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(Neb.) - Area veterans leave for Honor Flight



By: John Thayer Posted at: 05/03/2012 11:36 AM

CHADRON – Patriotic music filled the Chadron American Legion Thursday afternoon as 10 World War II Veterans, 10 escorts and two registered nurses prepared for their Honor Flight to Washington D.C.

When the music provided by the Chadron State College Brass Quartet went quiet there were applause, smiles and even one gentleman rising to his feet to show his appreciation of the music. One veteran later told one of the quartet members, “I thought you wanted me to get up and dance” as he gave a little twist and a smile.

The Chadron State College ROTC presented the colors before the Quartet blasted *The Star Spangled Banner* to begin the send off ceremony.

Each of the travelling Veterans was introduced as they stood to be recognized.

Captain Raymond Phillips, Commander of the 1057th National Guard, addressed the veterans. He spoke to them about the “great appreciation” people have for their service. He spoke about their heroism and while some may not think they are heroes he assured them they were.

Roger Clark, who is with the Patriot Guard, told the attendees that his group was started in response to families, active duty and military members wanted protection. It was a time when protestors began showing up at funerals of the fallen soldiers.

“Word went out to communities and people started showing up and standing in a line between the protestors and the funeral.”

After a closing prayer the veterans loaded their bags into four vehicles and led by the Chadron Police Department and the Patriot Guard they left for Denver where they will board a plane for Washington D.C.

Russ Seger of the Congregational Church provided the closing prayer and had these words, “Lord, we send our soldiers off again, this time not as warriors, but as ambassadors.”

About Honor Flight Network

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Honor Flight Network was created with the goal of helping every single veteran in America , willing and able of getting on a plane or bus, visit their memorial. The top priority is given to America's most senior heroes – World War II Veterans and veterans with a terminal illness – who wish to visit the memorial created for them. The program will naturally transition to the Korean War, Vietnam War and all other veterans who served on a chronological basis, according to the program's website.

The inaugural Honor Flight took place in May 2005 when six small planes took 12 veterans from Springfield, Ohio to Washington D.C to visit the memorial. In August 2005 there was an ever-expanding waiting list of veterans wishing to go. That led to the transition to commercial airlines.

At the end of the 2011 flying season 81,000 veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam had been transported, at no cost to the Veterans, as part of HFN to see the memorials built to honor their suffering and sacrifice to keep this great nation free and a world leader.

“We can't all be heroes. Some of us have to stand on the curb and clap as they go by.” - Will Rogers