

June 2016 Client Corner: Honor Flight

Larry Trine, a client of KFM for over 22 years, was last featured in a Client Corner email back in 1995 when Larry (a great golfer) “shot his age” 3 times in the same month. This is quite an achievement and an admirable goal for every golfer.

When we had our last update meeting, Larry shared that he had been invited to participate in Honor Flight by his close friend, Tim Daniels. Honor Flight is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing veterans with honor and closure. Their mission is to transport America’s Veterans to Washington, DC to visit those memorials dedicated to honor the service and sacrifices of themselves and their friends. www.honorflight.org

Larry wasn’t quite convinced he should participate, since he wasn’t part of the action in the World War II as it ended shortly after he volunteered. But his daughter encouraged him because of the honor he was bestowing on all of this friends and family that had also served our Country. You could only imagine that I had to follow up with Larry after he got home so we could share about his trip with you.

Two weeks prior to Larry’s trip, all of the participants were gathered together as a “meet and greet”. Each Veteran received the opportunity to share the name, rank, duties and experiences as a Veteran serving our Country. The leader of the trip explained all the details of the trip and each participant was provided a jacket and two shirts with instructions on what to wear for each event. Each of the participants was provided a “guardian”. In Larry’s case, it was his good friend, Tim. The guardians were appointed to make sure all of the travel was smooth and to make sure each participant was well cared for.



Larry boarded the plane to DC in San Louis Obispo, California. The first leg was to Phoenix, Arizona where the plane was greeted by a water cannon showering the plane as it pulled into the gate. As they went to their next plane, 100 people were at the gate to cheer them on as they departed on their flight to Baltimore, Maryland. When their plane landed in Maryland, they were greeted by yet another water cannon.

The first night they had a dinner at the Hilton, which again gave the opportunity to meet all of the Veterans on the trip along with their respective guardians. The next morning, they experienced the Changing of the Guard at Arlington National Cemetery, a first for Larry. They toured the Vietnam, Korean and World War II Memorials. Larry was greatly impressed by the volunteers that answered any and all questions posed by the Veterans. The finished the day with an up close and personal tour of the Washington Monument where they learned how and when it was constructed.



The following day they boarded a bus to Annapolis where they toured the entire facility. Larry was most impressed by the church located in the center of the property. The church had the largest pipe organ he had ever seen with 150 stops. In Larry's words, the Chapel Organist, Monte Maxwell, was a "virtuoso" playing Bach and Beethoven like nothing he has ever heard or witnessed before. The day was completed by

spending the evening at the National Air and Space Museum when stories were shared by all the participants. The two days were "hard to believe" for Larry. It was such a feeling of honor to be a part of the group.

On their way back home on the trip from Baltimore, the leader of the trip yelled out "Mail Call" in the middle of the flight. Letters from family, friends and strangers were handed to each of the Veterans on the trip. Larry was most impressed by one of the letters he received from a grade school student who wrote a full page letter. What impressed Larry the most was the understanding that "there are teachers out there that care about the past and are teaching young students about the wars and why the students ought to be grateful for what all of the Veterans have done."



Once they reached Phoenix, they once again were greeted by a water cannon and each Veteran was introduced as they walked into the airport. Once again, a crowd was gathered to cheer them on. When they arrived back in San Luis Obispo, they were greeted a final time by a water canon on the runway. Two armed officers in full uniform saluted each veteran as they walked off the plane. The local police and fire departments had also gathered to welcome them home.

One could only imagine this trip for Larry was an incredible honor and perhaps a bit surreal. While there were no political speeches or grandstanding done by anyone along the trip, it was the thrill of a lifetime for Larry.

Larry, thank you for sharing your story and for serving our Country!