

“Honor Flight” For World War II Vets Takes Off October 22

McCormick Foundation sponsors plane to carry local veterans to World War II Memorial in Washington

CHICAGO, Oct. 15, 2008 — The McCormick Foundation has granted \$35,000 to sponsor a group of 61 World War II veterans who will fly to Washington on Oct. 22 to visit the World War II Memorial. The one-day trip is part of Honor Flight Chicago, a local non-profit organization whose sole mission is to honor and thank local veterans by arranging visits to their respective war memorials.

“We’re proud to support this wonderful, grass-roots initiative to honor the men and women who fought and won World War II,” said Paul Herbert, executive director of the Cantigny First Division Foundation. “Their sacrifice more than a generation ago freed us from the terrible dangers of that time and shaped the world in which we live. We want these veterans to see their national memorial and to know that their legacy will not be forgotten.”

The Cantigny First Division Foundation, part of the McCormick Foundation, is helping coordinate next week’s trip. Nineteen of the veterans traveling to Washington were members of the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry Division, the history of which is preserved and interpreted at the First Division Museum at Cantigny Park in Wheaton, Illinois.

The veterans will travel completely free of charge, accompanied by 43 volunteer Guardians who ensure their safety and enjoyment throughout the day. The Guardians include soldiers from the active 1st Infantry Division as well as McCormick Foundation staff and other volunteers.

Departure on Oct. 22 will be from Chicago’s Midway Airport on Southwest Airlines Flight 736, leaving at 6:35 am. A patriotic send-off tribute at the gate featuring the vocal trio Tres Bella will take place prior to boarding at 6:00 a.m. Gate passes are available to the media.

In Washington, the vets will visit the long-awaited World War II Memorial as well as other memorials dedicated to those who served. The day includes a memorial ceremony for the fallen as well as surprises for the vets along the way.

A crowd of more than 500 is expected to cheer the veterans’ evening return to Midway. Family, friends, associates and bystanders will assemble in the baggage claim area to give the senior heroes the kind of “welcome home” they may have missed in 1945. The vets will be aboard Southwest Flight 1472, arriving at 9:20 pm.

The Oct. 22 “honor flight” is the fifth in a series that began in 2008. Honor Flight Chicago has a waiting list of local veterans who would like to visit Washington for a day of reflection and camaraderie. Top priority is given to World War II survivors and other



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For more information about Honor Flight, visit

Approximately 3.5 million American World War II veterans are still alive. But according to recent statistics, about 1,100 of them are lost each day. Some 13 million American men and women served in the war, and more than 300,000 sacrificed their lives.

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About the McCormick Foundation

The McCormick Foundation is a nonprofit organization committed to strengthening our free, democratic society by investing in children, communities and country. Through its five grantmaking programs, Cantigny Park and Golf, and three world-class museums, the Foundation helps build a more active and engaged citizenry. It was established as a charitable trust in 1955, upon the death of Colonel Robert R. McCormick, the longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. The McCormick Foundation is one of the nation's largest charities, with \$1.2 billion in assets. For more information, please visit www.McCormickFoundation.org.

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