



Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

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Lisa Aug (502) 564-9203
Lisa.Aug@ky.gov
www.veterans.ky.gov

Six KY D-Day Veterans on Anniversary Honor Flight

65 years later, they are visiting WWII Memorial

(LOUISVILLE, KY June 3, 2009) They were there, on one of the most agonizing, storied and history-changing days of the century. Six Kentuckiana veterans of the June 6, 1944 landing of American forces on Normandy beaches will commemorate the day at the national World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Honor Flight of the Bluegrass will have, among its 80 Kentucky World War II veterans, six who landed on Omaha and Utah beaches in Normandy:

- Richard Straub, Louisville, was a teletype operator, and has still the original tape and copy of the "end of war" message sent out by Eisenhower.
- Raymond Bumann, Louisville, will also be with us, he was a young motor machinist in the Navy on D-Day, and brought many troops on-shore on June 6th in the LCVT that he was operating onboard.
- Larry Mayfield, New Albany, was 23 when he landed on Utah Beach as an Army Engineer to spearhead a site for building an airport to support operations.
- Walter Brumfield Sr., Nicholasville, will be joined by his son on this Honor Flight; 65 years earlier, he landed on Normandy as a young Army, Private,

- Al Tomaassetti, Louisville, was an Army PFC who also made the D-Day landing 65 years ago.
- Cleo Henry, Louisville, was an Army Staff Sgt and squad leader on D-Day. He is not well but hopes to make the trip.

Accompanying the veterans as one of 25 volunteer Guardians will be Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs Commissioner Ken Lucas. Mr. Wayne Hettinger, Producer of *Thunder over Louisville*, will also join the D-Day flight.

“I can’t imagine a better place to commemorate this D-Day anniversary, or better company to share the day with, than the World War II Memorial among these Kentucky heroes,” Lucas said.

On May 16, Armed Forces Day, Honor Flight Bluegrass resumed 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 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 (though not from WWII veterans themselves.)

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.

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

For more information, call or email Brian Duffy at 502-550-3093, honorflight@insightbb.com.