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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oconomowoc-Hartland Masonic Lodge Sends Three Pillars Veterans on Honor Flights

Operation Freedom fundraising initiative covers guardian expenses for seven veterans and counting



Dousman, WI, May 29, 2017 – If you had asked 98-year old Russ Selbo last month if he ever imagined he'd travel on a whirlwind 18-hr flight to and from Washington, D.C. this month, he would've thought no. But instead, this WWII veteran is still flying high as he recuperates from one of the most memorable days of his life. "Traveling on a Stars & Stripes Honor Flight was a truly amazing day," reflected Russ.



Russ Selbo, Three Pillars resident, with volunteer guardian Tim Behling from the Oconomowoc-Hartland Masonic Lodge – traveled on the May 2017 Stars & Stripes Honor Flight after encouragement and funding from *Operation Freedom*.

So why the Honor Flight this year? The answer is due to encouragement from *Operation Freedom*. This new initiative, spearheaded by the Oconomowoc-Hartland Masonic Lodge #42, has brought Three Pillars Senior Living Communities and the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight together on a mission to send all eligible Three Pillars veterans on an Honor Flight. In addition to raising awareness and offering encouragement to the residents who may have never thought they'd be able or deserving of going, *Operation Freedom* also covers the cost of all accompanying guardian expenses for the flight.

Stars and Stripes Honor Flight, Inc., has been honoring veterans with flights since 2008. Whether they've served stateside or abroad, saw combat or not, Stars and Stripes seeks to express thanks and honor all with a trip to see memorials in Washington, D.C. during an unforgettable experience with fellow veterans. While flights are completely free for the veteran, a guardian accompanies each traveler to ensure their wellbeing throughout the day. To cover the guardian's travel expenses, a \$500 fee is associated, and Oconomowoc-Hartland #42 is committed to raising funds to cover these fees.

Approximately 68 individuals who live at the Dousman Three Pillars campus are veterans – the majority are eligible for an Honor Flight but have not yet participated. Thanks to encouragement and financial support through *Operation Freedom*

Freedom, seven veterans had the joy of participating in April and May Honor Flights, three have secured a spot to fly in June, six have applied to participate in the fall, and still more are completing their applications in hopes of flying on future flights. Over \$7,500 has been raised to support these deserving veterans, and the outpouring of support from the community has touched their hearts. For more information about Operation Freedom, including how to make a gift online to support future Honor Flights for Three Pillars residents and guardians, visit the Three Pillars website: www.threepillars.org/Get-Involved/Charitable-Giving.htm.

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For more information about this story or Three Pillars Senior Living Communities, please contact Kelsey Pangborn, Communication Strategist at 262.965.7333 or kpangborn@threepillars.org.



Three Pillars' resident Bob Kappel traveled on the April 2017 Stars & Stripes Honor Flight with his son, Mark, thanks to Operation Freedom.

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