

## PROJECT MAIL CALL

Dear Guardian, family members and friends: *for Jimmie*

**(KEEP IN MIND YOU MAY BE THE ONLY PERSON RECEIVING THIS LETTER!)**

Your veteran was willing to risk their life to protect family and country many years ago. Now, as they prepare for their Kansas Honor Flight trip, we're asking you to **help to give them the recognition and appreciation that they so richly deserve**. What we're asking is that you – and other family, friends and others who know them – take a few minutes to **share your appreciation for their service by putting your thoughts into a letter and mail it to us NO LATER THAN May 23rd at the address below**. Yes, it's an old-fashioned way to communicate – but here's why a letter is such a powerful way to say thank you.

One of the biggest moments in the day of any soldier's life was the arrival of a letter from home. The letter brought word from friends and family and it was always a highlight to know those at home were thinking of them.

The goal of PROJECT MAIL CALL is to provide each of our veterans with at least one or more "letters from home" that we'll hand out during our banquet Wednesday evening. Past Honor Flight veterans tell us that hearing from family and friends through "Mail Call" was one of the highlights of their trip! Remember: this is **TOP SECRET**, so don't tell the vet. Following are some tips to consider, and a sample letter in case you're not sure what to say.

- Make sure the typed print is large enough for them to read — handwritten letters are even better!
- Pictures and drawings from grandchildren and great-grandchildren would be great..
- Be sure to sign the letter.
- Mail letters to:
  - VETERAN'S First name and Last name
  - Kansas Honor Flight #71
  - P.O. Box 16028
  - Wichita, Kansas 671216
- You may also email the letter to [shirley.mcphail@att.net](mailto:shirley.mcphail@att.net); we'll print them out and put them in an envelope.
- You may also bring the letter(s) with you to the Hilton in Baltimore to give to the leaders as soon as you check in; however mailing is preferred so that we may sort them.

Please enlist the help of others in your community: a pastor, members of your church, the coffee klatch, a neighbor, or members of your clubs. These veterans fought for our FREEDOM. The least we can do is take five minutes to tell them how much we appreciate them and their service while we still can.

**(SAMPLE VETERAN LETTER FROM A NON-FAMILY MEMBER)**

Dear (name):

I'm happy for you to have the chance to go on an Honor Flight trip. As a veteran, your commitment to defend our country puts you among a small group of citizens willing to risk your own life to protect our way of life. Those of us in the United States and other free countries owe you our deepest gratitude for the courage to do so.

Although I can't possibly know the sacrifices you and your family and friends made during your military service, I know it couldn't have been an easy road to travel – either during your service and afterward, readjusting to civilian life again. Those of us who have never been in the military have been spared that life by those of you who did your duty not only for yourself, but for all the rest of us.

My dad served in World War II, although he remained Stateside, and my brother did a hard year's tour in Vietnam during his Army stint. We and they were lucky they both came home without physical injuries, although both carried the burden of wartime service. I cannot possibly imagine how my mother lived through the possibility and then the reality of one of our family members going overseas to a war zone – and that he might never return. My brother still doesn't talk about Vietnam.

I wish you could know how much what you've done by serving is appreciated by so many people. You are respected and admired for your courage. In an era where military service isn't experienced by many, those of you who have already done your tours are rare birds whose commitment to your country deserves celebration, recognition, the deepest respect, and our everlasting gratitude. I salute you.

Respectfully,

\_\_\_\_\_  
YOUR NAME

Ideas for letter-writers:

- What do you remember most about their military service?
- How did you feel when they left, while they was gone and when they returned?
- What are you proudest of about their service?
- What do you tell others about their service?
- What do their friends, neighbors, children, say to you about their service?
- What does it mean to you that they served their country?