

The 2024 Honor Flight Season Begins This Month



USAF Veteran John Schroeder of Grand Forks spends a cozy moment at the Korean War Veterans Memorial

The Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN is about to take wing for the 2024 season!

Later this month, over 100 Veterans will be whisked away to our Nation's Capital, where they'll enjoy a three day/two night all expenses paid tour of the monuments and memorials built in their honor.

The May 2024 trip will be the 15th flight our hub has

sponsored. While our all-volunteer group has this process down to a science, there are still new things that pop up on each trip and plenty we learn from each venture.

Our Board of Directors and volunteers are adept at keeping things running smoothly for our guests. Should there be a needed change to the agenda, we're already two steps ahead on making a plan.

Washington, DC road closures? Piece of cake! Group of school children want to spontaneously pay their respects to our heroes? We're on it. Foreign dignitary with tight security detail paying a visit to the Lincoln Memorial? We've got it all covered. Veterans and escorts need not worry about anything on our trips.

We're also prepared for the elements — we pack boxes

full of rain ponchos, backup clothes, and blankets should Mother Nature decide to throw us a wild card.

Additionally, our medical team is on the up-and-up with each of our Veterans' unique needs. The safety and well-being of each of our heroes is of utmost importance. (Note: if your medical conditions have changed or you have concerns about your health that you feel we should know about, please notify your Bus Captain right away)

As with previous flights, many of our daily adventures will be broadcast live on Facebook . If your loved one is traveling with us, or if you're a Veteran who'd like to share some of the excitement in real-time with your fan club back home, make sure to tell them to tune in to our Page for updates.

We can't wait to kick off the 2024 travel season! It's going to be a blast!

Special points of interest:

- VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT OF ND/MN WAS FOUNDED IN 2015
- SINCE ITS CREATION, APPROXIMATELY 1,983 VETERANS OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY AREA HAVE BEEN FLOWN TO WASHINGTON, DC
- HONOR FLIGHTS ARE ALWAYS EXPENSE-FREE FOR OUR VETERANS

Get to Know One of Our Flight Veterans

Dennis Eggebraaten (Eggs as he would later be known), was facing a fork in his life's road in the early 70s. After four years of college, he hadn't yet graduated from Moorhead State and knew he would be drafted. Wanting more control of his future, he decided to join the South

Dakota National Guard. Except, due to the mission needs, they were unable to get him out to basic training in a timely manner. At that point, Dennis told himself to go with the flow and volunteered for the Army.

By 1971, Eggs found himself on a (cont'd on next page)



US Army SP4 Dennis Eggebraaten of Grand Forks, ND served with the 126th General Support Group 101st Airborne

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flight bound for Vietnam, as one of the US Army's freshest Chaplain's Assistants.

For the next nine months, Dennis would visit orphanages in an attempt to teach the caretaker nuns basic English. Frequently, he and many fellow soldiers would volunteer to spend time holding the sweet, innocent babies and rocking them to sleep ... a juxtaposition not lost on him in the midst of raging jungle battles. However, he and his fellow religious support comrades were most often called upon to deliver a gravely ill or injured soldier's last rites and provide guidance.

Eggs was faced with many

"THE MORALE BOOST THIS TRIP HAS GIVEN ME TO KEEP LIVING AND OVERCOMING MY HEALTH CHALLENGES IS JUST WHAT I NEEDED."

-DENNIS EGGBRAATEN

difficult cases ... battle injuries, mental health emergencies, and drug overdoses. It was an environment that was taxing even on the toughest.

When the US government sought early discharge volunteers for a force draw down, Dennis took them up on it, knowing he'd forfeit some of the financial benefits of serving. He had done his time, seen enough, and was ready to close this chapter.

Except ... returning home wasn't much easier. As we know, the US wasn't welcoming of her returning Vietnam Veterans. For years, Dennis would do his best to put the military behind him, not talking about it much until after September 11, 2001 — when he finally felt pride in his service creeping back in.

A few years ago, he was convinced to throw his hat into the ring for a ticket on an Honor Flight. After feeling like there were certainly folks that de-

served it more, he was told all honorably discharged troops qualified regardless of combat or deployment status. He got his call up for the October 2023 Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN ... this time a much happier type of draft notice.



Eggs formed a deeper bond with James, friend of 60+ years and fellow Veteran

As luck would have it, a buddy from high school was also slated for the trip. The two were booked to be roommates, easing Dennis's mind.

Dennis and James Cameron (US Army, Fisher, MN) had a wonderful time — opening up to each other about their service and experiences in Vietnam like never before. They shared stories neither knew and bonded on a deeper level, despite their 60+ year friendship. Dennis was also glad to make friends with many of the other Veterans on the trip. Knowing many of the folks who had earned this trip had similar memories was comforting.

He has advice for Veterans contemplating applying for a flight: "Do it! It doesn't matter where you served or what you did ... it was all in support of the greater mission. You deserve this trip and the healing and gratitude it provides. The whole thing is magical!"

Since returning, Dennis has shared his Honor Flight stories with many fellow Veterans, convincing them to apply — and we love to hear it! With our community's help, as long as we can keep funding these trips of a lifetime, we'll continue shuttling our heroes out to Washington, DC so more of them can get their proper appreciation, just like Eggs.



50 years later, Dennis receives his deserved "welcome home"

"Freezin' for a Reason" Frostival Event Was a Huge Success!



Steve and Sue Baron of Golden Drive for Homeless Kids enjoying one of the many events at Freezin' for a Reason

Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN along with Golden Drive for Homeless Kids were the two fortunate recipients of the proceeds from the Freezin' for a Reason events during the 2024 Frostival.

The FM Legion Riders put on a weekend's worth of fundraising events at the Moorhead American Legion Post 21 ... a live performance by the Front

Fenders, soup cookoff, pizza-puzzles-beer contest, build-a-bike challenge, silent auction, cornhole tournament, live performance by Adios Pantalones, pancake breakfast, cheese & wine pull, and ice cube bingo.

All funds raised were split evenly between the two deserving groups. Each charity took home nearly \$15,000!

We are so fortunate that our



Build a Bike, one of the many fundraising events

community is so generous and our charitable partners are so committed to our mission.

Meet a Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN Volunteer

Diane Moderow, Secretary, has a lifetime of military association. The granddaughter of Veterans, daughter of a Veteran, sister of a Veteran, mother of two Air Force officers, and an Air Force Veteran herself, Diane is no stranger to what makes Veterans tick.

Lt. Col Moderow (ret.) served in the Air Force for 30-years. The first seven saw her enlisted in active duty, working her way toward commissioning as a Registered Nurse. She would then go on to become a Happy Hooligan with the North Dakota Air National Guard, ultimately retiring as the Chief Nurse.

This Moorhead, MN native worked for 30-years as an RN between

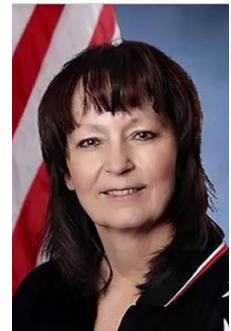
St. Luke's Hospital, MeritCare, and Sanford before finding her true home at the Fargo VA Hospital in 2014. She worked there for nearly 10 years before permanently retiring in 2023.

In 2015, Diane began volunteering for Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN and quickly moved into leadership on the Board of Directors. A natural for the position, she works diligently to make sure all our Is are dotted and Ts are crossed.

She says, "Having served in the military myself, there is a camaraderie that exists among all servicemembers. I have a huge respect for all those who have served to protect the freedoms

we all enjoy. I really feel there is no greater way to give back to those who have stepped up when called to defend our country."

Diane is a life member of American Legion Post 21 in Moorhead, Fargo AMVETS Post 21, and the auxiliary of the Vietnam Veterans Association. She lives in Fargo with her husband, Doug, and two dogs, Harper and Molly, and looks forward to frequent visits from her granddaughter, Anya.



*Diane Moderow
Secretary*

"THERE IS NO GREATER WAY TO GIVE BACK TO THOSE WHO HAVE STEPPED UP TO DEFEND OUR COUNTRY."

-DIANE MODEROW, SECRETARY

Virtual Honor Flights Ensure Every Veteran Can "Fly" With Us

We make every effort possible for Veterans to join our flights, in spite of varying health and wellness challenges.

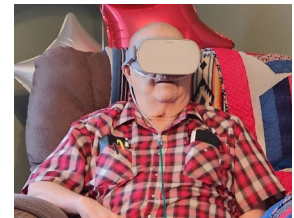
Sometimes, travel is no longer possible for an individual. It really didn't sit well with us that a Veteran in our hub wouldn't be able to fly, so we did something about it.

Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN has invested in a pair of virtual reality goggles. The person wearing the goggles is transported into recorded footage of Washington, DC that makes it seem as if they're actually moving through the filmed area. Additionally, Virtual Honor Flight Veterans will receive special

gifts, just like those who take flight. We live in a day and age where technology can be utilized in many incredible ways and we're so thrilled for this extra opportunity for our deserving heroes.

If you feel this would be a better option for your unique medical needs, please con-

tact Karen Harles, Volunteer, at 701.640.1163.



Special Goggles make our Virtual Honor Flights reality

Make Plans to Join Us at Summer Blast!



Axe throwing, one of the many events happening this year at Summer Blast

Our biggest summer event is near ... and we want YOU to join in the fun! Summer Blast takes place at the Moorhead American Legion July 26-27.

We'll be jamming to live music several times throughout the weekend courtesy of local favorite, Rucus ... 2023 fan favorites, Slamabama as Taylor Swift and Shania Twain ... incredible AC/DC tribute

band, Back in Black ... and tribute to one of the greatest rock bands, Bohemian Queen!

Additionally, stop by for a silent auction, cornhole tournament, wine pull, dunk tank, axe throwing, delicious food, family friendly Games on the Go, and so much more. Throughout the weekend there will be fun for all ages.

With three flights on tap for 2024, your help is needed more than ever. Make plans to join us for part or all of Summer Blast. It promises to be a super fun and busy weekend party.

Summer Blast is our biggest and most diverse fundraising event of the summer and we're counting on our community to help us get our heroes out to Washington, DC!

Know Before You Go — Real IDs Needed to Fly May 7, 2025

Anyone who wishes to travel via commercial or chartered airline beginning May 7, 2025 will need to possess a Real ID.

Real IDs can be obtained at your local Driver and Vehicle Services in Minnesota and Driver License offices in North Dakota. You will be required to bring several

documents to your appointment to obtain your Real ID. Be sure to reference the website listed here to determine

[HTTPS://WWW.DHS.GOV/REAL-ID](https://www.dhs.gov/real-id)

what information you will need to gather beforehand.

Not sure if you already have a Real ID? Check to see if

there is a star on your ID card. If there's NOT a star, your card won't be valid for air travel next May.

We cannot stress enough how important it is to apply for your Real ID now. The process can take some time and we never know what could potentially impact the

processing turnaround time.

If you don't have a Real ID, a Passport may also be used for travel.

If you have any questions about Real IDs, please contact Tod Ganje, Director, at 701.306.1244 or Lori Ishaug, Vice President, at 701.361.6972.

Take Me Out to the Ballgame — The FM RedHawks Ballgame!

We are thrilled to be selected again for a featured Jersey Night at the Fargo-Moorhead RedHawks game!

Gather up your friends, family, neighbors, and co-workers for a super fun day at Newman Outdoor Field on the North Dakota State University campus.

FMREDHAWKS.COM

At the Sunday, August 25 game, players for the RedHawks will be wearing special patriotic Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN jerseys

sponsored by Van Dam Financial. Bid on the player's jersey you like best during the game ... and when you have the highest bid, you keep it!

Additionally, we'll have other fun events happening throughout the game: throwing out the first pitch, extra



Board Members, LuAnn McDonald and Diane Maderaw enjoying the RedHawks game on Honor Flight Jersey Night

contests and prizes, branded giveaways, and more!

Our volunteer team looks forward to this event every year — what's not to love about baseball and supporting our troops, after all?

Tickets will be available on the RedHawks website now. A portion of the ticket sales will also benefit our charity.

We are so grateful to the RedHawks for their continuous support. We hope you can join us for an incredible day out at the ball field!



Board Members, David Brunsvold and Dave Rice, and Veteran Eddie Bernardson manning the merch table at the Honor Flight RedHawks Jersey Night game

Flags of Our Heroes — Honoring Those We've Lost

Flags of Our Heroes is our way of honoring Veterans who were on our waiting list to fly to Washington, DC, though sadly are no longer with us.

A family-supplied photograph of their beloved Veteran will be placed in a beautiful frame and accompany our living heroes on the Honor Flight to Washington,

DC. Upon arrival to the memorial representing the Veteran's branch or time in service, their photo is placed on a pedestal along with a folded United States flag in a special triangular case while a brief and meaningful ceremony takes place.

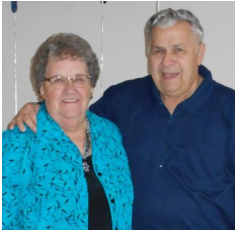
A professional photo will be taken and presented to the family after returning home.

Our wish is that there would not be a need for a program such as this, however we know the possibility exists. Flags of Our Heroes is our way of keeping all the Veterans in our family connected and close to our hearts.

If your loved one qualifies for Flags of Our Heroes, please call LuAnn McDonald, Director, at 701.306.4699.



How You Can Help — Be Like Don and Betty



Betty and Don Roberts

In May 2017, USMC GySgt Don Roberts (Ret.) was called up to take his Honor Flight. A Grand Forks resident, Don was thrilled to make his trip ... and also knew there were so many others in his area that qualified to fly.

Upon returning from Washington, DC, Don was so

moved by his experience he wanted to do more to help but didn't know where to start. So, he did what he could with what he had — he went door-to-door asking for free-will donations.

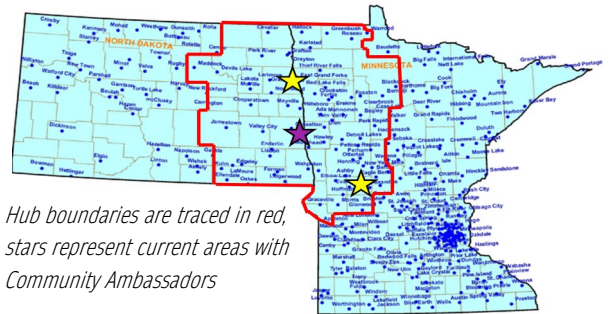
His grassroots efforts would morph into several organized fundraisers throughout Grand Forks, regular donations from groups like the Red River Valley Motorcycle Club, and a slew of eligible Veterans adding themselves to the waiting list.

Don and his wife, Betty, have become our Community Am-

bassadors in the Grand Forks area, firmly aligning themselves with our mission and doing everything they can to see to it that as many Veterans as possible make it on our planes.

They've formed a robust group of other volunteers who share the vision and are willing to truly help support our troops.

If you live within our hub and are interested in starting a Community Ambassadorship in your area, please reach out to Lori Ishaug, Vice President and volunteer coordinator, at 701.361.6972. You don't need to have flown with us to start a detachment in your area.



Hub boundaries are traced in red, stars represent current areas with Community Ambassadors

Charity is Their Fuel



Tim Gowan, Don Roberts, and Larry Gaddie, officers of RRVM, present Bobby Gregor, Director, with a recent sizable donation
Photo credit: Rock Tweten

The Red River Valley Motorcyclists (RRVM) aren't just a bunch of rough and tumble dudes and chicks raising money for bikers. Rather, they're stand up citizens who happen to be motorcycle enthusiasts that do charitable work for their community's benefit.

RRVM's three-pronged mission is clear: promoting motorcycle safety awareness, sharing the road, and raising as much money and awareness as they can for their charity partners.

Six years ago, RRVM chose us as one of the charities they would be supporting through their annual Spirit of America Bike & Car Show in Grand Forks. In that time, their total

contribution to Veterans Honor Flight has approached an incredibly generous ~\$161,000.

Their donations have helped alleviate huge financial portions of our operation over the years. We are so grateful these human teddy bears in leather vests have chosen us as one of the recipients of their hard work.

Insider Trip Secrets — Fort McHenry

O! Say can you see ... where Francis Scott Key wrote the poem "Defence of Fort M'Henry," which later was set to music and became our country's National Anthem? Well, when you fly on one of our flights you sure will!

Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine is just a stone's throw from Baltimore Washington Interna-

tional Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI) ... where we've elected to fly into for the last few years. Veterans have consistently listed this stop as one of the highlights of the trip.

There, among other significant events, they learn of the Battle of Baltimore in 1814 that inspired the Star Spangled Banner. In this pivotal

battle in the War of 1812, American military forces saved the city of Baltimore from being burned by the British the way our nation's capital had been just a month previous.

An intriguing movie, historical artifacts, intelligent staff, and an immaculate campus awaits all who tour this important part of our American history.



Veterans participate in the flag raising, complete with historical piper, at Fort McHenry during our October 2023 trip



VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT OF ND/MN

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Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN is a non-profit organization created solely to honor America's Red River Valley Veterans for their sacrifice to our grateful nation. We are accepting applications from WWII, Korean War, and Vietnam War Veterans. Applications can be found on our website. Flights occur in the spring and fall of each year, pending adequate fundraising.

We are a 100% volunteer, 501(c)(3) charity.

Join Us at Future Events!



Several of our spring and summer events have live bands and dancing

Every Monday (no holidays) in 2024 — 5:30pm Meat Raffle at Speck's Bar in Fargo, ND

Every-other Wednesday through May 29 — 5:30pm Meat Raffle at Wild Rice Bar & Grill in Wild Rice, ND

May 4 — 4:00pm Dinner and live music at VFW Post 5252 in Pelican Rapids, MN

May 5 — 8:00am Pancake Breakfast at Masonic Lodge 141 in Crookston, MN

May 5 — 10:30am Pulled Pork Lunch at American Legion Post 117 in Thief River Falls, MN

May 11-12 — All-day Spring Flower Sale at Lake Country Meats in Alexandria, MN

May 21 — 7:00pm Honor Flight Homecoming at Hector International Airport in Fargo, ND

June 22 — 11:00am NNMCA Annual Memorial Ride at VFW Post 3817 in E. Grand Forks, MN



Enjoy the best wood-fired pizza this summer in Alexandria

July 3 — 4:30pm Pizza Night at United Methodist Church in Alexandria, MN

July 26-27 — All-day Summer Blast at the American Legion Post 21 in Moorhead, MN

August 10 — Time TBD fundraiser at the American Legion Post 15 in Detroit Lakes, MN



Join us for Jersey Night at the RedHawks game — it's so fun!

August 25 — 1:00pm Jersey Night at the Fargo-Moorhead RedHawks game at Newman Outdoor Field in Fargo, ND

Every-other Wednesday beginning in September — 5:30pm Meat Raffle at Wild Rice Bar & Grill in Wild Rice, ND

September 24 — 7:00pm Honor Flight Homecoming at Hector International Airport in Fargo, ND



Hit the links with us — we may not be PGS pros but we sure have fun!

September 29 — 10:00am Honor Flight Golf Tourney at Leonard Country Club in Leonard, ND