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NEWS RELEASE

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Lovell FHCC World War II Veteran outpatient goes on Honor Flight

At age of 87, Wildwood resident William Jones Jr. sees WWII Memorial for first time

NORTH CHICAGO, Ill. – Captain James A. Lovell Federal Health Care Center outpatient William “Bill” Jones, Jr., of Wildwood, Ill., was among a group of 85 Veterans on the April 17 Honor Flight Chicago to Washington D.C.

“The Honor Flight did more for us than we ever expected,” said Bill Jones, who was a gunner in the Navy, serving in the Pacific Theater. “It was my first trip back to Washington D.C. since I was in the service in 1941. I’m grateful that I was able to see our nation’s Capitol again,” said Jones, who was honorably discharged as a Petty Officer 3rd Class after four years of service.

The day of honor for his selfless service was long overdue, son Phillip Jones, of Zion, wrote in a provided letter before the flight. “As a young man of 17, Bill decided one day that he would visit a recruiter’s office instead of attending high school. While talking with the recruiter, he decided to join the United States Navy, and would follow in his two older brothers’ footsteps – Fredrick Jones (U.S. Air Force) and Robert Jones (U.S. Navy).

“Soon after Bill joined the Navy, he found himself overseas defending our great nation along with his brothers,” Phillip Jones wrote about his father. “While serving, he was unaware that he would soon become a third of the inspiration to his two younger brothers, who would also follow suit: John Jones (U.S. Air Force) and Charles Jones (U.S. Air Force). Although John and Charlie were too young to serve in World War II, they would both find themselves defending our country once again during both the Korean and Vietnam Wars.”

With all five of their sons voluntarily joining the military, Phillip Jones said he could only imagine what their parents – William Jones Sr. and Susan Jones of Pana, Ill. – must have experienced. “They were most definitely proud of their sons but were also very worried. Susan was known to visit the local church each day, praying that her sons would be protected from harm.”

William and Susan Jones would eventually have their prayers answered as each of their five sons finished their tours of duty and return home unharmed. “While the Jones family was truly blessed, it is no secret that other families were not so fortunate,” Phillip Jones wrote.

“Countless men and women suffered life-altering injuries, spilling both blood and tears as others unfortunately paid the ultimate price, sacrificing their own lives so that we, the younger generation, may relish in the blanket of freedom that they provided,” Phillip Jones wrote. “One thing is for certain, these men and woman who came before us, truly paved the way. They opened the doors of opportunity that were once closed so that we can prosper in the life we live today. Although we will never be able to truly understand the sacrifices they offered, or the faith and

courage needed to overcome the obstacles before them, we can take a moment to embrace their love for this country.”

Bill Jones and other Chicago-area WW II Veterans – each with a personal escort – were treated to an all-expense paid flight to and from Washington D.C., where they received special tours of the WWII Memorial and other monuments. At the end of the long day, family, friends and supporters gathered at Midway Airport to welcome the Veterans home with hugs and large envelopes of personal letters of thanks.

“I didn’t know what to expect, and when I got there, it was an amazing and wonderful experience that the Honor Flight organization provided,” said Zion resident Donna Goetz, a Lovell FHCC employee and oldest daughter of Bill Jones. “I was moved by the enthusiasm and joy of all the other families and friends who came to pay tribute and honor these World War II Veterans.”

Bill Jones is a lifetime resident of Wildwood, and has been married 55 years to Rose (Perez) Jones. His other children are Brad Jones, Gurnee, and Linda Goheen, Park City. Honor Flight Chicago is a not for profit organization that has flown approximately 4,000 WWII Veterans to Washington D.C. More information is available at www.honorflightchicago.org.

Suggested photo and cutline information follows.

About the Lovell FHCC: The Lovell FHCC was established Oct. 1, 2010, as the nation’s only fully integrated Department of Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense federal health care center. The center has a dual mission of caring for Veterans and ensuring the medical and dental readiness of U.S. Navy recruits and sailors serving in the region. Lovell FHCC, which is located in North Chicago, operates four Great Lakes Naval Station medical clinics and three community based outpatient clinics in McHenry and Evanston, Ill. and Kenosha, Wis. The facility also serves military families and retirees.



William “Bill” Jones, Jr. of Wildwood (left) and James Gorman of Libertyville enjoyed a long day with the Honor Flight Chicago in Washington D.C. (Photo Provided by Donna Goetz)