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Two Generations of Air Force Veterans Reflect on Honor Flight

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Two Generations of Air Force Veterans Reflect on Honor Flight By Matt Bauer

Photo 1 Caption: Air Force veterans Norbert Bauer and Matt Bauer

Photo 1 Credit: Will Davis/WYSO

Photo 2 Caption: Norbert Bauer shows off his official Honor Flight t-shirt

Photo 2 Credit: Will Davis/WYSO

Today our Veterans Voices series continues with the Honor Flight Network, a non-profit organization that celebrates America's veterans by transporting them to Washington D.C. to visit their memorials. Air Force veteran, and Wright State student Matt Bauer of Vandalia spoke to his grandfather, Air Force veteran Norbert Bauer about his recent Honor Flight trip, and his military service.

Transcript:

Matt Bauer (MB): You were in Alaska for two years.

Norbert Bauer (NB): Two years.

MB: Because that was during...

NB: That was doing the Korean War.

MB: Right. So what was your job during that time?

NB: I was in the Air Rescue group up there, and one of our planes did crash and we'd bring them back in body bags. And one of the guys they brought back was the roommate that lived right across the hall from me.

MB: That's horrible.

NB: It sure is.

MB: What about during the Vietnam conflict? What was your job and where were you at during that time?

NB: If you look at a world map, I was right above Hanoi.

MB: Oh, wow.

NB: We supported the F-4 fighters.

MB: That's got to be a pretty cool job. Is the rumor true that fire pilots are all a bunch of arrogant people, is that true?

NB: No comment, cause I got a bunch of friends.

MB: Understood, understood. So you said you've been all 50 states and I'm going to include... You've been to DC just recently.

NB: I've been down to DC for the Honor Flight.

MB: Explain what the Honor Flight is.

NB: Only certain cities have this and Dayton is one of them. They fly you to DC on a charter plane. They have buses escort you to different memorials.

MB: How was your day structured? Do you go directly to the memorials or is there like a briefing?

NB: My day consisted of me getting up at 2 o'clock in the morning, maybe an hour or so we're flying to Washington, get off the plane there and there's a bunch of people greeting us there hollering, ranting, singing, hollering. So then they police escort through Washington DC...

MB: Wow, it's like you're the president.

NB: I think we were higher than the president. But that gives you a chance to maybe close your eyes for a few minutes.

MB: Well, you've been up since 2 so I hope you'd get a little naptime

NB: Well it's very short. But we started at the Lincoln Memorial, and almost shaking hands with Lincoln sitting in his chair. And then we went to the Korean Memorial, we went to the Vietnam Memorial... And it's really pathetic to see all these names... that these people were killed. To retain your sanity, I have to say a prayer for them, and move on. And previously somebody contacted one of your family members and everybody who could would write a letter to tell you what they value, what you did, what have you. So they have a big 9 x 12 envelope that has your name on it, and they call out your name and pass it out.

MB: Wow.

NB: It kind of makes the hair on the back of your neck stand up - getting this appreciation you never got before. You're flying high is the simplest way I can explain it. I've been flying since then.

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