

Honor Flight planning 'Super Senior' trip

By Ellen Sussman

Special to the Green Valley News

The Women of Quail Creek knew the guest speaker at Monday's meeting would be Honor Flight volunteer coordinator Kathy Mansur but they had no idea she was bringing along 91-year-old World War II Navy veteran Helen Anderson Glass.

Mansur spoke about the memorable experiences WWII veterans have on the three-day trip to Washington, D.C., made possible by donations. She also told about the important role of guardians, who pay their own way, look after the needs of veterans and ensure their safety.

She gave a brief overview of how Honor Flight started after the World War II Memorial was finally built in 2004.

TO DONATE

The cost to send a World War II veteran on a three-day trip to Washington, D.C., is \$1,000. Donations may be made online by credit card at honorflight-saz.org. Applications to go as a WWII veteran or a guardian are also online.

ON THE RADIO

Don Shearer, editor of the Green Valley News, will interview Honor Flight's Kathy Mansur and a World War II veteran at noon Friday on KVCJ radio, at 1030AM on The Buckmaster Show.

Honor Flight was the idea of Ohio physician's assistant and retired Air Force Capt. Earl Morse,

who learned many veterans assumed they would never see the memorial.

He persuaded 11 pilot buddies to donate their time and private planes to fly local WWII veterans to D.C. The first flight was in May 2005. And the rest is Honor Flight history. There are now 134 hubs in the United States.

Mansur said the next flight by the Southern Arizona hub is June 25-27 and is a "Super Senior" flight because all veterans will be 90 and older. The flight that returned Tuesday was Southern Arizona's 13th flight.

"We have 180 on the waiting list," Mansur said. "We aim for three flights in the spring and three in the fall assuming we have enough funds and guardians."

She told about 50 women there is an urgency to



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HELEN ANDERSON GLASS holds a photo of herself when she was serving in World War II.

send veterans because, "Windows are closing and closing fast."

To date, the Southern Arizona hub has flown close to 400 veterans; 86 have been from the greater Green Valley area.

Mansur introduced Glass, who told about her experiences as a Navy

when she was 22, to Aug. 25, 1945. Glass served as an aviation mechanic and machinist and said she didn't know she had those skills until tested by the Navy.

She told the group how her brother Arthur Anderson was killed at age 22 while serving in the Navy aboard the USS Sa-

vannah in Salerno, Italy.

"The ship was hit a few minutes before 9 a.m. on Sept. 11, 1945," quickly evoking the infamy of the hour and date that has special meaning since 2001.

Glass showed a photo on the back of her patriotic jacket and said, "That was me 71 years ago!"

Active and articulate, Glass writes patriotic poetry and danced spritely at Honor Flight's luncheon for veterans and guardians at the Pima Air and Space Museum in 2012.

"I didn't do much in the service. I just did my job," she said. "I've had a rich life because of service."

"We veterans appreciate everything you do for us."

Peggy McGee, president of TWOQC, finished the evening by presenting Mansur with a check for \$1,000 to pay for WWII veteran Betty Mae Perkins' June trip.

Contact Green Valley freelance reporter Ellen Sussman at ellen2414@cox.net.