



*The participants in Old Dominion Honor Flight mission six posing on the amphitheater steps at Arlington National Cemetery, April 20. Post 284 members Tom Yench and Dick Cole were among the veterans who participated. The veterans are in blue shirts, the “guardians” (escorts) are in yellow shirts, and the medical personnel are in red shirts. (Photo courtesy Old Dominion Honor Flight)*

## Two Post members participate in Honor Flight trip

By Dick Cole  
Editor

It was a perfect day as we gathered at VFW Post 9808 in Mechanicsville on Saturday, April 20. The skies were bright blue, there was a nice breeze and the temperature was in the high 60s.

I drove myself to Post 9808 and arrived right at 6:30 a.m. I met my guardian (escort) Erin Reynolds, and her 11-year-old son Connor, who is training to be a guardian. After a quick breakfast and ceremonies that included Congressman Rob Whittman (R-VA 1st District), we boarded our assigned busses for the ride to the Marine Corps Museum at Quantico. As we got onto I-295, heading north, we pulled on the interstate directly behind the Honor Flight busses carrying participants from the Gloucester/Williamsburg area. With them were American Legion Riders from Newport News and Richmond on their motorcycles to escort us to the museum.

We were able to take a quick tour of the museum, spending about an hour there, before heading to the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Following the visit to the World War II Memorial, we again boarded the busses to travel down the Mall to park at the Lincoln Memorial and tour the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Korean War Me-

morial. While at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, my young guardian-in-training, Cooper, pinned me with the Vietnam Veteran’s pin.

Most of the participants in mission six were Vietnam veterans, although we did have a handful of Korean War vets and one World War II veteran as part of the group.

Following the visit to the Vietnam and Korean War memorials, we traveled to Arlington National Cemetery. We observed a changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was the first time during a visit to the tomb that I observed the sentinel standing guard and the relief guard commander were women. Following our viewing of the 4 p.m. changing of the guard ceremony, we posed for the photo at the top of this page.

We departed Arlington and traveled to the Knights of Pythias Lodge 22 in Fredericksburg for dinner. Following dinner, we again boarded the busses for our return to VFW Post 9808 in Mechanicsville. Upon our arrival, we were greeted by fire trucks and a good sized crowd welcoming us home.

I will admit it was a long day, but it was a great day. I am glad I participated. Everyone I came in contact with was great. I felt welcomed, appreciated and well cared for.

The Old Dominion Honor Flight conducts missions twice a year—one in April and one in October. If you



*Wheelchair-bound veterans observe the Sentinel standing guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. They are accompanied by their guardians and medical personnel. During our visit to Washington, D.C., we crossed paths with Honor Flights from Dayton, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, Penn. (Photo by Dick Cole)*

are interested in participating in the October mission, I would encourage you to apply. You can do so by going to <https://olddominionhonorflight.org/apply-now>.

If you, a loved one or a friend served in military uniform from World War II to Vietnam, you are eligible to participate for a FREE trip to Washington D.C. to see the memorials built to honor the sacrifices you made and to the many whom were lost protecting our right to freedom.

Veteran applications are taken in the order they are submitted, the order of war/conflict they served and medical situations such as being terminal. Example: A Vietnam Veteran or later could submit an application and they would be entered into their database; however as Korean, Cold War or World War II applications continue to come in, they will be placed ahead based on their war/conflict time frame. Veterans of Vietnam should consider applying now and getting into their database.

On my application, I qualified as both a Cold War and Vietnam War veteran and was included on the April mission immediately after applying.



*Above: A diorama of a UH-34 helicopter unloading Marines in Vietnam in the lobby of the National Marine Corps Museum. Numerous full-size dioramas are part of the museum's displays. The Marine Museum was our first stop on the day's activities. Below: The World War II Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The busses were able to park adjacent to the memorial, which helped reduce the walking for the older veterans on the trip. (Photos by Dick Cole)*

