



Land of Lincoln Honor Flight Announces Return For This Summer

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SPRINGFIELD, Ill. - After a 30-month delay due to COVID restrictions, Land of Lincoln Honor Flight (LLHF) is announcing the first 2022 flight on Tuesday, June 14, 2022. Ninety-two (92) Veterans will be on board this LLHF Mission #60 from Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport to Washington, DC - 1 World War II, 26 Korean War and 65 Vietnam War Era Veterans - all ready to experience their national memorials with their comrades. These veterans represent all branches of military service: 18 Air Force, 41 Army, 11 Marine and 22 Navy veterans.

Ninety-two (92) Veterans and eighty-six (86) Guardians will arrive at the airport Tuesday morning at 4:15 AM, having traveled from the 62 central and southern Illinois cities and communities of Altamont, Annapolis, Arcola, Arthur, Atwood, Belleville, Camargo, Champaign, Charleston, Clinton, Coffeen, Dalton City, Danville, Decatur, Dietrich, Downs, Effingham, Filmore, Forsyth, Havana, Hettic, Highland, Hillsboro, Jacksonville, Kincaid, Lake City, Lincoln, Mechanicsburg, Morris, Mt. Zion, Neoga, New Berlin, Newton, Nokomis, Normal, Oakland, Oakley, Oreana, Pana, Pittsfield, Pontiac, Raymond, Robinson, Rockbridge, Sawyerville, Sherman, Shipman, Smithton, Springfield, Sullivan, Sycamore, Taylorville, Teutopolis, Urbana, Vandalia, Villa Grove, Virden, Watseka, Waverly, West York, Windsor, Wood River and Sebring, Florida.

Joan Bortolon, LLHF President, states: *“This June 14th flight represents the return to our core mission of showing our most senior Veterans gratitude and appreciation for their service in protecting our freedom. Throughout the 30-month pandemic-induced suspension of flights, the 600-plus Veterans on our wait list have demonstrated a great deal of patience. We are excited that we can now safely honor them with an amazing day in Washington, DC visiting their memorials. This day of honor is provided at absolutely no cost to our Veterans. They have paid enough; it is our turn to pay them back.”*

The Veterans travel to Ronald Reagan National Airport in via a chartered Sun Country 737. Upon arrival, they will board luxury motorcoaches and tour the World War II, Korean and Vietnam War memorials, as well as Arlington National Cemetery Tomb of the Unknowns. Other stops include the Lincoln Memorial, the National Air & Space Museum (Chantilly, Virginia), the US Marine Corps Memorial, and the US Air Force Memorial.

The return to newly-renovated Springfield airport is planned at 9:30 PM and the general public, friends and family, and LLHF alumni veterans are encouraged to “pack the ‘port” to welcome home these heroes. Bortolon states: *“For many of our Veterans, the airport Welcome Home is the only one they will receive. It is a very memorable and healing part of the Honor Flight experience. We appreciate every member of the general public who makes the effort to participate.”* Greeters are encouraged to come early and bring balloons, posters, etc. to show appreciation and support to these Veterans who sacrificed so much for our country.

Land of Lincoln Honor Flight is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that receives no government funding. It is only able to honor Veterans due to the generous donations, sponsorships, fundraising events, merchandise sales and supporting efforts of the many local businesses, individuals and organizations within our service area. Land of Lincoln Honor Flight is operated by volunteers; it has no paid staff, no office and no utilities costs. Their on-going administrative cost is approximately 1% so virtually every dollar raised supports flight costs for our Veterans.

Veteran applications continue to be accepted with flight priority given in the following order: World War II (enlisted by 12/31/1946), then Korean War Era (01/01/1947 to 12/31/1957), followed by the Vietnam War Era (01/01/1958 to 05/07/1975). Any certified terminally ill Veteran should contact LLHF directly. Veteran and Guardian Applications may be obtained at www.LandofLincolnHonorFlight.org by clicking on Applications tab.

Since the inception in 2009, Land of Lincoln Honor Flight has been privileged to serve 4,600 veterans on 59 flights. Additional 2022 flights are planned for July 19, August 30, September 27 and November 1.

Follow LLHF on Facebook to stay current on upcoming events and view our travels on flight day.