Local vets take Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.

SUBMITTED CONTENT

Local area veterans John Sergent and Danny Duncan recently participated in the Columbus (Ohio) Honor Flight Program.

"It was awesome," Sergent said. "Fantastic!"

Duncan said, "This was a once-on-a-lifetime event. Pictures and videos will never replace the atmosphere of being there."

Nearly 75 veterans participated in this day-long trip to the nation's capital honoring veterans from previous military campaigns.

Veterans were treated to a two-night hotel stay, an airplane flight to and from the nation's capital, breakfast, lunch and dinner plus transportation to many of the monuments and memorials they attended.

Two veterans were assigned one guardian, members of the Honor Flight Columbus group, who would help with keeping them hydrated and, if needed, push wheelchairs throughout the day as well as meet other needs a veteran might need.

Veterans visited the Marine Corps Iwo Jima memorial and Arlington National Cemetery, where they witnessed the changing of the guard of the Unknown Soldier as well as laying of the wreath at this tomb.

Then veterans were taken to the Navy Museum and had lunch there.

Next up was the World War II Memorial, located at one end of the Reflecting Pool. From there, veterans were taken to the Lincoln Memorial and visited a host of monuments in this area.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Veterans John Sergent and Danny Duncan are pictured at a memorial wall in Washington D.C.

One memorial displayed digitized names resembling etched names of all veterans or current members of the Armed Forces. Displayed names rotate about every minute but because of the huge database they could request their name be shown in a special window.

During this visit, veterans also saw the Korean War Veterans Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

Following dinner at the Military Women's Memorial, veterans were bused to the Reagan National Airport to board the flight taking them back to Columbus.

One of the highlights of the entire trip happened as the veterans deplaned and entered the terminal. They were greeted by hundreds of people who had formed a line, shaking hands and thanking veterans for their service, while offering words of encouragement.

For many on that flight, that "Welcome Home" reception was something many never received because the nation was sharply divided on how many felt about America's involvement in Vietnam.

"The feeling I received while exiting the terminal is something that affected me greatly," Duncan said. "I was nearly moved to tears because of the reception I received. It's a moment in my life I will never forget."

Each veteran received a Certificate of Recognition for his or her participation in this Honor Flight.

This event is scheduled for two or three times a year, and there is never a cost to veterans as the entire event is financed through donations by various organizations, under the direction of Honor Flight Columbus.

To learn more about the Columbus Honor Flight or if you are a veteran and would like to attend the next Honor Flight, visit their website at www.honorflightcmh.org to start the application process.

County shines light on archery, sportsplex projects

BY AARON SNYDER
THE DAILY INDEPENDENT

CATLETTSBURG The Boyd County Fiscal Court voted to enter into negotiations on a request for proposal on the construction and renovation of an archery center at Camp Landing Entertainment District, pending a contract with Easton.

Commissioner Jeremy Holbrook said Easton has a program called Bring Archery To Your Community.

"They're attempting to build multiple archery facilities," Holbrook said, "... and Boyd County is the first one listed to be developed."

This will be in addition to but physically separate from the new sports complex dome.

Holbrook said House Bill 900 allows for funding ($350,000) to be used for this project.

Easton would match that amount.

If/when it comes to fruition, the Easton Center would host tournaments, even Olympic-sized events, in a 12,600-square-foot space inside of Camp Landing.

"It's an incredible opportunity to be the first," Holbrook said.

According to Holbrook, 800 students in Boyd County participate in NASP (National Archery in the Schools Program).

The NASP is available for fifth- through 12th-grade archers.

"They all use the same bow ... so it's a level playing field," Holbrook said. In Kentucky, 14,000 students competed at the most recent state tournament.

The sports complex — a 110,000 square-foot inflatable dome — will featured 35,000 square feet of turf and six full basketball courts.

Judge-Executive Eric Chaney said that includes space for volleyball, wrestling, and "anything you can possibly imagine."

Chaney mentioned expos, conventions, gun shows, lawn-and-garden events, Comic Cons and more.

"It's a great project for the community," Chaney said. "We're talking 110,000 to 120,000 square feet of wide open floor space to do whatever you can do in."

He said the county is working on partnering with schools for after-school programs and other events in the space.

"It's a long time coming," Chaney said. "In the spring time, we'll be ready to go."

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SUBMITTED PHOTO

The 110,000 square-foot air-supported dome at Camp Landing Entertainment District is designed to expand access to indoor sports, training and community programming. It will feature flexible turf for baseball and soccer, multi-use court space for basketball, volleyball and pickle ball, youth and adult sports, leagues, camps, clinics, tournaments and community events.

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