

As a Vietnam veteran, I had the opportunity to participate in Honor Flight Mission 92 on the weekend of Oct. 4, 2025. I am writing to thank all of the Honor Flight Crew, Guardians, and other volunteers and staff. Everyone made every effort to ensure that the weekend visit to memorials in Washington D.C. was nothing short of amazing. I can assure you that every veteran on the flight felt honored and appreciated the entire weekend. I especially extend my special thanks and recognition to Mandy, a volunteer who went well above and beyond to provide care and assistance to ensure that my Guardian (son Brian) and I were taken care of.

Please share my thanks with all of the Honor Flight volunteers and staff.

With appreciation,

John

We Need You

to answer emails and respond to surveys!

Our missions and events rely on volunteers like you! We certainly couldn't pull off a Welcome Home celebration or fundraising event without our tremendous team.



That's why we can't stress enough that responding to emails and surveys asking for participation is so important. Even if you can't help out, please take a moment to respond. No. Maybe the next time we have a Welcome Home, Send Off, or any fun event, you'll see our request and may just be able to join us!

HFR, Grand Marshal for Monroe County's Veterans Day Parade



VETERANS VOICES

A ride on Mission 92

by: Adam Chodak

Earlier this year, Adam Chodak and photojournalist Emalee Burkhard were invited to travel on Honor Flight Rochester Mission 92. This half-hour special, posted on Veterans Day, documents their trip to Washington, D.C. with the veterans and crew.

Watch it here: <https://www.rochesterfirst.com/news/veterans-voices/veterans-voices-a-ride-on-mission-92/>



President's Note



Kim Gould, President

Dear Volunteers,

As the leaves change and we welcome the winter season, we are closing the book on an extraordinary fall here at Honor Flight Rochester (HFR). We successfully completed three missions—Missions 91, 92, and 93—transporting our area's heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit the memorials built in their honor.

This season, the magic of Honor Flight was on full display. Watching our WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam War veterans experience the sheer gratitude of the American people, receive their long-overdue "Welcome Home," and shared stories with their fellow travelers is the reason we do what we do.

For those who witness it firsthand—from the Guardians who dedicate their weekend to a single veteran, to the Honor Flight Volunteers who staff the early morning send off, to the crew who fly our veterans safely, and finally to the volunteers whose dedication makes the Welcome Home so memorable—thank you.

The thunderous applause, the flags waving, and bands playing and the heartfelt embraces at the Greater Rochester International Airport (ROC)

were the perfect capstone to these missions. It's a powerful, tangible reminder to our veterans that their sacrifices are neither forgotten nor diminished by the passage of time. To everyone who lined the processions route: Thank you. Your presence is the truest gift we give our heroes.

A huge thank you to Adam Chodak and Emalee Burkhard of Channel 8 for joining us on Mission 92! Adam's special tribute program about M92, which aired on Veterans Day, was a heartfelt and powerful look at the flight.

Honor Flight Rochester from the very start has been all about community.

These three missions, spaced just weeks apart, would simply not be possible without the massive, coordinated effort of our HFR family.

To our Volunteers: Thank you for coordinating logistics, preparing, and dedicating countless hours of service to make every mission successful. My sincere gratitude.

To our Donors: Your generosity continues to be the fuel for our missions. You ensure that every aspect of this trip—from the very start to our Welcome Home—is provided at no cost to the veteran.

To our Guardians: You are the essential link to each mission, providing care, companionship, and support every step of the way.

As we look toward planning for 2026, we carry the pride and success of Missions 91, 92, and 93 with us. The work is continuous, and the list of deserving veterans waiting for their flight grows shorter with every successful mission.

While our planes may be temporarily grounded for the winter, our planning and fundraising never stop. We encourage you to get involved today:

- **Volunteer:** Visit our website to apply as a general volunteer or a future Mission Guardian.
- **Donate:** Every contribution helps us book the next flight.
- **Spread the Word:** Know a veteran who hasn't flown yet? Encourage them to submit their application!

Thank you for being the heart and soul of Honor Flight Rochester. We look forward to seeing you at our next event and to the launch of an even more impactful 2026. The next mission starts now.

Sincerely,

Kim Gould
President & CEO