



Land of Lincoln Honor Flight Mission #63 Will Take Off September 27

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SPRINGFIELD - Ninety-four Central Illinois Veterans are ready to experience a day of appreciation for their service on Land of Lincoln Honor Flight's Mission #63; Tuesday, September 27, 2022. Two Korean-era Veterans and ninety-two Vietnam-era veterans will be on board this free flight from Springfield Abraham Lincoln Capitol Airport to Washington, DC - - all ready to experience their national memorials with their comrades.

These Veterans and their eighty-four (84) Guardians (who cover the cost of their own expenses) will arrive at the airport Tuesday morning at 4:15 AM, having traveled from the 55 Illinois cities and communities of Bethany, Bloomington, Blue Mound, Brighton, Carlinville, Champaign, Charleston, Chatham, Cowden, Danville, Decatur, Delavan, Donnellson, Effingham, Farmer City, Farmersville, Findlay, Franklin, Grafton, Granite City, Highland, Jacksonville, Lebanon, Lincoln, Litchfield, Lovington, Mahomet, Manito, Mansfield, Mascoutah, Mason City, Mattoon, Moweaqua, Newton, Normal, Ohlman, Ottawa, Pana, Pleasant Plains, Ramsey, Rantoul, Riverton, Rochester, Rockbridge, Savoy, Sherman, Springfield, St Joseph, Sullivan, Tallula, Teutopolis, Urbana, Vandalia, Virden and Warrensburg.

Joan Bortolon, LLHF President, states: "While this is Land of Lincoln Honor Flight's Mission #63, this is the first and only flight for these ninety-four veterans. Because of the 30-month COVID delay and the length of our waiting list, most of these veterans have been waiting for their day of honor for four years. Their patience is appreciated and we are ready to show them the respect and gratitude for their service that they earned and deserve."

Our passengers will travel to Washington DC on a chartered Sun Country 737 aircraft and by luxury motorcoaches on the ground upon arrival. The day includes visits to the World War II, Korean and Vietnam War memorials, as well as Arlington National

Cemetery Tomb of the Unknowns, the Lincoln Memorial, the National Air & Space Museum in Chantilly, Virginia, the US Marine Corps Memorial, and the US Air Force Memorial. This day of honor is provided at absolutely no cost to our Veterans.

These heroes return to newly-renovated Springfield airport at 9:30 PM on Tuesday. The general public, friends and family, and LLHF alumni veterans are encouraged to pack the airport to welcome home these heroes. Bortolon states: "The Welcome Home crowd at the Springfield Airport ensures that these Veterans experience the welcome home they did not receive when they returned from service. Our Veterans have told us that the welcome home in Springfield is one of the most rewarding parts of the experience." Greeters are encouraged to arrive early and show appreciation for and support of these Veterans who sacrificed so much for our country. Parking assistance and a parking lot shuttle bus will be available for those attending this event.

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 all volunteers; it has no paid staff, no office and no utilities costs. Its on-going administrative cost is approximately 1% so virtually every dollar raised supports flight costs for our Veterans.

Land of Lincoln Honor Flight still has a waiting list of over 500 veterans waiting for a future flight. However, LLHF is still encouraging new applications. Veterans will be offered flights by date of application within each service era: 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 4,923 Veterans on 62 flights. The final 2022 flight is scheduled for November 1.