



## Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

For Immediate Release  
May 5, 2009

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# 85 Kentuckiana WWII Veterans Take Flight to Memorial

### *Honor Flight's Second Year Doubles Flight Size*

(LOUISVILLE, KY May 5, 2009) Kentucky's World War II veterans are a year older, but now they have a better chance of finally getting to visit the Washington D.C. World War II Memorial built in their honor. On May 16, Armed Forces Day, Honor Flight Bluegrass will resume its mission of making sure that Kentucky's surviving World War II veterans will not miss seeing the national tribute to their service.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there are an estimated 36,569 World War II veterans living in Kentucky.

As the national Honor Flight organization notes, "very few of these senior veterans have the logistical knowledge or physical strength to complete an unescorted conventional trip to Washington, D.C. It is our mission to honor as many of these remaining selfless 'ordinary people who saved the world' as we can by providing them an organized and expense-paid, escorted day trip to visit their memorial."

Eighty-five Kentuckiana WWII veterans will travel to Washington, D.C. to visit the World War II Memorial and other sights. Their flight, ground transportation and meals on the same-day trip are at no cost to veterans. Two-dozen guardian/companions pay their own way. This mission of

respect and admiration is possible thanks to the generosity of the Kentucky Veterans Program Trust Fund and donations from corporations, veteran organizations and individuals.

“Donations from WWII veterans are not accepted,” said Brian Duffy, director of the Bluegrass Chapter of Honor Flight. “WWII veterans have given enough; this is our gift to them. Most of these humble and stoic veterans are now in their mid-to-late 80’s, and this trip presents their only realistic chance of seeing the WWII Memorial.”

Last year, Honor Flight Bluegrass took 204 Kentucky World War II veterans to the Memorial on five flights. This year, Duffy hopes to double that number to 400 with larger flights.

Veterans scheduled for the May 16<sup>th</sup> flight served in many historical WWII sites including Iwo Jima, Pearl Harbor, Okinawa, Battle of Bulge, China-Burma-India, Europe and the Pacific theater of operations. During their day in Washington, D.C., the 85 veterans and 25 volunteer guardians will visit the WWII Memorial, Korean War Memorial and the Iwo Jima Monument. The veterans will be treated to a group dinner in the Baltimore area before returning on an evening Southwest flight back to Louisville.

Additional information on the Honor Flight Bluegrass Chapter can be found at: [www.honorflightbluegrass.org](http://www.honorflightbluegrass.org) or by calling 502-550-3093.

An additional trip is scheduled for Saturday, June 6, 2009 – the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day. This trip will have several veterans who took part in the D-Day landings. Mr. Wayne Hettinger, Producer of *Thunder over Louisville*, will join us on this D-Day flight.

Limited opportunities for traveling members of the press to accompany these memorable trips are available.

For more information, call or email Brian Duffy at 502-550-3093, [honorflight@insightbb.com](mailto:honorflight@insightbb.com).