All They Did Was Save The World 1944
Forgotten No More 1953
Welcome Home 1974

Arlington National Cemetary

The Villages Honor Flight trips always visit this site to witness the Changing of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Across the street there are 2 graves that are also visited by most of those Veterans on every flight; Army Major Audie Murphy and Air Force Colonel John Glenn.

Colonel John Glenn is a more contemporary figure. His exploits are more recent.

Major Audie Murphy has a story that may not be as well known today. Accordingly, his story is the focus of this article.

His Story...

His Thoughts...

During World War II (1939-1945), the Battle of Normandy, which lasted from June 1944 to August 1944, resulted in the Allied liberation of Western Europe from Nazi Germany’s control. Codenamed Operation Overlord, the battle began on June 6, 1944, also known as D-Day, when some 156,000 American, British and Canadian forces landed on five beaches along a 50-mile stretch of the heavily fortified coast of France’s Normandy region. The invasion was one of the largest amphibious military assaults in history and required extensive planning. Prior to D-Day, the Allies conducted a large-scale deception campaign designed to mislead the Germans about the intended invasion target. By late August 1944, all of northern France had been liberated, and by the following spring the Allies had defeated the Germans. The Normandy landings have been called the beginning of the end of war in Europe.
VHF President's Update

The Board of Directors of the National Honor Flight Organization announced there will be no Honor Flight Missions to Washington D.C. until 2021. Therefore, VHF will not be honoring any of our local Veterans with flights until the restriction is lifted.

The VHF Board has not postponed the Flightless Mission scheduled for later this year in November.

When updated information becomes available on social distancing and the use of Villages facilities and other resources required for a mission, the board will decide on the Flightless Mission. When that decision is made, it will be available to all Villages Honor Flight volunteers.

Until then, I hope everyone has a safe and pleasant summer.

Rob Hempel, President
Villages Honor Flight

VP Admin Corner

During this uncertain time please be assured that we are doing everything to protect and serve our vets.

As soon as the board lets us know to go forward we will pass on the info ASAP so we can get back on track safely.

We all want to get back to normal but only if it is safe for all.
If you have any questions please get in touch with any of the management team.

Stay safe,

Peter Tetrault
VP Admin
vpadministration@villageshonorflight.org
352-205-8503
Club Coordinator’s Letter

Hello Villages Honor Flight!!

Here we are in the middle of June. Hard to believe it’s been ~90 days of pandemic and ~90 days since we’ve had a monthly meeting at Colony Recreation Center.

I want to thank everyone who responded about our first monthly meeting video. This was something we wanted to do to keep in touch in a little more personal manor. While we certainly didn’t win any Oscars, seems like you enjoyed it.

If you have any ideas about how to make it better or another venue, please email me.

I just learned about a fantastic resource that could be VERY beneficial, especially to guardians. It’s the Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM). VLM is an online memorial space managed by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA). NCA manages more than 140 national cemeteries as shrine spaces to honor our Nation’s Veterans, and extends memorialization of the 3.7 million Veterans interred in those cemeteries to this digital memorial space by providing a VLM profile page for each Veteran. To find a Veteran’s memorial profile, all you have to do is enter the Veteran’s name. To search with additional information (branch of service, cemetery name, etc.), just click on Advanced Search.

Click here...

So, this caused me to think about other cemeteries. Here’s some additional information:

Arlington National Cemetery's app, ANC Explorer, enables families, visitors and the public to locate gravesites, events or other points of interest throughout the cemetery; view front-and-back headstone photos and points of interest; and receive directions to these locations. The latest version also includes self-guided tours, easy access to general information, and provides the ability to save searched burial records to a mobile device. You’ll need to download the free ANC Explorer app.

Click Here...

The American Battle Monuments Commission also has a register. Their register includes the records for those buried and memorialized at our World War I and World War II overseas military cemeteries, along with those names on the Walls of the Missing at the East Coast Memorial, West Coast Memorial, and Honolulu Memorial. Burial information can also be found for those interred at Corozal American Cemetery and Mexico City National Cemetery. This register does not include individuals who died overseas in World War I or World War II and were repatriated to the United States for burial.

Click Here...
Club Coordinator’s Letter

Courtesy of the American Legion:
A man went to the doctor, concerned about his wife’s hearing. “Go back home and say something to her,” the doctor suggested. “Tell me how close you are when she hears you.”

The man went home and saw his wife in the kitchen, cutting carrots. From 15 feet away, he said, “Honey, what’s for dinner?” Nothing. He walked halfway to her and repeated the same question. Nothing. Concerned, he stood right behind her and asked again, “What’s for dinner?”

She turned around and exclaimed, “for the third time, beef stew!”

Stay safe.

Al Arnold
Villages Honor Flight Club Coordinator
VHFClubCoordinator@villageshonorflight.org
When we see smiles like this on our Veterans faces, we are being paid back for all our hard works and dedication as Guardians!!

As we have discussed, the National Honor Flight Organization Board of Directors has cancelled all flights to Washington D.C. for the remainder of 2020. The Villages Honor Flight Board of Directors has not made a decision on the Flightless Honor Mission scheduled for November. Once we have the final information, we will begin planning for future missions.

For those of you who were scheduled to go as Guardians on Mission 50 in April, I wanted to let you know that when Mission 50 flies we are going to do all we can to keep the Veteran/Guardian teams and the Squad assignments together.

There will, of course, be some changes due to availability of both Veterans and Guardians for the Mission dates. If you were assigned as a Guardian to Mission 50, please keep in contact with your Veteran and keep them up to date on what is happening. This will also give you time to really get to know your Veteran and develop a true bond and friendship. You should also make sure that you have all the information you need to prepare their Bio for the yearbook.

We miss you all and look forward to seeing and working with all our amazing Guardians just a soon as we are back to flying missions and serving our Veterans.

Bob Beishir
Guardians Coordinator
HELP US HONOR WWII VETERANS

To mark the 75th anniversary of World War II, residents are invited to help make a special tribute possible at Veterans’ Memorial Park. On Pearl Harbor Day, Dec. 7, 2020, a memorial brick for each of the estimated 300 - 500 WWII veterans living in The Villages will be unveiled.

HELP US FIND DESERVING WWII VETERANS

Do you know a WWII veteran living in The Villages? Please help ensure that none of them are left out of this event by emailing the Daily Sun’s Senior Veterans Reporter Steve Straehley at steve.straehley@thevillagesmedia.com or calling him at 352-753-1119 ext. 5228.

SPONSOR A PIECE OF THE MEMORIAL

Sponsorships for bricks, which cost $55 each, may be sent by check to VCCDD (please specify “WWII bricks” in the memo) at 984 Old Mill Run, The Villages, 32162. They can also be made by credit card by calling District Customer Service at 352-753-4508.
Villagers For Veterans

Cordially Invites You To The
Smart House Presentation For:

SGT Pam Kelly

Saturday June 27, 2020
11:00 A.M.
1307 Teakwood Ln.
The Villages, Fl. 32159

RSVP: By June 20, 2020
Marie Bogdonoff 516-220-5068
or villagersforveterans@gmail.com

Outdoor Event, Bring A Chair
(CNN) War veteran Tom Moore, who has raised more than £30 million ($37.4 million) for the UK's National Health Service (NHS) by walking laps of his garden, celebrates his 100th birthday Thursday, April 30th. Moore, who rose to the rank of Captain during his military career, was also promoted to honorary Colonel in recognition for his efforts to raise money for the UK's health service.

"His mature wisdom, no-nonsense attitude and humour in adversity make him an inspirational role model to generations young and old," General Mark Carleton-Smith, chief of the general staff of the British Army, said in a statement Thursday.

Moore raised money for the NHS walking laps of his garden.

Moore has been appointed as the first Honorary Colonel of the Army Foundation College Harrogate, the UK's Ministry of Defence said.

The war veteran thanked all of his supporters on social media Thursday, as he reached £30 million ($37.4 million) on his fundraising page. He has also received more than 125,000 birthday cards, which are on display at Bedford School, southeast England, where his grandson is a student.

Volunteers were enlisted to open the war veteran's cards after he became an international sensation for his fundraising efforts. The volume of cards that have been sent to granddad is just astonishing," Benjie Ingram-Moore, who has been managing the veteran's social media accounts, said.

"So many of the cards are truly heartfelt with thousands from young children who have taken the time to use their artistic talent and write a personal message," Moore's grandson added.

Born in Yorkshire, northern England, Moore trained as a civil engineer before being enlisted in the British Army during World War II, where he served in India, Indonesia and Britain. He later became the managing director of a concrete manufacturer. Following the death of his wife in 2006, he moved in with his daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren in Bedfordshire, southeast England, where he still lives.

Moore told CNN that he never thought he would raise so much money for the NHS. "I'm absolutely overwhelmed by this sum of money -- and when you transfer those into American dollars it's even bigger. We really never, ever for a minute thought we would get to this sort of money. We started off with a little modest figure," he told CNN's Hala Gorani on the "Connect The World" show on April 17.
Loyalty, A most Valuable Commodity

Judy, a purebred pointer, was the mascot of several ships in the Pacific, and was captured by the Japanese in 1942 and taken to a prison camp. There she met Aircraftsman Frank Williams, who shared his small portion of rice with her.

Judy raised morale in the POW camp, and also barked when poisonous snakes, crocodiles or even tigers approached the prisoners. When the prisoners were shipped back to Singapore, she was smuggled out in a rice sack, never whimpering or betraying her presence to the guards.

The next day, that ship was torpedoed. Williams pushed Judy out of a porthole in an attempt to save her life, even though there was a 15-foot drop to the sea. He made his own escape from the ship, but was then recaptured and sent to a new POW camp.

He didn't know if Judy had survived, but soon he began hearing stories about a dog helping drowning men reach pieces of debris after the shipwreck. And when Williams arrived at the new camp, he said: "I couldn't believe my eyes! As I walked through the gate, a scrappy dog hit me square between the shoulders and knocked me over. I'd never been so glad to see the old girl!"

They spent a year together at that camp in Sumatra. "Judy saved my life in so many ways," said Williams. "But the greatest of all was giving me a reason to live. All I had to do was look into those weary, bloodshot eyes and ask myself: 'What would happen to her if I died?' I had to keep going."

Once hostilities ceased, Judy was then smuggled aboard a troopship heading back to Liverpool. In England, she was awarded the Dickin Medal (the "Victoria Cross" for animals) in May 1946. Her citation reads: "For magnificent courage and endurance in Japanese prison camps, which helped to maintain morale among her fellow prisoners, and also for saving many lives through her intelligence and watchfulness."

At the same time, Frank Williams was awarded the PDSA's White Cross of St. Giles for his devotion to Judy. Frank and Judy spent a year after the war visiting the relatives of English POWs who had not survived, and Frank said that Judy "always provided a comforting presence to the families."

When Judy finally died at the age of 13, Frank spent two months building a granite and marble memorial in her memory, which included a plaque describing her life story.
A return to Makin Island.

A true story about 19 Marines killed in the Gilbert Islands in 1942 (defending against the Japanese). They had to retreat, so they asked the islanders to please bury their dead so the Japs couldn’t find them.

Years later, they checked and found a man who had been a teenager then and remembered where they were buried.

They sent a C-130 and an honor guard over there and found all 19 had been buried with their helmets on, their rifles in their hands, in perfect condition. The islanders had really done a wonderful job.

As they were loading the bodies, a voice from out of nowhere started singing The Marine Corps Hymn"..........gave everyone goose bumps.

Turns out, the voice was from a man who spoke no English but remembered a song the Marines had taught him when they landed. Very touching.

They got all 19 and their photos are at the end. This of course was WW II!

IF YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THIS - BE SURE YOU'RE SITTING DOWN. THIS IS ONE OF THOSE GESTURES FOR WHICH THERE ARE NO WORDS.

Click here...

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Comments or suggestions may be sent to;
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or leave messages at; 352-430-2259.
P.S.: PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER WITH FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS!