Giving back to heroes...

With flights 34 and 35 on Sept. 18, North Country Honor Flight has taken 521 World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War Veterans to Washington D.C. to visit their national memorials. For the first time, a terminally ill Iraq/Afghanistan veteran was on Flight 34.

We’re a “Regional Hub” of the National Honor Flight Network. North Country Honor Flight (NCHF) was founded in 2013. We depend on fundraising and donations from various groups, organizations, businesses, and individuals allowing us take veterans to D.C. at no cost to them. Donations can be sent to NCHF, PO Box 2644, Plattsburgh, NY 1290l.

Each veteran is accompanied by a Guardian, generally a family member. Upon return, tired from a long day in D.C., veterans affirm: “this is one of the best days of my life”. We encourage veterans to submit applications so they can participate on a future flight.

We extend thanks to law enforcement, motorcyclists, fire departments, who escort veterans from home to the U.S. Oval and lead the parades to and from the Oval and Plattsburgh International Airport. We also thank the hundreds of spectators who attend the send-off ceremonies, line the parade route, and return to greet the veterans home. And, of course, our amazing volunteers make Honor Flight a success.

It is an honor for flight leaders to meet with veterans and document their stories and it is an honor for all involved to give our servicemen and women the trips they all deserve. We hope you enjoy learning more about them in these pages.

Barrie Finnegan
Executive Director

Janet L. Duprey
Director of Operations
NEW YORK STATE LABORERS' LOCAL 1822

SALUTES OUR VETERANS & THANKS THE BRAVE MEN & WOMEN WHO CONTINUE TO SERVE OUR COUNTRY
SCENES FROM
THE SEND-OFF

Thank you to all the amazing men and women who have so bravely served our country.

A special thank you to these incredible veterans who continue to serve our communities with their passion, stories and pride.
Veterans aboard Flight 32 — Aug. 28

- Karl Baggs
  Navy | 1964-1968 | Vietnam
- Romeo Barriere
  Army National Guard
  1967-1993 | Vietnam
- Donald Carr
  Army | 1955-1963 | Vietnam
- Gordon ‘Andy’ Traver
  Veteran Guardian for
  Donald Carr
  Army | 1968-1971 | Vietnam
- Donald Cassidy
  Air Force | 1947-1967 | Cold War
- Carl Duford
  Air Force | 1962-1986 | Vietnam
- Stefan Elmore
- Paul Gardner
  Army | 1967-1970 | Vietnam
- Arlene Gosnell
  Air Force | 1952-1956 | Korea
- Edward Hall
  Army | 1953-1956 | Korean
- Homer LaMare
  Army | 1950-1953 | Korea
- David Premo
  Navy | 1952-1966 | Korea
- Floyd Rock
  Army | 1965-1967 | Vietnam
- James Verseput
  Air Force | 1971-1975 | Vietnam
- William Wolford
  Air Force | 1953-1973 | Korean
- Robert Woods
  Army | 1950-1952 | Korean

Veterans aboard Flight 33 — Aug. 28

- Albert Barcomb
  Army | 1961-1964 | Vietnam
- Alan Beaubriand
  Marines | 1966-1970 | Vietnam
- Thomas Davison
  Marines | 1970-1972 | Vietnam
- Richard Flora
  Army | 1966-1969 | Vietnam
- Earl Garrant
  Navy | 1956-1959 | Vietnam
- Oliver Hickok
  Marines | 1956-1975 | Vietnam
- James Knapp
  Navy | 1958-1960 | Vietnam
- Harry Landry
  Army | 1967-1969 | Vietnam
- Gerald LaValley
  Army | 1961-1963 | Vietnam
- Ronald Miller
  Army | 1967-1970 | Vietnam
- James Page
  Air Force | 1962-1966 | Vietnam
- Eugene Sears
  Air Force | 1955-1956 | Vietnam
- Dale Stephens
  Air Force | 1968-1989 | Vietnam Era
- Michal Zmijewski
# Veterans aboard Flight 34 — Sept. 18

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**VETERAN BIOGRAPHIES**

For every North Country Honor Flight send-off ceremony, former New York State Assemblywoman Janet Duprey interviews and writes short biographies of each of the veterans traveling on the flight. The write-ups are nostalgic, heartfelt and often with a touch of humor.

**Flight 32**

**Karl Baggs**  
**Navy | 1964-1968 | Vietnam**  
A mechanic on board ships, Karl started planes while they were still chained to the ship; then someone would unchain the plane for takeoff. Karl started the plane; someone unchained it before the flight crew arrived. The plane taxied with Karl at the wheel, so he slammed on the brakes. The flight boss wasn’t happy, but Karl was happy when the flight crew took over!

**Romeo Barriere**  
**Army National Guard | 1967-1993 | Vietnam**  
Basic training at Fort Knox led Romeo to many exercises including REDEYE Missile launchers. After 7 years, he joined Plattsburgh 962nd Ordinance Company. Sent to Germany, they lived in tents heated by small coal stoves. Romeo saw many countries and U.S. bases, retiring after 24 years of service.

**Donald Carr**  
**Army | 1955-1963 | Vietnam**  
Don was an Airborne Division instructor. In Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, they were the eyes and ears on night missions counting enemy vehicles. Squad leader Don led Airborne Rangers on night parachuting from 20-static line jump helicopters, dropping 400 feet searching for enemies.

**Gordon ‘Andy’ Traver**  
**Veteran Guardian for Donald Carr**  
**Army | 1968-1971 | Vietnam**  
Andy graduated from college, married the next day, enlisted in the Army the 3rd day. He completed Military Intelligence and Vietnam language courses, and with 5 others settled in the middle of nowhere in Vietnam. Isolated, never safe, eating more rice than anyone should in a lifetime, the 6 Intelligence operators returned stateside.

**Donald Cassidy**  
**Air Force | 1947-1967 | Cold War**  
Don was shift leader decrypting top secret messages. Air Force inspectors made unannounced checks for security. Don traveled to Japan, France, Germany, England, Turkey, Greece, Italy. In North Africa he married his first wife at a landfill. Don said he should have known the marriage wouldn’t work out. He’s been happily married to Annette for many years.

**Carl Duford**  
**Air Force | 1962-1986 | Vietnam**  
**Carl worked Presidential Security from 1969-1973.**  
In Vietnam, as a Military Policeman, he was responsible for securing the perimeters with K-9 dogs. One night Carl prevented the Vietcong from overrunning the base along the perimeter. For his action and bravery, he received the Bronze Star for Valor.

**Glen Elmore**  
**Navy | 1970-1991 | Vietnam**  
Admiral Thomas Mattingly chose Glen to work with the Space and Navy Warfare Systems Command. The joint operating focus with Marines monitored electronic frequency durations and satellite communications. The Admiral became an Apollo 16 astronaut. Glen spent a year on Diego Garcia Island, Indian Ocean. He said it was ‘choice duty’.
Paul Gardner  
**Army | 1967-1970 | Vietnam**  
After basic training, Paul went to Vietnam in 1968. Paul was in country for the Tet Offensive, the 1969 Tet counter-offensive and counter-offensive phases IV, V, VI.  
Once stateside, the Army raised his life insurance to $15,000. How nice of the Army. Paul was discharged August 28, 1970.

Arlene Gosnell  
**Air Force | 1952-1956 | Korea**  
At 18, Arlene’s Dad signed for her to join the Air Force. She was in Texas, Wyoming and England. 3 months short of being 21, her Dad refused to sign for re-enlistment.  
Arlene re-enlisted, met Robert in Westover, and they married in Guam.  
She retired from Plattsburgh Air Force Base in 1990 after a long career with the Department of Defense.  
It’s a tough assignment, Arlene, but I’m placing you in charge of these 27 men for the day.

Edward Hall  
**Army | 1953-1956 | Korean**  
Ed served with the 7th Division, 17th Regiment above the 38th Parallel. There were no towns, just the compound.  
He guarded millions of dollars of military payment certificates watching the color of certificates so the black market couldn’t get a hold of them. Issued a 45 pistol Ed didn’t know how it worked, whether it was loaded or not or what to do with it.

Homer LaMare  
**Army | 1950-1953 | Korea**  
Homer, Buck, was a parachutist with the 11th Airborne Division, Korea. Stateside they parachuted into Fort Drum during a snowstorm. Several men were injured but Buck fortunately wasn’t hurt.  
Stationed in Tennessee, Buck enjoyed the Grand Old Opry and Nashville bars. Coming home to Tupper Lake he hitch-hiked or hopped a train.

David Premo  
**Navy | 1952-1966 | Korea**  
On the Ship USS Coral Sea, David split the catapults launching aircraft and bringing them back in. One day in Cuba an airplane crashed; the ship caught on fire.  
David wanted to ride a camel. The camel’s owner said ‘what can you trade? Dave gave the owner his sunglasses and got his camel ride.

Floyd Rock  
**Army | 1965-1967 | Vietnam**  
On One Delta Huey helicopter Floyd was mechanic crew chief and door gunner with an M-60 machine gun. He trained infantry to load and unload from the Huey.  
1967 Tuwa Air Force Base, Floyd flew the Huey hauling troops of the 111th Airborne and picking up wounded soldiers.

James Verseput  
**Air Force | 1971-1975 | Vietnam**  
Caught between closing doors, Jim sustained a back injury in “the Black Hanger” on Plattsburgh Air Force Base. In 1972, Jim was defueling a plane to a fuel truck when a short caught the truck on fire. Laying on the ground, he used all 500 gallons in the jet fuel fire extinguisher.  
Jim was awarded ‘Safety Officer of the Month.’

William Wolford  
**Air Force 1953-1973 | Korean**  
Bill was a pilot of K B 50 J; C 130 E and C 141 planes. During the Pakistan/Anaheim War, Bill was tasked to bring civilians out in his C-130. A Two-Star General handed 110 civilians up to Bill, loading into a plane designed for 30 passengers.

Robert Woods  
**Army | 1950-1952 | Korean**  
Bob went to Germany on the USS Langfitt. Sailors slept on fold-down cots, with a thin piece of canvas cloth, cots stacked 5 high. Turning over the sailor hit the guy above.  
Carrying Class A uniforms on backpacks, they wiggled items from the packs. Hanging clothes on pipes brought a quick announcement “no hanging clothes on pipes.”
Flight 33

Albert Barcomb
Army | 1961-1964 | Vietnam
At boot camp the Sergeant asked for a volunteer driver. Al raised his hand; the guy next to him said ‘never volunteer’. As the soldiers got through swamp training with mud up to their necks, Al was totally dry driving the jeep or a 2-1/2 ton truck.
He had TDY in Verdun, France and went 40 miles to visit Germany.

Alan Beaubriand
Marines | 1966-1970 | Vietnam
While Alan was serving in Okinawa, he met three people he had gone to high school with.
A ship to shore radio operator, he was among the Marines transported from California aboard the USS Tulare. The ship safely delivered the Marines and cargo to the DaNang Harbor.
Alan finished his tour as a driver and radio man in Okinawa.

Thomas Davison
Marines | 1970-1972 | Vietnam
While in Okinawa on guard duty, Tom met up with his cousin.
They separated as Tom transferred to patrol the Ho Chi Minh Trail. At Freedom Hill, the cousins reconnected.
A Military Police radio man, Tom used a short whip to call in air raids and bombings at night. Tom said they were sitting ducks in DaNang as the Vietcong owned the night.

Richard Flora
Army | 1966-1969 | Vietnam
As crew chief Richard oversaw repairs and flew on helicopters that had 4 millimeter 60 machine gun outriggers — two on each side.
In Germany, Rich served with the 9th helicopter support Calvary and the 24th Infantry Division. Army helicopters flew on one side of the Czechoslovakian border and the Czechs flew the other side.

Earl Garrant
Navy | 1956-1959 | Vietnam
Earl served on the USS Saratoga CVA 60 Aircraft Carrier. They were stationed at the entrance to the Mediterranean. Earl did generator repair and maintenance and stood watch for hours.
The Saratoga tied up in Cannes, France, during the 1958 Lebanon crisis. All sailors were directed to man battle stations.

Harry Landry
Army | 1967-1969 | Vietnam
Harry was a First Air Cavalry Fire Crewman and Squad Leader.
Harry and two others were critically wounded by open fire while being medivacked. Harry was hospitalized for 8 months.
With several medals, Harry joins his WWI grandfather and WWII father in a family of heroes.

Oliver Hickok
Marines | 1956-1975 | Vietnam
After 4 years in the Air Force, Oliver joined the Marines; 3rd Division.
Oliver took part in 15 field Operations. In February 1968, he was hit in the shoulder, back and knee during the Tet Offensive. Medivacked to Da Nang, to Japan and home to recover.
Oliver is a 2021 National Purple Heart Hall of Honor two-time Purple Heart recipient.

James Knapp
Navy | 1958-1960 | Vietnam
James enlisted in the Navy in Philadelphia. He was sent to the U.S. Naval Station in Newport, Rhode Island where he graduated from radioman A School.
Jim served on the USS McGowen as a radioman and was later switched to gunnery clerk aboard the USS Springfield until his honorable discharge.

Gerald LaValley
Army | 1961-1963 | Vietnam
Gerald was in the Signal Corp stationed in Orleans, France. With security clearance he was at the headquarters for communication and information systems. If messages came in with a piece missing, the entire message was resent.
Living off post, his wife Darlene was with him for 14 months. Gerald enjoyed visiting
Belgium, Holland, Spain and Germany.

Ronald Miller  
Army | 1967-1970 | Vietnam  
Ron was a General Vehicle Repairman with the 815th Combat Engineers.  
Ron said they spent lots of time on guard duty protecting the machinery and perimeter known as Engineer Hill, Pleiku. There were 2 machinery fields. They’d fix machinery in the day and stand guard duty at night.  
Not much sleep during a long year in Vietnam.

James Page  
Air Force | 1962-1966 | Vietnam  
Jim entered the Air Force at 17. He went to Texas to become a jet mechanic. As a heavy equipment operator, he was sent to Paero, France to extend the runway.  
The Georgia boy went to Tuley, Greenland, blowing and plowing snow to keep the runway open. On to Plattsburgh Air Force Base with more snow and operating heavy equipment, this became his home.

Eugene Sears  
Air Force | 1955-1956 | Vietnam  
Gene was a photographer and film developer stationed in Sumter, South Carolina, and Little Rock, Arkansas.  
In the days of good old-fashioned cameras, he took photographs, developed film in a dark room and made prints.  
Gene filmed in various locations and situations, often taking pictures from airplanes.

Dale Stephens  
Air Force | 1968-1989 | Vietnam Era  
Dale served 20 years: the first decade in administration and the 2nd in flight management.  
From 1980-1985, Dale was stationed at Plattsburgh Air Force Base. Discharged from Myrtle Beach, he retired in Plattsburgh.  
Dale has an amazing collection of 400 patches most of which are from aviators - some from enlisted personnel.

Michal Zmijewski  
An aerial photographer Mike flew many reconnaissance missions. He was stationed at Westover Air Force Base, Massachusetts, then transferred to Plattsburgh.  
Mike’s missions entailed filming military accidents, airplane crashes and even murders.  
Mike met a local Keeseville girl. He and Marge will soon celebrate their 57th anniversary.
Flight 34

Wesley Black
Vermont Army National Guard
2003-2015 | Iraq/Afghanistan
Ramadin, Iraq, 2005. An anonymous tip on unexploded artillery sent 2 jeeps to investigate. They found 100 artillery shells and munitions as an IED explosive tossed the jeep Wesley and others were riding in. The day before, Wes received an experimental prototype gunner attention strap which allowed Wes to extend forward and then be pulled back into the jeep. He suffered the loss of hearing in one ear and serious back injuries. Had he not received that gunner attention strap, now installed in military vehicles, he would surely have been killed.

Wesley is a victim of the Iraq/Afghanistan Burn Pits. Soldiers generate lots of trash – electronics, plastics, batteries, human, medical and food waste – thrown in the trash dump, coated with diesel fuel and set on fire. Eastern Afghanistan pits were only 150 feet outside the gates. Monthly, Wes and his comrades patrolled 3 weeks and one week they were assigned to gate guard duty spending 8-12 hours daily breathing in the carcinogens of the Burn Pit fires.

In a CNN interview, Wesley said “I’m just a dumb Irish kid from Boston” who has stage 4 cancer; who doesn’t know how long oral chemotherapy will keep him alive; but he’s going to put up ‘one hell of a fight’.

At 35 years old, Wes knows life will be short. He wants to make good memories for his wife Laura and their 5-year-old son Ronan.

We are proud to welcome Wes, Laura and Ronan into our Honor Flight family as they make memories today in Washington, D.C.

John Doten
Army | 1952-1954 | Korea
During basic training in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, John became a Track and Maintenance Instructor. Going from California to Japan, he taught maintenance and repairs on tanks. Their engineering troop was headed to the Korean line. Instead, they went back to Japan to build a track vehicle school. John spent 18 months in Japan.

John fits right in with a great group here today, as he currently owns 5 motorcycles, even after one Harley Davidson was destroyed in a fire and another was stolen. John turns 91 in a couple of weeks so further proof, motorcycle guys never give up!

Ronald Ewing
Air Force | 1954-1957 | Korea
Ron served in the 767th Air Control & Warning Squadron. After military driving classes, he drove buses, semis, jeeps. He drove the bus for ball teams in New Mexico. He also drove to Santa Fe where atomic bombs were being made. While doing night patrol in Oklahoma, Ron found rattlesnakes at the rear gates.

In Japan, Ron was the first to get through the door to take a seat on the bar stool. A guy hit him in the mouth, knocking out 3 front teeth. A quick learner, Ron wasn’t the first in the bar again.

Clarence Fournia
Navy | 1950-1954 | Korea
Clarence, also known as Joe, served on repair ships including the USS Cadmus with its homeport in Norfolk, VA. The sailors on the Cadmus were called to service ships that were in trouble along the East Coast. Most often Joe and his fellow sailors fixed leaking high pressure steam valves, and repaired boilers. As Castro began making noise to take over, the ships cruised the Caribbean. The crews focused on assuring the need for repairs were detected, fixed, and maintained in good condition in the event a battle occurred.

Alden Ehler
Air Force | 1954-1959 | Korea
Alden, known as Duke, joined the Air Force but said he got ‘tossed’ to the Army in a Special Army-Air Force Category. He said they all wore Army uniforms, were surrounded by rice paddies and slept in tents in the field. But the men in Air Force uniforms stayed on the Base. Army leadership spent one year in Korea.

Returning to the Air Force Base with the 19th Aviation Company, Duke maintained equipment including rebuilding tanks on the battle fields. He said it was not a pleasant place to be.

Thank you for your service to our country.
You are greatly appreciated.

RE/MAX NORTH COUNTRY
68 Cornelia Street, Plattsburgh, NY 12901
518-563-1200
Stephen Gitto  
Navy | 1944-1947  
World War II  
Steve joined the Navy at 17. He spent most of his wartime in England including the U.S. Air Facility 804, Dunkeswell, Devon. In London, they were about 20 minutes from battles and bombings. London was in shambles.

Steve boarded the USS Helena to Scotland. The good news: the ship had an operating room, as Steve needed an appendectomy. The bad news: the doctor was on another ship that didn’t have an operating room. The doctor was brought across rolling waves on a rope. Steve watched the doctor perform the appendectomy as the massive waves kept the boat heaving up and down. Steve is one of the first people to receive penicillin and the doctor didn’t know how much to give him. After 4 days of penicillin shots every 4 hours, Steve said ‘stop!’ as he was a pin cushion. While still recovering in Switzerland, he hobbled off the ship to get a photo taken with a kilt on.

Steve played the trumpet in the Naval Band. He traveled with American Admiral H.R. Stark on a Good Will Tour after the war, going to several bases in France, Spain, Germany, Gibraltar.

Steve began playing trumpet at 12. In 1952, he began teaching trumpet to students. This summer, he played 9 concerts with the Chatham Community Band. The final concert was dedicated to Steve.

After the concert, Steve was surprised to see a former trumpet student: John Bass, former Ambassador to Afghanistan, recently appointed Under Secretary of State approach him for a great visit.

We are honored to have 95-year-old World War II veteran Steve Gitto join our Honor Flight Family.

Bruce Allen — Veteran  
Guardian for Cameron Herdman  
Army | 1967-1969 | Vietnam  
After basic training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, Bruce attended medical training in San Antonio, Texas. He was a Specialist Medical Corpsman.

As an orthopedic specialist, Bruce worked at the William Beaumont General Hospital in El Paso, Texas, treating soldiers returning to the states from Japan. He applied many Plastic of Paris casts and splints under doctors’ supervision.

Bruce turned down Officers’ Candidate School and spent his last 6 months of service as the non-commissioned officer in charge of orthopedic rooms.

William Holzer  
Army | 1956-1958 | Vietnam  
After basic training at Fort Knox, Bill trained in heavy weapons at Fort Hood.

Bill spent 18 months at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, with the 524th Military Police. The centerpiece of Fort Shafter is Palm Circle, including the National Memorials and the National Memorial Punchbowl Cemetery. It’s estimated over 53,000 U.S. veterans from World War II, Korean and Vietnam Wars are buried there along with Ernie Pyle, Pulitzer Prize-winning war correspondent. No cemetery stones or crosses are allowed.

13 Generals lived on Palm Circle and Bill said when the Generals pulled up to the gate, the Military Police just let them through.

“"For greatness lies not in what office you hold, but in how honest you are, in how you face adversity, and in your willingness to stand fast in hard places...””  
— Bob Dole

Cameron Herdman  
Army | 1956-1985 | Vietnam  
Cameron was drafted in 1955 but he received a farm deferment. He began active service in 1956. Cameron was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas when the Red Cross assisted with a hardship deferment due to the death of his father.

With a smile, Cameron said he was directed to join the Army Reserves or go to jail. He said joining the Reserves was the best thing that ever happened as he spent 28 years going up the ranks in nursing.

A member of the Medical Unit, he was a Chief Ward Master in the Malone Reserve Center.

Linus Kinner  
Army | 1952-1954 | Korea  
Upon arrival in Tokyo, Linus was given 3 choices: Infantry, Signal Corp or Medical Aid Man. After medical training at Eta Jima, Japan, he was immediately sent to the Demilitarized Military Zone.

Linus was injured by mortar shrapnel and transferred to Osaka to recover after M.A.S.H. surgery.

Flying to the United States on military transport, a stowaway was discovered. They turned back to Tokyo, handed the stowaway over to police, got a new plane, and were on the way home to the States.

50 years later, Linus and his wife Judith went to Tokyo and were treated like royalty.

Ora Paul  
Army | 1952-1954 | Korea  
Ora was a member of 1821 Company B 13th Engineer Company Battalion. He was the Unit Supply Specialist in charge of supplies for the company.

Ora was stationed at the Demilitarized Military Zone when the Infamous Pork Chop Hill bombardment took place. The 2nd battle involved many troops on both sides. The battle was bitterly contested for 5 days with heavy artillery back and forth 24 hours a day.

When the battle finally ended, Ora couldn’t sleep for 3 days.

Robert Peacock  
Air Force | 1958-1978 | Vietnam  
After basic and Police Academy training, Bob went to Okinawa for 18 months.

In 1962, stationed at Plattsburgh Air Force Base, Bob met his wife Irma on a blind date.

Bob was in the 1968 Tet Offensive and was thankful every day that he survived the 24 hours before. In 1969, Bob joined the 377th Security Police Squadron, the largest Police Outfit in Vietnam.

Assigned to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, he greeted the returning Vietnam prisoners of war. Back in Plattsburgh, Bob retired and became a Clinton County deputy sheriff.
Gary Tamer  
**Navy | 1966-1970 | Vietnam**
Gary spent 19 months at the Military Sea Transportation Service Office, Vung Tau and Saigon, Vietnam.

Assigned as communications yeoman, Gary composed messages given to him by higher-ups using encrypted teletype; encoding highly classified messages on the transport and location of military cargo from food supplies, ammunition and weaponry.

Gary later received a field promotion to third-class storekeeper, which should have meant he knew how to do that job.

Except there was a problem, he was pretty hazy on his a-school storekeeper training.

But with a little on-the-job training from the man he was replacing and just good old-fashioned determination, Gary made it work, serving aboard the USS Parrot and the USS Fidelity.

For his efforts, Gary is proud to have received the top grade of 4.0 for his supply store performance.

Frederick Woodward  
**Navy | 1960-1966 | Vietnam**
Fred tested experimental equipment corporations and other countries wanted to sell to the Navy.

A radio operator, Fred was on the USS Glennon DD840 to record conversations from Astronaut John Glenn. Given an unused frequency Fred heard nothing, but it was an exciting experience.

Fred was involved in the rescue and recovery of the Submarine Threshold but there was no rescue or recovery – only marking the site off the Massachusetts coast.

During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Fred was aboard a ship tracking the Russian ships. There was no engagement thanks to the negotiations between President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev.

Ralph Wurtz  
**Air Force | 1960-1980 | Vietnam**
Early in his Air Force career, Ralph was stationed in Germany for four years, where he met and married his wife.

At McConnell Air Base, Kansas he trained as an Aerospace Ground Equipment Repairman or AGE mechanic. Ralph said they repaired generators, air compressors, heaters and anything else needing repair.

He served in Thailand and Vietnam with a TDY in Korea.

Stationed for another 5 years in Germany, Ralph returned to the States. After 20 years of service, Ralph retired from Plattsburgh Air Force Base, and worked as a civilian on base until it closed in 1995.

Flight 35

Ronald Badger  
**Army | 1965-1969 | Vietnam**
Ron enlisted in the Army National Guard serving with the Green Mountain Movers, 131st Engineers in Vermont. When the unit was deployed to Vietnam, Ron was with the Advance Party sent to set up camp for the remaining Company members.

Departing from the plane, they were loaded into a deuce and a half as they proceeded through the rice paddies. They were issued M16 weapons, but no ammunition. Thankfully the advanced team was not fired on. The memory of that experience has stayed with Ron.

A member of American Legion Post 912, Ron has been raising the flag at our ceremonies. We're so pleased he's going on this flight.

Raymond Barnes  
**Army | 1954-1956 | Korea**
Ray was assigned to Headquarters Detachment 29th Engineer Battalion. In 1954, the battalion assumed responsibility for Korea and Okinawa and moved to Tokyo, Japan to provide topographic support for U.S. and Allied Forces in the Pacific.

Using an island observatory, Ray and other Topography Computers watched for the point international time signals triangulated to each sighting.

Ray said this was all top secret and they were not to talk about it...until he got home and read about it in the newspapers. Government in action!
Thursday, Sept. 30, 2021

Donald Bradley
Air Force | 1950-1954 | Korea

A member of the Air Police, 76th Communications Squadron, Don wanted to join the flight service. Because he is color blind, he couldn’t go.

Don was in Korea for 17 months. They lived in 16 Quonset Huts which were definitely not comfortable living quarters.

The Air Police secured trains taking supplies to the rear lines and provided security to radio towers on top of mountains. At Dageau Air Force Base, known as K-2, in South Korea, Don said it was phenomenal to watch the jet planes take off 2 at a time up to 20 times a day.

Ronald Chase
Army | 1967-1969 | Vietnam

Ron was assigned to the 1st Battalion – 5th Artillery also known as the Big Red One.

Arriving in Vietnam, the troops were transported on Schanook trains loaded with jeeps. The vibration of the jeeps was unmerciful. They went through elephant grass that was way over their heads and the troops knew Charlie was waiting.

Ron fell in love with the kids but, as with his fellow soldiers, too many little boys were killed in the nights by the Vietcong.

Ron will never forget landing at the California airport, being spit on and called a baby killer. Tough memories linger on.

Paul Costin
Army | 1963-1966 | Vietnam

Paul was stationed at Zweibrucken Air Force Base, Germany. He was a cook and also maintained the warehouse lists and collected all the food.

Paul qualified as an expert rifleman and participated in bivouac. The Black Forest served as a training ground for war games. If a soldier came against chalk on the side of a truck, the opposing side had him.

When Russian vehicles were on the road, the U.S. troops were to pull over and wait until the Russians left. Often the Russians kept count of the U.S. license plates, which Paul described as a bit scary.

Rob Schwartz
Veteran Guardian for Paul Costin
Army | 1979-2012 | Cold War

Rob was a Combat Engineer who served at many bases during his career.

In Boise, Idaho, he did route clearance with hummers to clear the roads. As a resident expert for unit training, Rob addressed issues of nuclear, biological and chemical hazards.

Rob was a military instructor who taught ROTC students, and West Point cadets during the summers on basic rifle management and obstacle and small group courses. He also taught professors to develop courses for non-commissioned officers.

Rob retired after 33 years of military service to our country.

Darrell Dailey
Army | 1969-1984 | Vietnam

Darrell completed a 20-week course on conventional and nuclear weapons to become a member of the 85th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team.

Darrell was in a 12-man unit in a demolition squad. When the company commander needed security, a 2-man team would go and sometimes a 6-man team was dispatched.

They put out booby traps, roadside bombs, and grenades in particular spots. At night they placed chargers, and timers on bombs and went back in the morning to see if any had been blown up.

While searching one morning sadly a sergeant became a victim of a bomb.

Lawrence Douglas
Army | 1961-1963 | Vietnam

Larry was assigned to the 310th Field Hospital. On realizing he could type, he became a general clerk processing orders for fire service, draftees, and enlisted personnel.

At the Armed Forces Enlistment Station in downtown Philadelphia, he processed physicals, testing, and cut orders for Army and Air Force draftees headed to Fort Dix.

Larry said it was a great duty with public relations including the USO, huge city parades, parties at hotels with Colonels and Generals and he got tickets to the NBA Phillies’ games.

Larry also worked with the Red Cross and served as an Honor Guard at funerals.

John FitzGerald
Air Force 1949-1969 Vietnam

John was a Flight Engineer with the 4603 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron.

In Vietnam they fixed planes at night, got to the barracks at 6:00 a.m., lunch at noon and at 4:00 guys were pushed to go on the Ho Chi Min Trail.

There were plenty of planes to work on such as patching holes in a C-47. The pilot wanted to fly home - the plane crashed on take-off.

A British Camberra bomber got stranded on the air strip at 2:00 in the morning.

They had dropped their bombs but on landing the fuel tank fell off. John and crew moved all the other planes, worked on the British plane until it was ready to go.

Lots of dangerous excitement – too little sleep.
Terry Flatt  
Navy | 1968-1969 | Vietnam
Terry received basic training at the Great Lakes. The recruits qualified on the Old Springfield and he was worried about jumping off a 10 meter (30 foot) high tower into the water. Tying his bell bottom legs turned them into a buoy. Some of the guys who couldn’t swim got thrown out of the boat – guess that’s sink or swim time.
Terry was stationed at Andrews Air Force Base. He was with the Honor Guard for pomp and ceremony parades every weekend. A lieutenant taught him how to twirl a rifle.
An invitation from Chief of Staff Westmoreland brought Terry to the White House for a ceremony held by President Johnson.

Anthony Prinsen  
Upon high school graduation, Tony’s father asked him what he intended to do with his life. Tony thought about his schoolfriends who were a group called the North Country Platoon.
They went together to the Recruiting Station to sign up. The military put the Platoon up in Albany for the night awaiting their physical the next day. They went out that night, had too much to drink and all failed the physical. They repeated their antics until, on the 3rd try, they passed the physical. Instead of riding the bus north, they headed south to Fort Dix.
Tony was a lineman with his final tour of duty in Germany.

Earl LaVoie  
Air Force | 1948-1952 | Korea
Earl enlisted in the Air Force as the Korean War was starting and President Truman extended his time an extra year.
He was in a Medical Unit headquartered at Colorado Springs Air Force Base. The new base was being established as an air defense command. They also were suppose to build bombs but that didn’t get done. Earl served in the Air Surgeon’s office. With no accommodations on the base, Earl stayed in a hotel.
He was given an application for college and Officer Candidate’s School but he turned them down.
Earl attended The University of Maryland receiving his degree in business and public administration

Robert St. John  
A member of the 432nd Field Maintenance Squadron, Robert became a master at packing parachutes.
In the Mojave desert, a Master Sergeant was testing a parachute which failed. Using a reserve parachute packed by Bob worked. Returning to base, Master Sergeant went to the Parachute Shop presenting Robert with a bottle of champagne.
In Thailand, a pilot stationed at Udorn sustained battle damage to the aircraft. The parachute packed by Robert allowed the pilot to return safely to Base and he, too, gave Bob a bottle of champagne.
Is there a pattern here?
Clinton County American Legion and Rouses Point 912 Post Commander Robert St. John has been at every Honor Flight ceremony with the Honor Guard. We are delighted to have Bob on this flight.

Gary St. Pierre  
Navy | 1963-1965 | Vietnam
Gary served at Naval Air Station, Whiting Field, Florida, performing internal base security with 45 pistols, shotgun and rifles. They patrolled the base perimeters, staffed the main gates and ran the brig escorting prisoners from one base to another and to hearings.
Gary participated in cordonning off plane crashes as they were first on the scene. Some crashes were really hard to cope with. The biggest challenge was keeping reporters out.
Boarding USS Bennington to the South Pacific as an aviation boatsman mate, Gary prepared aircraft on the flight deck.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SIGN UP A VETERAN FOR AN HONOR FLIGHT:
Visit northcountryhonorflight.org or call Executive Director Barrie Finnegan at 518-569-7429.