

# HONOR SOCIETY

Lake County Honor Flight program rewards veterans with a trip to Washington D.C., where they visit monuments and build friendships that can last a lifetime.

BY MITCH HURST  
THE NORTH SHORE WEEKEND

A few weeks ago, when Army veteran Dorothea Barclay boarded her flight to Washington, D.C., she knew she was going to visit the city's many monuments and also bond with fellow veterans.

What she didn't know was that the trip would help heal some old emotional wounds she suffered during her years in the Army.

Barclay, a resident of Waukegan, was one

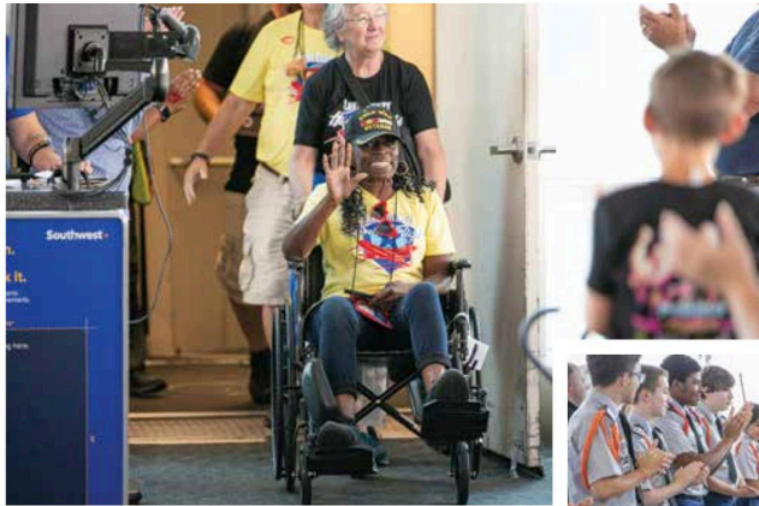
of 15 participants in the Lake County Honor flight, which celebrates America's veterans with a multi-day trip to Washington, D.C. to honor their service. Barclay says she wanted to participate in the trip because of the trauma she endured which caused her to suffer from PTSD.

stories about the honor flight and that the experience was therapeutic. It was beyond what words can say. It made me feel whole again." Paula Carballido co-founded Lake Forest Honor Flight in 2013. The organization sponsors three flights a year, and this month's trip was the group's 22nd to date, 463 veterans have had the opportunity to participate in the program. It is one of the few honor flight programs that sponsor overnight trips. Veterans tour DC for three days.

"We meet in North Chicago and then charter a bus to Mitchell Airport in Milwaukee.

and they taught me when they returned home, they did not have the same respect from their communities as World War II veterans," she says. "The veterans start get a sense of healing throughout the journey, and now we joke that donations from members of the community. Carballido says she inspired by a veteran named Frank who was a member of the Black World War II Navy Veterans of Great Lakes, the group that erected the veteran's memorial in North Chicago.

and they taught me when they returned home, they did not have the same respect from their communities as World War II veterans," she says. "The veterans start get a sense of healing throughout the journey, and now we joke that



Veterans Antonio "Tony" Tellez (above) and Dorothea Barclay were honored during the Lake Forest Honor Flight trip to Washington, D.C. earlier this month. Photography by Janelle Rominski

we start out as strangers, then we become friends, and by day three we are family."

Antonio "Tony" Tellez has participated in two trips with Great Lakes Honor Flight, one as a guardian and more recently as a veteran. Tellez is Mexican by birth and grew up in Waukegan. He began serving in the Marine Corps in 1971 and says the honor flight trips are unique.

"You're not just going for a day like most of the honor flight chapters do. It's a three-day event, so you really get to bond with your fellow veterans," says Tellez. "It's more than having gone on a trip with a bunch of people. It was totally amazing. It took a couple of days to come down from the high."

For Barclay, who was the only female veteran on the August flight, she felt a sense of the camaraderie she yearned for when she first entered the Army.

"I was by these gentlemen, and they showed respect, love, caring, and dignity, everything that I had originally signed up for or be connected with," she says.

For more information or to donate to Lake County Honor Flight, visit [lakecountyhonorflight.org](http://lakecountyhonorflight.org).

We have a total of 15 veterans on every flight and each has a guardian, so with volunteers there's a total of 64 passengers," Carballido says. "We go to the Vietnam and Korean War memorials, the World War II Memorial, the Air Force and Marine Corp memorials, Navy Memorial Plaza, and Arlington Cemetery for the Changing of the Guard ceremony."

Lake County Honor Flight has a few corporate funders, including Southwest Airlines which has donated airline tickets, but the majority of its funding is derived from smaller

of 15 participants in the Lake County Honor flight, which celebrates America's veterans with a multi-day trip to Washington, D.C. to honor their service. Barclay says she wanted to participate in the trip because of the trauma she endured which caused her to suffer from PTSD.

"I have been in a women's group and fortunately through the V.A. received therapy the last five years," Barclay says. "I had heard

"He inspired me to do honor flights even before I knew honor flights in general. We took six local veterans to Washington, D.C. to visit the Martin Luther King Memorial in 2012, just a year after it was unveiled," Carballido says. "We all wanted to see that memorial, but then since they were all veterans, we decided to see the other memorials."

A year later, Carballido applied to the national umbrella organization for honor flights and in 2013 the Lake Forest Honor Flight program was launched. Carballido says it's the most rewarding volunteer work she's ever done.

"The Vietnam and Korean War veterans are the majority of who come on the flights now