

Dear friend of the Never Forgotten Honor Flight,

I've been writing about our core values these past few months. You can find the entire list on our website at <https://neverforgottenhonorflight.com/about-us/>

The core value we're focusing on this month is *patriotism*, or love of country. It seems to have been in short supply when most of the veterans we're flying these days were serving – the welcome home we're able to give them these days is far better than the one they got when they came home in uniform from overseas in the '60's and '70's.

One of the things that stirs our love of country is music. And that's one reason we feature so much of it during the Never Forgotten Honor Flight experience. Veterans, guardians and guests hear it all through the preflight dinner. The CenterStage Singers start us off with the National Anthem as the colors are posted, and they lead us through the Armed Forces Medley as we honor the branches of service in song. Trillium, a musical group from Minocqua that has also been with us from the start, sings songs of the era that our veterans served in, as well as a stirring "America" medley. We enjoy dinner to the recorded music of the late Mike DeSciscio, who faithfully performed for our veterans until he was no longer physically able. This is the music that stirs our patriotism, and we're grateful to have these talented performers bring it to us.

Music greets us when we arrive at Reagan International Airport in Washington DC. On many of our flights, we've been greeted by a man wearing a bow tie and a straw hat, playing a French horn. By the time we've gotten there, Dave Junion has pranked the TV reporter so many times that when he tells her about the French horn guy, she thinks it's just another setup. Imagine the surprise when she reaches the end of the jetway and finds he's real! And I don't recall if it's an every-flight sort of thing, but I know patriotic music was playing in the concourse as we headed out to the buses on our most recent flight.

Who can forget the playing of Taps at the *Flags of our Heroes* ceremony, when we honor a veteran who didn't live to have an Honor Flight experience of his or her own? There's often a tear as our veterans stand tall and salute the casket flag of the fallen hero as it passes by.

And, as we often say, "*Just when you think your Honor Flight experience is over, it isn't!*" Veterans leave the plane upon our return to CWA, head down the concourse, and begin to hear more music still, thanks to Ted Aarrestad and his band of volunteers. They play stirring music until the last veteran has been greeted by the grateful citizens of northcentral Wisconsin.

One of the parts of the Honor Flight experience that gets me every time comes near the end of the preflight dinner. Trillium sings "Proud to Be an American" by Lee Greenwood, and when they sing the words "*...and I'd proudly stand up next to you and defend her still today...*" the entire dinner crowd rises to its feet. We couldn't keep them down if we tried. That's love of country. That's patriotism showing itself.

We're so grateful for all the performers who bring us this great music that stirs our hearts. They're part of a team of nearly 300 people who are committed to making the Never Forgotten Honor Flight experience "*the Trip of a Lifetime.*" For whatever your part is in that effort, we thank you.

Here's a look at our Scoreboard:

Veterans flown				Waiting list			
WWII	Korea	Vietnam	Total	WWII	Korea	Vietnam	Total
1,045	1,247	2,107	4,399	0	3	699	702

For the heroes,



Ken Moberg  
President

Never Forgotten Honor Flight

