

Honor Flight makes an impact

This one-day tour of war memorials in the nation's capital makes a heartfelt impact on the participating veterans.

"The Honor Flight trip was such a blessing," said Darrell Waterfill of Harrodsburg, one of two veterans sponsored by BGEnergy on the 2017 Honor Flight. Along with Mr. Waterfill was Ben Kurtz of Lexington.

Full story on page 28B.



Honor Flight participant Darrell Waterfill locates names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Photo: Tim Webb

Message from the President

Thankful for Independence

As another Fourth of July approaches, let us not forget what this day in history signifies. It marks the day of our country's independence and the adoption of the Declaration of Independence.

This monumental day did not come without great sacrifice from military veterans, many who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our independence, as well as

the numerous service men and women who have served since.

Many of us celebrate this holiday with fireworks, parades and picnics with our families. But this day would not have been possible if it weren't for the brave men and women who have served our nation. It is in that spirit of freedom that I celebrate Independence Day.

I offer sincere thanks to all our current military personnel and veterans for their dedicated service to our nation. Veterans like Mr. Darrell Waterfill and Mr. Ben Kurtz. It was our honor to sponsor these two men on our last Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. During this one-day

trip, they were able to see the memorials to the wars in which they fought. In this issue of *Blue Grass Living*, you will read about their service and Honor Flight experience. We owe them, and many others, so much for protecting our country; and our participation in Honor Flight is just a small way we can say thank you.

So, if you see Mr. Waterfill or Mr. Kurtz, or any other current or former service member, be sure to shake their hand and tell them how much you appreciate what they have done for our country.

I hope each of you have a safe, enjoyable holiday.



Michael I. Williams
President & CEO

Flag-waving crowd packed Blue Grass Airport

Darrell Waterfill of Harrodsburg and Ben Kurtz of Lexington met 65 other Kentucky veterans at Blue Grass Airport early on the morning of September 16, 2017, all participating in a one-day Honor Flight.

The veterans participated in a one-day tour of war memorials in the nation's capital. This was the seventh Honor Flight sponsored by Blue Grass Energy and Kentucky's Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. The mission was coordinated by Winchester-based Honor Flight Kentucky.

Several of the veterans, who served during World War II, Korea and Vietnam, said it was the best day of their lives.

"This was the most wonderful thing I've ever been to," said Darrell Waterfill. "It meant the world to me as a Vietnam veteran. It showed people cared about our fight over there."

When the veterans arrived at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport that morning, cheerleaders, football players and other citizens clapped as a chorus from the U.S. Military Academy sang patriotic songs.

"The experience at the airport was unbelievable," commented Waterfill.

After boarding three buses, a police escort cleared highway traffic

and took them directly to the Air Force Memorial and the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery, the group watched the changing of the guard and participated in an emotional wreath-laying ceremony.

Throughout the day, people greeted the veterans with smiles, requests for photos and many thanks for their sacrifices in the cause of freedom.

The group also toured memorials dedicated to the veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Representing 36 Kentucky counties, the veterans included 19 from World War II, 36 from Korea and 12 from Vietnam.

"The statues at the Korean memorial looked just like we did as soldiers in Vietnam," said Waterfill. "That was us right there."

Prior to the return flight to Lexington, the veterans were treated to a nostalgic "mail call," receiving letters from home just as when they were young servicemen. Friends, family, school children, electric co-op employees, church groups and many others



and welcomed veterans home from Honor Flight



They received a hero's welcome home that night from flag-waving citizens who filled the entire terminal at Lexington's Blue Grass Airport.

"The Honor Flight trip was such a blessing," said Waterfill.

Clockwise from top: Veteran Darrell Waterfill, seated next to his son, David Waterfill, opens letters during "mail call." Veteran Ben Kurtz and his grandson, Patrick Johnson, arrive at the celebration at Blue Grass Airport. Blue Grass Energy friends and family greet the veterans as they return home. Ben Kurtz and his grandson pose for a photo.

Photos: Tim Webb



wrote letters and sent cards that helped make the day memorable.

As a bagpipe band led the returning veterans through the Lexington terminal, more than 1,500 family members and citizens waved "Welcome Home" signs and shook their hands.



How to reach us

24-Hour Service: (888) 546-4243

Automated payment: (877) 934-9491

Report an outage: (888) 655-4243
bgenergy.com

Headquarters

P.O. Box 990
1201 Lexington Road
Nicholasville, KY 40340-0990

District Offices

P.O. Box 730
327 Sea Biscuit Way
Cynthiana, KY 41031-0730

P.O. Box 150
1200 Versailles Road
Lawrenceburg, KY 40342-0150

P.O. Box 276
2099 Berea Road
Richmond, KY 40476-0276

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Road To Recovery®

Road to Recovery program solves transportation issues for cancer patients

Most everyone knows someone who has had cancer and Blue Grass Energy member, Martha Shouldis, is no different. Martha and her husband were living in Connecticut when one of her close friends was diagnosed with cancer and was in need of assistance with transportation to her treatments. Martha was able to help with this very real need. "For my friend, these trips provided time for her to talk about a wide range of topics including her illness and how she was coping," Martha says. "For me, it was an opportunity to support her, in this small way, in her battle against cancer."



BGEnergy member Martha Shouldis is a volunteer driver for the ACS Road to Recovery program.

Martha continued to drive her friend to treatment until she and her husband moved to Nicholasville in October 2017. Martha started to look for volunteer opportunities and when she found the American Cancer Society's (ACS) Road To Recovery program, she knew it was a good match. Road to Recovery is a volunteer program that provides free transportation for people who do not have a ride or are unable to drive themselves to treatment.

Martha is part of the local Road to Recovery program which covers Fayette and surrounding counties. In 2017, this program provided 43 patients with 1,037 rides.

The Road to Recovery program is currently in need of volunteer drivers in Madison, Clark, Bourbon, Montgomery, Fayette, Jessamine, Woodford, Franklin, Anderson and Scott counties. Volunteer drivers donate their time and the use of their vehicles so patients can receive the cancer-related treatments they need. "Every driver has what it takes to help save lives," says Kelsey Lewis, the manager of this program for the ACS. "We're seeking drivers in the Bluegrass area to donate their passenger seat and volunteer to take cancer patients to treatment."

To volunteer, you must have a valid driver's license, a safe and reliable vehicle and proof of insurance. Drivers must be at least 18 years old with a good driving history. They arrange their own schedules and decide how many hours they can manage. The ACS provides free training to drivers and conducts criminal background and driving record checks. To volunteer, contact Kelsey Lewis at kelsey.lewis@cancer.org or (859) 260-8285.

Each year, Blue Grass Energy chooses a charity to work with for the year. We partner with a local nonprofit organization that benefits the communities in which we live and serve. Our fundraising efforts for the entire year go to that cause. This year, we are partnering with the American Cancer Society.