

2016 Annual Report



Mission Statement

Honor Flight DFW is dedicated to honoring our country's veterans for the sacrifices they have made to keep our nation safe by providing them with an all expense paid overnight trip to visit the memorials in Washington DC, those memorials which symbolize the spirit, sacrifice, and commitment of these American heroes.

Highlights of 2016

- ★ To date HFDFW has traveled 1,360 veterans to DC.
- ★ In 2016, Honor Flight DFW safely traveled a total of 160 veterans: 51 WWII, 79 Korean veterans, 160 guardians and 70 medical/trip leaders to Washington DC.
- ★ The average age of the WWII veterans traveling with HFDFW in 2016 was 93 years old. The oldest veteran traveling with HFDFW was 99 years old. The average age of the Korean veterans was 86 years old.
- ★ Fifty-four of the veterans, in 2016, reside outside of the DFW area. Three were out of state (Missouri, Oklahoma, and Arkansas); they did not have a hub to travel with or the nearest hub did not have a seat available. The logistics of traveling veterans outside of the DFW area is more complex and requires additional attention of the support staff.
- ★ **The veterans safety is the single overriding priority for HFDFW.** Nothing takes greater precedence than their safe transport to Washington DC. As each year passes the safe travel of the veterans becomes more challenging. Flying the old warriors is no easy feat

given their the myriad of physical, functional, and cognitive issues. HFDFW was prepared for each individual challenge and safely returned all of the veterans to DFW. We are thankful for the for the continued support of the medical professionals who readily volunteer to offer their expertise to the veterans.

Three out of the four flights this year, encountered rain. There are many challenges of traveling older veterans in the rain i.e. increased chance of falls, inability to control body temperature, damp clothing and shoes, traffic congestion and decreased visibility). Each challenge was met head-on by the implementation of wet weather protocols, rain gear, and increased vigilance of the support staff and guardians.

Neither rain, heat, and/or cold, could alter the mood of the Honor Flights. Each bump in the road was taken stride and adjustments were made to make sure the veterans needs and desires were always first and foremost in mind.

To enhance the safety of the veterans HFDFW:

- Each veteran received a call/s from medical team prior to travel to assess needs and ability to of travel overnight. Follow-up calls are made to each veteran who have changes in their medical/physical/cognitive status. Additionally, calls were made to veterans who need oxygen, CPAP, and/or BiPAP therapy.
- Eight Guardian Training programs and four make-up sessions, were held for all guardians traveling with HFDFW.
- Four Pre-Flight Briefings for veterans, guardians, medical, and leadership. One hundred percent of veterans attended the Pre-Flight Briefing.

- Due to the age of the veterans, additional support staff was added to assist veterans and to ensure all the veterans needs were met.
 - Each veteran and guardian receive a travel name pouch that contains vital information concerning emergency contact names/ numbers and medical information that is essential in the case of an emergency.
 - Prior to each trip, an assessment is made of the weather (heat/ rain/cold) and appropriate measures/equipment are brought with the group. Rain gear (ponchos, tarps, towels, umbrellas) were purchased to protect the veterans from the rain and assure the stair, lifts, and walkways were dry. Fleece jackets and emergency blankets were purchased for the November flight.
 - Team Leader meetings are held prior to each trip
 - Each member of the Leadership/Medical teams carries an assignment duties document to assure all safety aspects of the flight are covered.
- ★ **Four HFDFW reunions** were held at the Frontiers of Flight Museum (donated space). The reunions are important component of the Honor Flight Mission (80-90% of the veterans attend the reunions) as they provide the veterans one more opportunity to reconnect with veterans they met on their trip and to celebrate their journey to DC with their families, guardians, and volunteers.

Gift bags containing picture book and video of their trip is provided to each veteran.

We are grateful for the efforts of volunteers and support team who provide the hospitality for the veterans and their families.

★ **The HFDFW Ground Mission** was implemented to bring Honor Flight DFW to veterans who are physically unable to travel to DC. The program provides an opportunity for the veterans to experience the spirit of the Honor Flight Mission and to see and hear about the memorials built in their honor. The program has been a huge success and is expected to grow as word spreads about the program.

★ **Financial Stability**

- HFDFW remains financially sound thanks to the generous donations from the community.
- The Annual HFDFW Charity Golf Classic is HFDFW's largest fund raising event. The continued success of the golf classic is the result of a team of volunteers who spend months planning and organizing the event. The HFDFW Charity Golf Classic was scheduled for April but was rained out and rescheduled for June 6, two days after Flight #30. The sun was shining on June 6th, volunteers and WWII veterans met the golfers with enthusiasm and spirit. The tournament was a huge hit with golfers and sponsors.

Plans are underway to host the Sixth Annual Charity Golf Classic on April 10, 2017.

- Thursby Software generously provided funding for a flight.
- The Texas Independent Bankers management team was tasked to select a non-profit organization and to raise funds for that organization. The team met the challenge raising funds for an entire trip.

★ **Honor Flight DFW Volunteers clocked-in 20,000 hours for 2016**

Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.”

~Elizabeth Andrew

The mission of HFDFW could not be accomplished without the efforts of volunteers. Honor Flight DFW saw an unprecedented number of dedicated volunteers offering their time to the veterans. HFDFW's continued support from volunteers provides stability and consistency to the program. Most of the volunteers have been with HFDFW for more than 5 years, they are the foundation and heart of HFDFW.

It is difficult to put a dollar amount on volunteer hours yet according to 2015 figures we can assume that the monetary value of the HFDFW volunteer hours is estimated at **\$502,200** (Texas: \$25.11 per hour). Source: <https://www.independentsector.org/>

★ **The Airmen of Note Concert**, at the Morton Myerson Concert Hall, was a hit with the over 2,000 in attendance. Not only did the concert increase HFDFW visibility in the community it also provided and opportunity for the veterans to, once again, enjoy the music of the Airmen of Note. The joy the music brought to the audience was evident in their faces as they departed the music hall.

HFDFW's relationship with the Airmen of Note has been a true asset to the HFDFW mission, the music brings back memories from long ago and is a highlight of their journey to DC.

- **Trip Logistics Airline:** Southwest provides a substantial cost savings and are very accommodating to the needs of the veterans. In 2016, HFDFW received 50 Green Passes for the veteran. The relationships we have made with Love Field (City of

Dallas, TSA, Southwest, parking and the food vendors) are solid and HFDFW would like to continue to use SW Airlines in 2017.

- **Hotel:** The association with Gateway Crystal City Marriott remains strong and we will continue to use them for our lodging needs in 2017.
- The Embassy Suites in Dallas have increased their room costs and with the increased needs for rooms we will look for alternative lodging for 2017.

★ Letter Appreciation

This heartwarming note is one of the many letters that we receive about a passing of a veteran. The common thread of them all is appreciation for their 36 hours in DC and they want to express their feelings of love for you and the volunteers of HFDFW.

Dear Tudy,

I wanted to let you know of the passing of my uncle, Bobbie W Foreman. He lived a long and wonderful life.

He died on Monday, November 14th from complications of lung cancer. He was 89 years old.

My father died in a military plane crash when I was six years old. My Uncle Wayne (he went by his middle name, which is my middle name also) stepped in and helped my mother with my three brothers and sister. Throughout his life, he was always there for us.

I heard about Honor Flight from two men at my church. I thought it would be great if my Uncle Wayne could go. We got him signed up and he went on the trip in September of 2013.

I was very fortunate to go along as his guardian.

He had a wonderful time and I did too. It is one of the top highlights of my life. I also know it was one of his as well.

He's a very quiet, gentle man and allso, a man of few words. I knew he was proud of his trip because almost every time I saw him, he was wearing his Honor Flight shirt and jacket.

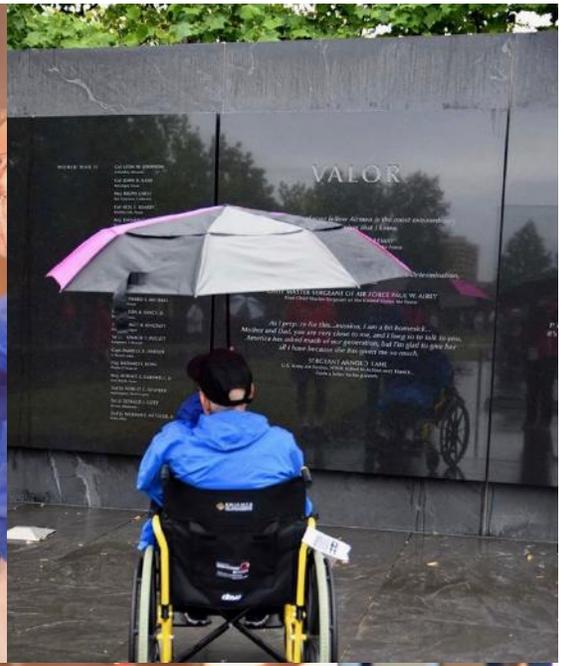
As a matter of fact, his granddaughter, who planned his funeral, called me to ask if it was ok to bury him in his Honor Flight jacket. She was also aware of how important the trip had been for him.

In the email sent out for Veteran's Day, my uncle and his Honor Flight group are in the middle picture on the bottom. Please accept my deepest gratitude for this wonderful act of kindness that you do for our "greatest generation." With your love and compassion for our veterans, you have touched so many lives. The picture I have included is Uncle Wayne and me as we are getting ready to leave from DFW.

Sincerely, David W. Foreman

★ Pictures of Appreciation

Each year HFDFW receives many letters of appreciation from the veterans who have traveled on a recent flight, volunteer/family guardians, and HFDFW Alumni. The pictures below is a representative of the sentiment that is expressed in the letters that are received from the HFDFW family.







Looking Forward in 2017

- ★ Four flights will be taken in 2017. Two in spring, two in fall.
- ★ The spring flights are in the final process of being scheduled and booked. It looks like the spring trips will be on May 6-7 and June 3-4.
- ★ The HFDFW Golf Classic will be held on April 10.
- ★ We are looking forward to seeing growth in the HFDFW Ground Mission outreach program.

In conclusion

It has been my honor to serve alongside the HFDFW BOD in 2016. I am very proud of the dedication that each of you bring to the mission of HFDFW. I thank you on behalf of all of the veterans life's that you have touched with your work for HFDFW. YOU make a difference.

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

Maya Angelou

Respectfully,

Melaine 'Tudy' Giordano MS, RN

President Honor Flight DFW

12-03-16