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**May 31, 2019**

**TO: Never Forgotten Honor Flight**  
**4404 Rib Mountain Dr. #234**  
**Wausau, WI 54401**

**RE: Honor Flight #35**

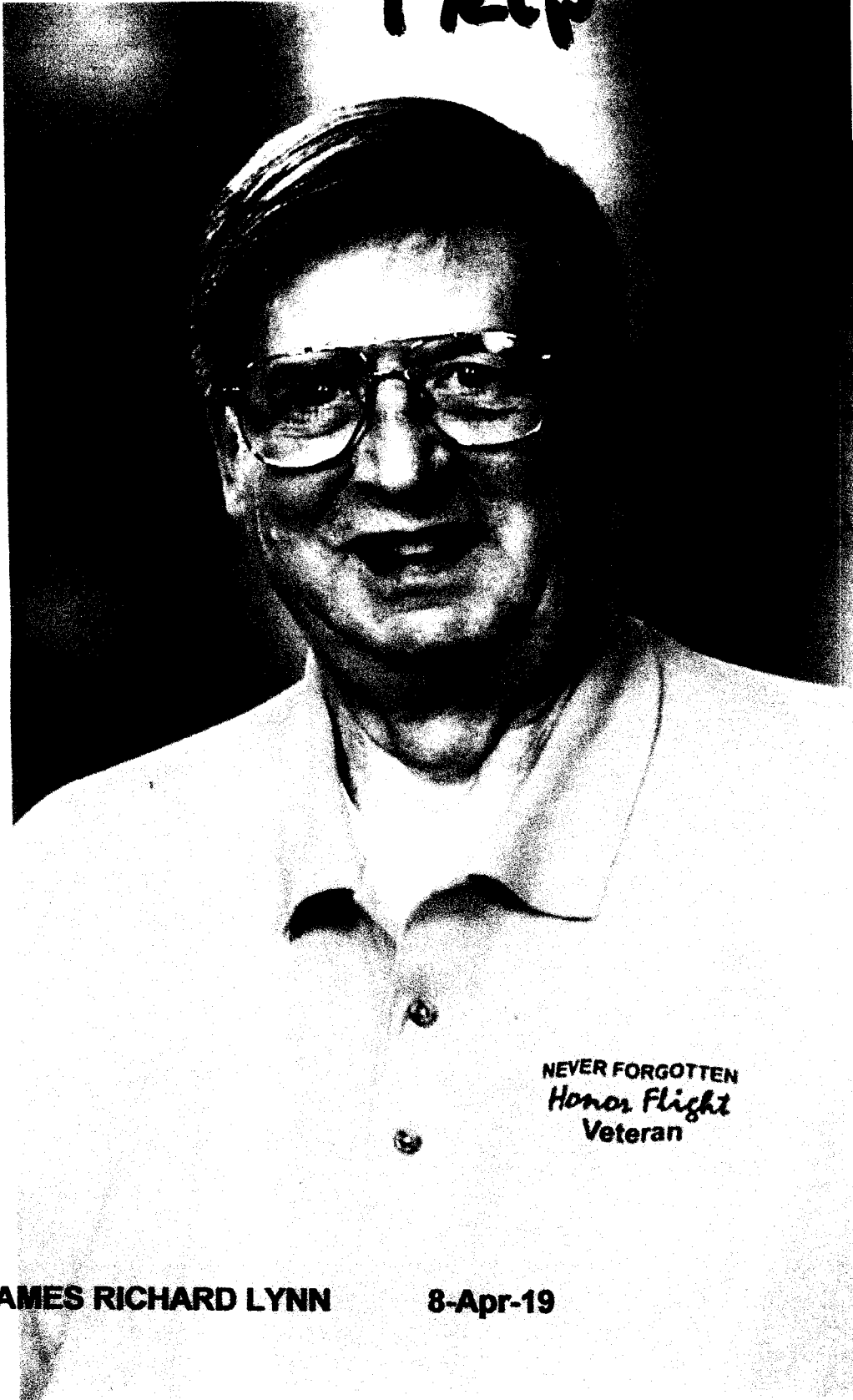
**Dear Mike Thompson,**

**Enclosed on page 9 is the article I wrote concerning my flight.**

**Thank you and all involved for this memorable trip.**

***Jim Lynn***

Thank you for the  
TRIP !!



**JAMES RICHARD LYNN**

**8-Apr-19**

# Never Forgotten Flight was a moving day

BY JAMES R. LYNN

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS-REVIEW

In 1959 when I graduated from Cass Tech High School in Detroit, I had two choices, go work in a factory or join the military. I chose the military and spent the next eight years in the U.S. Air Force.

During my return from Pakistan, I was harassed by a protester shouting "baby killer" while I was waiting for my luggage at Detroit Metro Airport, and again while in a college class I was repeatedly insulted by an English literature professor calling me a "baby killer." This was ironic since as an Air Force surgery tech, I helped deliver babies.

For 35 years, I didn't really feel my service was appreciated until the Desert Storm Parade in Chicago. I've always felt that I was glad for what I did, but hoped to never have to do it again.

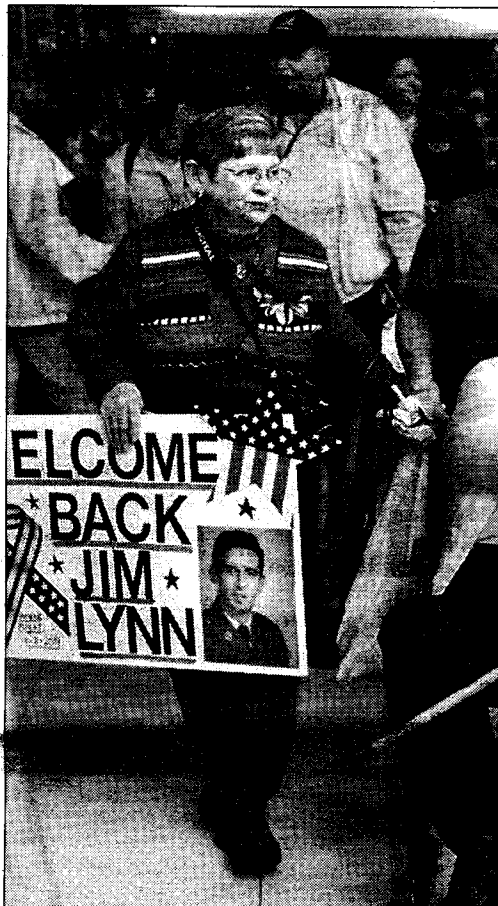
Since I retired and escaped from Chicago, I have lived up north near Eagle River and I have appreciated the annual Veterans Day ceremonies at Northland Pines High School, especially when the third-grade students give carnations to the veterans. It restores my sense of pride in our children and have almost made everything I've gone through worthwhile.

However, my going on the 35th Never Forgotten Honor Flight has topped everything! The Never Forgotten Honor Flights from northern Wisconsin have sent 35 flights with more than 3,250 northern Wisconsin veterans to see their memorials in Washington, D.C.

Of the 132 Honor Flight groups in 42 states that have taken over 200,000 veterans to Washington, D.C., the Never Forgotten group is rated as one of the best. With more than 100 volunteers in Wisconsin and D.C., this group is one of the best managed and organized groups I've seen in a long time. I have nothing but praise for the blue shirt management, the red shirt local volunteers and the appointed green shirt guardians — especially for the way they carefully, delicately and respectfully handled the wheelchair vets on and off the plane and buses.

For my guardian, Mark Turkiewicz, who has worked on 33 of the 34 flights since 2009 as a volunteer, this flight was his first trip and special for him since his father Wayne was on this flight. Also, I was thankful to the management that allowed me some quality time with my brother Roger (who is a retired 32-year U.S. Air Force vet, and lives near D.C.) to join the tour at Reagan National Airport as an honored veteran.

On Sunday afternoon, April 7, we checked in at the Wausau Hilton Garden Inn. The Ghidorzi family, hotel owners, paid



Veteran Jim Lynn of Eagle River recently went to Washington, D.C., and received a big welcome home.

for the rooms.

After a meet-and-greet, receiving our gold shirts and meeting our green shirt guardians (our Honor Flight colors were Packers green and gold), and having our photos taken, we and our guests were treated to a banquet with entertainment from a choir called the Center Stage Singers, and a music group, Trillium from Minocqua.

Also, on the day of the flight, our spouses were treated to breakfast and then a luncheon and tour at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum. Later, our spouses and guests returned to Central Wisconsin Airport for the joyous "Welcome Home" celebration.

## Memorials were special

Before dawn on Monday, April 8, 102 northern Wisconsin veterans and 60 guardians boarded a Sun Country Airline Boeing 737-800. Following a foggy 25-minute delay and a bumpy ride over Lake Michigan, we arrived at Reagan National Airport on time.

Before each visit to the D.C. memorials, our tour guides told us the background and history. At most of the memorials, the flight planners had scheduled special events.

# Honor Flight for Air Force vet



Never Forgotten Honor Flight to Wash-  
—Photo By Dave Junion

At the World War II Memorial, there was a special service for the two vets who died while waiting for this flight. At the Iwo Jima Memorial, there was a really sharp Marine Corps silent precision "Queen" drill team with M-1 rifles and bayonets. After the drill, the really young-looking Marines with medals came over to talk to the veterans.

Most of the day it was bright, sunny, and in the 60s with the cherry blossoms, magnolias and dogwoods in full bloom; however, at the Tomb of the Unknowns, very fittingly there was a light rain during the 5 p.m. service. The flight was followed by a solemn tour through the Arlington National Cemetery grounds with the all-too-common gravestones of the real heroes. Our first stop was the new Air Force Memorial. During the tour while going between the monuments and all the memorials, we had a police and sirens escort taking our large tour buses nonstop through the Washington, D.C., traffic.

So, I would like to applaud the red cap and the man who kept an eye on us and did well-checks on the vets. A special applause will be given to the medic on my bus. When we were reboarding at the Lincoln Memorial, a woman tourist, who was with

her husband and three small children, passed out near our bus. Our medic got off the bus and treated her for heat exhaustion.

### Welcome home!

Our return flight to the Central Wisconsin Airport at Mosinee on Monday night was on time, during which we had a "Mail Call" where each veteran received letters from friends, loved ones, all the state politicians and about a dozen "thank you" letters from northern Wisconsin school children.

After landing there was a spectacular homecoming! The veterans were welcomed home by a band and each vet was announced to over 1,000 cheering, flag- and sign-waving friends and relatives. The celebration included an indoor parade of veterans from the gate to the front door. The cheers, salutes, handshakes, high fives, signs, hugs and kisses from both sides resulted in my tearful pride in these people.

I've never been so honored before.

### Getting involved

The Honor Flight's mission is to "transport America's veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit those memorials dedicated to honor the service and sacrifices of themselves and friends."

The Never Forgotten Honor Flight flies about 100 veterans at a time during April, May, September and October to Washington, D.C. Currently there are 1,040 Korean and Vietnam-era veterans waiting for future flights. Some of the notable local sponsors of the Honor Flights are the Ghidorzi family, Junion Photography, Greenheck Foundation, First Weber, Nicolet Bank, Bull Falls Brewery, Kinziegreen Marketing, Marathon Cheese, Kwik Trip, Hodag Country Fest, American Legion and VFW posts, Northland Pines School District, Lakeland Union High School and various area churches.

The Honor Flight Network is a nonprofit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. A top priority is given to the senior veterans — World War II survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill. To contact, donate, or sign up for an Honor Flight, visit the website [neverforgotten-honorflight.org](http://neverforgotten-honorflight.org).

I wish to thank the Never Forgotten Honor Flight, the Tiny Tap and their patrons who sponsored me, the Eagle River American Legion and VFW posts, and all the other sponsors.

The next flight will be May 5-6. The cost for every veteran and guardian on a flight is about \$500 and I would greatly recommend donating time or dollars to the Never Forgotten Honor Flight program. I hope it will make you feel as good as I do following my flight.