

News from the Front Lines

VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT OF ND/MN

February 2025

Flying High in 2025



Curt Erickson, Dave Knopf, and Dave Ohman, Army Veterans from Detroit Lakes, at the National Museum of the United States Army

As one can imagine, five flights in 2025 means our Board of Directors and volunteers are currently in fundraising over-drive. Before the year is out, we will have disbursed nearly \$1.5M

The 2025 travel season is upon us. Another 200+ Veterans are scheduled to depart from Grand Forks Int'l Airport on Easter Sunday in what will be our second double-flight in less than a year. A third planeload will depart Hector Int'l Airport two weeks later, and then two more will jet off, again from Fargo, in September.

to make over 500 Veterans' trip of a lifetime happen.

We've got a full slate of fundraising events folks can attend (see last page). Some of our further-flung communities are in dire

need of Community Ambassadors, maybe that seems like something you'd enjoy (read more about this role on page 5). There are a few projects we're seeking sponsors for, one being the Welcome Home celebrations

happening in April, May, and September. Giving Hearts Day will again be held in February and is an event we count on to keep the planes in the air. Finally, the



Giving Hearts Day donation link

donation link on our website is open 24/7. If you find yourself thinking about supporting our cause, we have loads of different ways to do just that.

As always, we thank you so much for your support. We love what we do and we love treating our heroes to this very deserved, life-changing experience.

DONATE ANYTIME:
[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/VHFOND MN](https://tinyurl.com/VHFOND MN)

Special points of interest:

- VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT OF ND/MN WAS FOUNDED IN 2015
- SINCE ITS CREATION, APPROXIMATELY 2,300 VETERANS OF THE RED RIVER VALLEY AREA HAVE BEEN FLOWN TO WASHINGTON, DC
- HONOR FLIGHTS ARE ALWAYS EXPENSE-FREE FOR OUR VETERANS

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Get to Know One of Our Flight Veterans



Elizabeth "Beth" Olson of Moorhead, MN served in the Signal Corps of the US Army, eventually achieving the rank of E-4

Growing up an "Army Brat" in a family of eight children, Beth Olson (nee Person) and her siblings bounced all over the country. Ultimately, the Persons settled in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota after her father's Army retirement. In 1972, Beth graduated high school and decid-

ed to give college a go in the Twin Cities. Her journey would lead her back to the tech college in Detroit Lakes and trying hard to find some stability in her young adulthood.

She and a friend decided they could find that stability by (cont'd on next page)

Get to Know One of Our Flight Veterans — continued from page 1

(cont'd from page 1) enlisting in the Army ... so off they went to meet with their recruiter! Except ... her friend backed out and Beth was off on her next big SOLO adventure.



Beth is one of less than 20 female Veterans to make her Honor Flight with our hub

Fort McClellan, Alabama was Beth's first stop in the military. Her basic training class was all women, as every unit to pass through the gates were then. And while she would be mandated to learn many of the things a male soldier would — physical fitness, tactical experiences, survival

"I WISH MORE FEMALE VETERANS WOULD TAKE THIS TRIP — WE'RE ALL WORTHY OF GOING."
- BETH OLSON

skills, and so on — she and the rest of her group were never allowed to fire any weapons while in training.

That would change in January 1974 when she landed in Korea with the Signal Corps. As luck would have it, Beth's previous college experience proved she was excellent with office work ... which bought her a seat in the Commander's office as his clerk. She was one of the first women in the role and did her job well enough to keep her in that assignment for a year. She filled the same role for another 1.5 years at Fort Huachuca, Arizona.

Of her experience she says, "my male peers never had a problem with my gender. To them, I was simply another soldier putting in the work. I did find things were made unusually harder for women or it was believed that we couldn't do things, simply because of our gender."

In 1976, her time with the Army was over and she moved to the Red River Valley, where she's been since.



Veterans on the Bravo flight were asked to participate in the retreat ceremony at Fort McHenry (Beth is pictured doing her part to roll up the Garrison Flag)

A lot of unfair assumptions were made of Beth and her connection to the military — she's "just" a spouse, she had to have been "just" a nurse, or worse, that women didn't belong in the military. Such sentiments caused her to step away from any real Veteran-type events until her friend and Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN Volunteer, Barb Chamberlain, convinced her she qualified for a trip.

On her September 2024 trip, she was given a huge surprise — being honored at the Women's Military Memorial while the other 100 male Veterans watched. It was a moment she won't soon forget.

"Heading into this trip, I didn't know

any of the other Veterans going. Since traveling, I'm excited, humbled, emotional, and I have many, many

memories that I will cherish the rest of my life. The most amazing part of the trip was the dedication and work the volunteers do to make them happen. They are so committed and truly respect every Veteran that goes on these trips. Thanks to all of them!"

Like Beth and the women before her, we hope all female Veterans who qualify for our trips will apply. This trip is for you, too!



Beth's profile is among the searchable female Veterans at the Women's Military Memorial on the grounds of Arlington National Cemetery

Hot Dish Contest Cooks Up Some Fun ... and Some Yums!



Krystal (3rd), Adam (1st), and Kathy (2nd) were among 17 hot dish entries in the contest

Casseroles be danged ... around these parts we enjoy HOT DISH!

The 4th Annual Hot Dish Contest and Silent Auction was a comfort food success! Held at American Legion Post 21 in Moorhead, MN, celebrity judges Adam Chalifoux of KVLV, American Legion Post 21 Commander Paul Leeman, and Bobby Falet of KVLV gave top honors to Anthony

Nelson with his Carne Over Rice. Kathy Spielman and Krystal Krabbenhoft rounded out the prize earners, taking home not only notoriety, they also each earned a fun prize. Between the silent auction and the public's free-will donations to enjoy the various pans of home cookin', Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN earned just under \$1,500 through this delicious venture. Uffda!



Celebrity judges hard at work

Organizer Lori Ishaug said, "This year's entries were all quite varied — folks really enjoyed this cozy, feel-good event! We're already looking forward to next year!"

Meet a Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN Volunteer

Patriotism courses through the veins of the entire Ishaug family and Susie, the youngest of three sisters, is no exception.

As a fresh-faced 18-year-old, Susie enlisted in the North Dakota Air National Guard, following in her father's and sister's footsteps. After several assignments and job titles, she retired from the NDANG in 2021 as a Senior Master Sergeant and the Cyber Systems Superintendent at the Communications Flight. She continued her civilian work with the Air Guard until 2023.

After her father, DeLyle Ishaug, made his Honor Flight in 2015, Susie began volunteering for our outfit managing the ever-growing master list of applicants. Before

long, she began her time on the Board of Directors.

The flight her father took opened her eyes to the needs of the WWII and Korean War era veterans — old battle scars softened and camaraderie was shared amongst strangers. She knew she had to be part of this outstanding cause.

A 1982 graduate of Moorhead High School, Susie has enjoyed working with the thousands of deserving Veterans on each of the more than one-dozen flights she's made (only missing one while she was deployed to Kuwait in the fall of 2017). Being local to the Fargo-Moorhead area has meant she knows many of the flight Veterans personally and

has so enjoyed showing her appreciation for their sacrifices and services.

Susie is the proud mother of a beautiful daughter, Gracie, who carried on the family tradition and joined the Happy Hooligans in 2022.

In addition to her work with Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN, Susie is also a member of American Legion Post 21 in Moorhead and is a life member of AMVETS in Fargo. If she's not volunteering in some capacity, she can almost always be found supporting another



*Susie Schroeder
Director*

Veterans' fundraising event.

"I COULDN'T ENJOY MY LIFE AS-IS IF IT WASN'T FOR THE VETERANS BEFORE ME. THIS IS THE LEAST I CAN DO FOR THEM"
-SUSIE SHROEDER, DIRECTOR

JOIN US IN HANKINSON FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN!



We'll have loads of awesome prizes to win at Valentine Bingo on Saturday night — get your tickets now!

We've got a full weekend of fun planned for the Hankinson, North Dakota community and we hope you can join us!

Kicking off the weekend on Saturday 8 February at the Hankinson Community Center we're hosting a Valentine-themed bingo night. Grab your sweetie, your Galentine, or your parent/adult child and join us.

Included in your ticket price (\$50) is a hearty dinner (prime rib or shrimp linguine) and 12 bingo games. The prizes value over \$5,000 and range from cash to a designer handbag to a Blackstone grid-dle ... and more! There will also be a silent auction and wine pull for additional participation. This event sells out every year and is SUCH a great time!

The following morning, Sunday 9 February, we'll be back at the Hankinson Community Center flipping flapjacks, scrambling eggs, and rolling sausage links



There will be a wine pull and silent auction at bingo night — so fun!

All are welcome to join us for this hearty meal.

If you would like to reserve your bingo seat, or have questions about either event, please reach out to David at 701.261.2049 or check out online at the website listed here. If there are any additional tickets, they can be purchased at the door ... though they are not guaranteed.

sage links beginning at 8:00am. This free-will donation breakfast will surely hit the spot after a night of fun.

We hope you can join us for either or both of these fun opportunities in Hankinson to raise much-needed funds for our heroes' Honor Flights to Washington, DC. We look forward to spending the weekend with you!

We'd love you to check out all of our other fundraiser events listed on the final page of this newsletter and join us as often as possible.



Volunteers will be ready to fill your bellies on Sunday morning from 8:00-12:00

[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/HANKINSONND](https://tinyurl.com/hankinsonnd)

Know Before You Go — How Much Money Should You Bring?



After a few awesome days touring our nation's capital, these two enjoyed toasting their experience with grownup drinks!

The short answer: little to none.

The longer answer: You'll only need to bring along some cash or credit/debit cards if you'd like to enjoy an adult beverage at either of our evening banquets or at the hotel bar.

Additionally, if you'd like to get a souvenir at any of the museums we visit (Women's Military, Army, Navy, National

Archives, and Fort McHenry) it might not hurt to bring a little spending money.

But that's it!

We've got your food, tips, lodging, attraction tickets, and bus and airline fare covered.

We'll also be ready with supplies for unexpected weather and minor medical issues.



There are fun offerings at several of our stops if you're hoping to bring home a souvenir(s)

Do You Believe in Miracles?! The Fargo Force Sure Do!



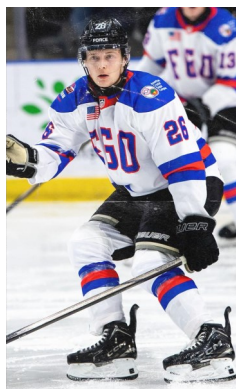
Volunteers Diane Moderow (Sec. and Retired LTC), AMN Gracie Shroeder, CPT Skyler Muller, and Susie Schroeder (Director and Retired SMSgt) tossing out the puck drop

Jersey Night at the Fargo Force game was INCREDIBLE!

Before the game even started, fans were waiting at the doors to get in, ready to revel in all the Miracle on Ice-themed fun.

Between the 1980 Winter Olympics-style jerseys, complimentary clear tote bags, volunteers presenting the colors during the National Anthem, clips and trivia from the movie "Miracle" playing on the Jumbotron,

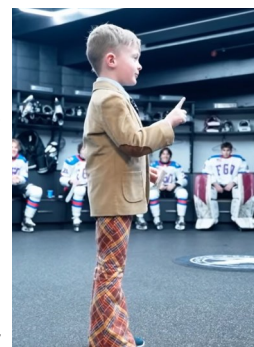
four more of our volunteers and North Dakota Air National Guard members dropping the puck, a wildly successful



Fargo Force players rocked their 1980 Olympic throwback jerseys

silent auction, and one of our volunteer's 5-year-old son reenacting the famous Herb Brooks' pre-game locker room speech from the game against the Soviets for the Fargo Force players ... there was no shortage of patriotic and inspirational fun to be had!

All told, Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN bene-



"Great moments are born from great opportunities ..."
-(Mini) Herb Brooks

fited from this fabulous partnership with the Fargo Force to the tune of almost \$19,000 or enough to put approximately 12 Veterans on their plane!

We are so grateful for the relationship

we've built with the Fargo Force and look forward to many more Jersey Nights in the future. Thank you, Fargo Force!

Real IDs required for May 2025 Honor Flights and beyond

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 refer-

ence the website listed here to determine 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 later this spring.

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 have any questions about Real IDs, including what other forms of ID could potentially be used in place of a Real ID, please visit the website below or contact Tod Ganje, Director, at 701.306.1244 or Lori Ishaug, Vice President, at 701.361.6972.

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

Welcome, DL!

How You Can Help — Become Community Ambassadors

We're jazzed to announce that we've added a third Community Ambassadorship to our ranks. Everybody give it up for Detroit Lakes, Minnesota! <clap clap clap>

With the recent relocation of one of our Fargo-Moorhead area volunteers, Angie Christensen, we've formally established a Community Ambassadorship in the area! Together with long-time resident and supporter, Ceil



Angie Christensen, pictured here with her family, is our newest Community Ambassador in Detroit Lakes

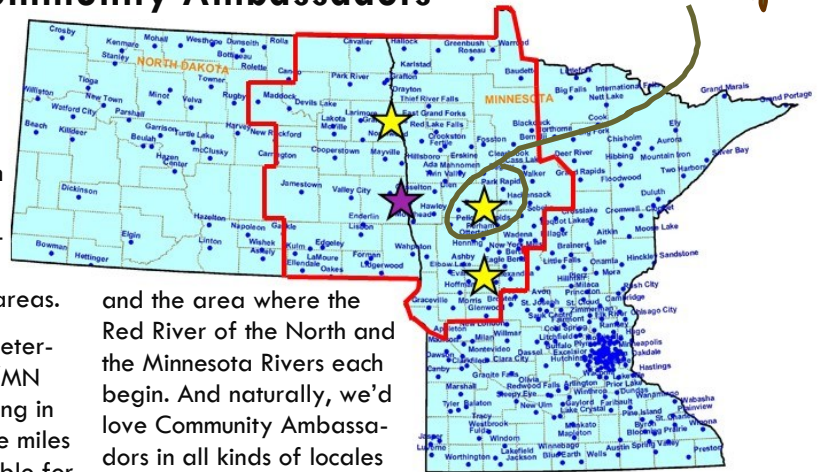
Sundstrom, the two are poised to do more good for DL than ever before.

Why is this such a big deal? With boots-on-the-

ground in towns outside the metro, we are able to better find eligible Veterans to fly, answer their questions in a timely manner, put a local face with our charity's name, and improve support from our outer areas.

The boundaries of the Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN hub are enormous. Coming in at nearly 50,000 square miles of coverage, it's impossible for the volunteers located in Fargo-Moorhead to be everywhere all the time, despite our hopes and desires to do just that. Working with Community Ambassadors allows our crew to be more present in as many scenarios as possible.

Our boundary map pictured here shows four stars where our local volunteer presence is strong (Grand Forks, Alexandria, Detroit Lakes, and Fargo-Moorhead). You'll also see that there are a lot of areas that could be better served by Community Ambassadors. Areas like Central North Dakota, the Northwoods of Minnesota,



and the area where the Red River of the North and the Minnesota Rivers each begin. And naturally, we'd love Community Ambassadors in all kinds of locales within our boundaries.

If you think you might be interested in getting the ball rolling on a Community Ambassadorship in your area, we'd love to talk more with you!

Community Ambassadors help Veterans apply for their flights, hold fundraisers in their communities, act as a conduit of information from

our homebase, and most importantly, align with our charity's values and ethics, put Veterans first, and represent Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN in the best light possible.

Lori Ishaug, Vice President, is ready to get you on your Community Ambassador journey. Please reach out to her at 701.361.6972 to learn more about the rewarding opportunity to bring Veterans Honor Flight of ND/MN a little closer to home.



Ceil Sundstrom has long been busy laying the groundwork for Community Ambassadorship in DL

Insider Trip Secrets — Professional Photographers Capture Your Memories

We're very proud to offer an entire catalog of professional photos to all of our flight attendees, free of charge.

Two professional photographers per plane donate their time, talent, and products on each of our trips to ensure that as many moments and images are captured throughout our time together.

Not having a high quality camera or the ability to pack

one should never be a barrier to bringing home images of the people and places you experienced. Additionally, we'd like to free you up from worrying about capturing everything and instead allow you to experience your trip in the moment.

If there is a specific photo you'd like, please don't hesitate to alert a photographer (they'll be wearing white

polo-style shirts with our logo on them). They are ready and willing to be at your disposal.

Your images will show up in the thousands captured and are available at no cost a couple weeks after we return home. Download one or download them all!

Watch our Facebook page for the announcement that the photos are ready.



Darrell Deutz, Professional Photographer, captures thousands of images on our trip



The Real ID
deadline is coming up!
Make sure you have
yours before May 7,
2025!

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

VETERANS HONOR FLIGHT OF ND/MN

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Facebook: facebook.com/veteranshonorflightndmn

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 Era 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!



*Flapjacks will be
flipping twice this
winter — join us*

21 in Moorhead, MN

February 8 — 3:30pm Valentine
Bingo/dinner at Hankinson Com-
munity Center in Hankinson, ND

February 9 — 8:00am Pancake
Breakfast at Hankinson Commu-
nity Center in Hankinson, ND

Every-other Wednesday from
February 12 to
May 21 —

5:30pm Meat
Raffle at Wild
Rice Bar & Grill
in Wild Rice,
ND



*Volunteers peel
over 600 pounds
of potatoes to
prepare for the
Potato Dumpling
Feed*

February 13 — All day Giving
Hearts Day at American Legion
Post 21 in Moorhead, MN

February 15 — 6:00pm Winter
Slam at Butler Machinery Arena
in West Fargo, ND

March 1 — 5:00pm Fundraiser at
Ratzo's Pool Hall in Barnesville,
MN

March 6 — 4:00pm Mexican Eats
Fundraiser at Qdoba in Moor-
head, MN

March 22 — 11:00am Chili Cook-
Off at Wild Rice Bar & Grill in
Wild Rice, ND

March 23 — 9:00am Pancake
Breakfast and All the Fixin's at
Club 1883 in Jamestown, ND

March 29 — 2:00pm Purse Bingo
at American Le-
gion Post 15 in
Detroit Lakes, MN

April 13 —
4:00pm Do Good
at Chipotle in
Moorhead, MN

April 22 — 6:00pm and 7:00pm
Honor Flight Homecoming Cele-
bration at Grand Forks Interna-
tional Airport in Grand Forks, ND

April 27 — 11:00am Potato
Dumpling Feed at American Le-
gion Post 21 in Moorhead, MN

May 3-4 — All Day Spirit of
America Bike and Car Show at
the Alerus Event Center in Grand
Forks, ND



*Greet community heroes in person
as they arrive home from the April
and May Honor Flights*

May 6 — 7:00pm Honor Flight
Homecoming Celebration at
Hector International Air-
port in Fargo, ND

May 10-11
— Spring
Flower Sale
at Lake
Country
Meats in
Alexandria,
MN

July 2 —
4:30pm
Pizza Night

at Alexan-
dria Community Woodfired in
Alexandria, MN

August 17 — TBD F-M RedHawks
Jersey Game at Newman Out-
door Field in Fargo, ND



*Shop for a mom in your
life or your front porch*

*Are you, a group you
belong to, or your
business interested in
hosting a fundraising
event? Visit our web-
site to learn more!*

VETERANSHONORFLIGHTOFNDMN.ORG/
THIRD-PARTY-APPLICATION