

**For Immediate Release**



**Veterans Honor Flight of Southern Illinois  
Invites Public to Welcome Home Ceremony**

*Plenty of Parking, Transportation, Food and Entertainment*

**Where will you be at 5pm on Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>? Hopefully at the Veterans Airport in Marion to welcome home our Veterans from their day in Washington DC.**

**Event organizers have been working most of the year on the Welcome Home event and want to invite everyone to come out and enjoy the festivities.**

**“The community support for the previous Honor Flight Welcome Home events has been overwhelming!” stated Deborah Hogg, Welcome Home organizer. “There is no better way to celebrate our Veterans and honor them than by giving them a Hero’s welcome home.”**

**The 10-member Welcome Home Committee meets monthly to plan the event which is expected to unite the community in honoring our Veterans.**

**The Flight #12 Welcome Home Celebration will be held outside at the front airport entrance. Those attending are encouraged to bring lawn chairs.**

**“The community starts arriving at the Airport about 5pm with banners and lawn chairs. It is really a festival atmosphere all afternoon and evening” stated Hogg.**

**Several food trucks are scheduled to participate in the Welcome Home event including, Cone to Table, Crazy Asian Eats, Honeybeez Snowballz, Flippin Crepe, Fry Guy, The Caribbean Hut, and Venezi Wood Pizza who have all made a donation to Honor Flight.**

**Food service will begin at 5pm and last until all 87 Veterans have passed through the Freedom Path through the Airport terminal.**

**“And while the public is enjoying their dinner, they can also enjoy the local entertainment” stated Amanda Throgmorton of the Welcome Home Planning Committee. “The entertainment line-up for the evening includes Daniel Brothers Band and Whiskey and Rust**

**The Welcome Home Ceremony will begin at 8:45pm with Emcee Steve Falat from River Radio and Matt Throgmorton from Byassee Music and Sound will be singing the National Anthem.**

**Limited parking is available on Airport grounds. The planning committee encourages the general public to utilize the transportation busses from off-site parking locations.**

**T-Street Rides, Shawnee Mass Transit District, Jackson County Mass Transit District and Veterans Honor Flight of Southern Illinois are happy to provide park and ride transportation services at no cost from locations including Sam’s Club and Cornerstone Church. Buses will depart from these off-site parking locations throughout the event, approximately every 20 minutes beginning at 5 p.m. to ensure everyone has easy access to the event.**

**The Welcome Home committee encourages the general public to bring Welcome Home banners and flags to the ceremony and wear patriotic attire.**

**If anyone has any questions or needs assistance when they arrive at the Airport, they can ask any one of the more than 350 volunteers stationed at various points throughout the Airport grounds and Terminal lobby. All volunteers will be wearing bright orange lanyards.**

**“We hope everyone will come out to the Airport and help us welcome home our Veterans. We want the Veterans to witness a sea of red, white and blue when they depart the plane.” stated Hogg.**

**Veterans that have been on previous Honor Flights are also encouraged to come out in your red shirts and have VIP access at the Welcome Home Celebration.**

**Veterans Honor Flight of Southern Illinois is an established 501c3 non-profit hub of the Honor Flight network. All expenses for this one-day trip are covered by Veterans Honor Flight of Southern Illinois including the flight, ground transportation, meals, and beverages. The trip is provided absolutely free of charge to the veterans.**

**Veterans Honor Flight of Southern Illinois is implemented solely by volunteers with 96.5 cents of every dollar donated going straight to the Veterans.**

**For additional information or to apply to become a Guardian, Volunteer or Honor Flight Veteran, visit our website [www.veteranshonorflight.org](http://www.veteranshonorflight.org)**