

Peoria Honor Flight hub ready for takeoff About 80 veterans will participate in Greater Peoria Honor Flight trip

By **ANDY KRAVETZ** (akravetz@pjstar.com) of the Journal Star

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PEORIA — Almost 80 veterans will fly next week to Washington, D.C., on the first flight of a newly created local hub of the Honor Flight program.

Leslie Matuszak, one of the hub's organizers, said 35 veterans from World War II and 35 from the Korean War will join seven Vietnam vets and two from the Gulf War on the daylong trip to the nation's capital where they will visit several monuments and memorials.

The total is nearly twice the number she and others with the Greater Peoria Honor Flight had hoped would be on their first flight.

"All gave some and some gave all and this fight is supported by all the good people of Peoria who understand the importance of what these people did for their country," Matuszak said.

**CENTRAL ILLINOIS
HONOR FLIGHT
MEMORIAL DAY FUNDRAISER**

10 AM - 6 PM | Monday, May 27th
Effingham KC Hall
1501 W. Fayette Ave.
Effingham, IL

MEAL PRICES
Adults: \$8.00
12 & Under: \$5.00
WWII Veterans: Free

Drive thru carry outs available.
Call orders into 217.343.3915 or 217.844.2401

"SONG OF THE SOLDIER: A TRIBUTE TO OUR MILITARY" A LIVE MUSICAL

Showtime: 3 PM
Effingham Performance Center
1325 Outer Belt West
Effingham, IL

General Public: \$14
12 & Under/Military/Veterans: \$8.00
All tickets general admission

Tickets for "Song of the Soldier" are available during the fundraiser or at the EPC box office (11 AM – 2 PM, Monday – Friday). They are also available by phone (217.540.2788) or online at www.theepc.org or www.ticketmaster.com.

Produced by Three Chicks and a Stage, SONG OF THE SOLDIER is a live musical tribute with memorable pictures on the big screen and historic scenes enacted by our local talent and our veterans.
Proceeds will benefit Central Illinois Honor Flight.

Boneless Pork Chop,
Fried Chicken, Baked Beans,
Cole Slaw, Potato Salad,
Roll, Hot Dogs,
Chips, Dessert,
Lemonade & Tea

Matuszak, the head of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Peoria, said more than 50 of the veterans are older than 80. Every service branch is represented. Some were prisoners of war. Others were involved with the D-Day landings. And still others were involved with the Battle of the Bulge.

"It brings tears to my eyes," Matuszak said, speaking of learning about the veterans' stories.

The flight will leave about 7 a.m. Tuesday from Gen. Wayne A. Downing Peoria International Airport and return at about 9 p.m. Tuesday. As is common with Honor Flight programs, the public is encouraged to go to the airport to welcome the veterans home. Often the crowds are large and the old soldiers, sailors, airmen or Marines are moved to tears.

Matuszak said shuttles will run to and from the CEFCU branch just outside the airport for those who want to greet the veterans. She encouraged people to arrive by 8:30 to 9 p.m.

She also noted plans are being made for the next flight, which will occur in late September. For more information on the flight or if you want to donate to the privately funded program, go to the Web site at www.greaterpeoriahonorflight.org



Veterans return from Honor Flight to cheering crowd

Jun 05, 2013 @ 12:04 AM

About 80 Peoria-area veterans of World War II, and the Korean, Vietnam, and Gulf Wars returned Tuesday night to cheers and waving flags at Gen. Wayne A. Downing Peoria International Airport after their inaugural Honor Flight to Washington D.C. The day long event was formed initially for World War II veterans but expanded over the years. The goal is simple: Fly aging veterans out to the nation's capital for a one-day sight-seeing tour of the service memorials and monuments, free of charge, as a way to say thanks for their service and sacrifice.

