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Media Contact:
press@pauliespush.com

PAULIE'S PUSH 3 REACHES HALFWAY POINT TO SHANKSVILLE

Retired Flight Attendant Pushing Airline Beverage Cart 300 Miles in Memory of the Flight Crew of United 93

HARRISBURG, PA – Paul “Paulie” Veneto, the retired flight attendant pushing an airline beverage cart 300 miles from Newark-Liberty International Airport to the Flight 93 National Memorial in Stoystown, PA, reached the halfway point on Sunday, August 27, passing 151 miles on Old Jonestown Road, Grantville, a part of Lebanon County, Pennsylvania.

Paulie’s Push is the effort of retired United Airlines flight attendant Paul Veneto to recognize the heroism of the ‘first, first responders’ of September 11 – the flight crews who perished that day. Veneto was a United Airlines flight attendant in 2001, and was routinely scheduled to fly on United Flight 175.

This year’s Push is Veneto’s third – he previously pushed his cart 220 miles from Boston-Logan International Airport to Ground Zero, Manhattan in 2021, and 35 miles from Washington-Dulles International Airport to the Pentagon National Memorial in 2022. Later that year he was named ‘Hero in Travel’ by travel and aviation blogger The Points Guy. He pushes routes selected to symbolize the flight paths of the four aircraft hijacked by terrorists that day.

The push to Shanksville began on Monday, August 14 with a ceremony held by the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey at Newark-Liberty International Airport. Paulie was later escorted past a water cannon salute and along the tarmac of the airport itself, before being greeted by a number of airport employees as he was lead off of airport grounds.

Over the next seven days Paulie pushed westward through New Jersey, through Essex, Union, Morris, and Warren Counties, meeting members of the communities his route took him through. He pushed into Easton, PA on Saturday, August 19, where a viral social media post with over 5,000 shares lead to dozens of people greeting him along his route in a single day.

“The people coming out to see me are the best part of this,” Veneto says. “I’m pushing this cart to share the story of the flight crews of 9/11. They were the ‘first, first responders’. People come out and they hear the story, and then they share the story, and that’s how it happens – the word gets out.”

Honoring and remembering the flight crews who perished on September 11 is a passion for Veneto.

“In the enormity of everything that happened that day, with all of the heroes that emerged, I just felt that my friends and colleagues weren’t going to receive the recognition that they deserved,” says Veneto. “I wanted their families to hear it said: they died as heroes. And the people I’m meeting on the street all agree – it’s not something they can recall hearing. But they’re hearing it said now, and they’re repeating it, and knowing that I’m a part of that feels so good.”

Veneto spent a rest and media day in Bethlehem, and then passed through Allentown, where he met the mayor, and into South Whitehall Township, where he and his team were met by the police chief and police department and many members of the community, including a retired American Airlines flight attendant who’d worked flight 77 and knew some of those who Veneto had walked for the previous year. Next they went into Upper Macungie, where a group of United Airlines pilots in full uniform were waiting for him.

“People sometimes call these meetings ‘photo ops’, and we do make our best effort to share everything we can across social media and our website, but these meetings are so special – that term really doesn’t do them justice,” says Veneto.

Veneto’s beverage cart is outfitted with a GPS system and a camera system that allows his followers to see his progress along the route in real time, as well as photos from the route. Some of those who’ve come out to meet him say that they’ve followed the real-time mapping system for days at a time, orienteering their way into a perfect position to meet Paulie. Most stop to pose for a picture with him, to hear his story, or to share their own.

“People tell me they’ve waited for hours in the sun, in the rain, just to watch me push my cart past them – how can I not stop and talk to them? I have to stop and talk to them,” Veneto says.

The stories that they share, he says, are priceless.

“I’ve met people who lost loved ones on 9/11. I’ve met people who lost loved ones who survived that day but were so affected by what happened that they succumbed to it later. The stories that people share with me are powerful. I’m just the guy pushing the cart – I say that a lot – but for some of these people I’m a chance to share something from that day, or from the days since, and they take that opportunity. I’ve had people tell me it’s the first time they’ve talked about it. It’s moving, it’s emotional. It’s what keeps me going, what’s going to keep me going all the way to Shanksville.”

Veneto finished Sunday, August 27 with 167.5 miles completed, leaving 133.7 remaining. He plans to push one more day into Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania, before taking a rest day there. Then it’s on to the Flight 93 National Memorial in Stoystown.

“As I’ve pushed each day this has continued to build and build,” Veneto says. “The first few days we got some curious stares, and some questions from onlookers. As the days have gone past, I’m seeing neighbors telling neighbors, people coming to find me who heard I’m coming through town from relatives who live far away. We’ve had escorts from state police, local police, fire departments, EMTs. A man on a bike road behind me with an American flag, just road with me in silence. An EMT coordinator who volunteers his time at 9/11 events road his bike alongside me and gave me a ‘challenge coin’. This story just keeps growing, and I’m so grateful for that – every person I meet is another chance to share the story of these heroes. That’s what it’s all about.”

Some who come out to meet Veneto tell him that they’re moved by his mission to honor his flight attendant friends and colleagues. Others admit that they’ve just come to follow him online because they’re inspired, and find themselves rooting for a 64 year-old retiree pushing an airline beverage cart 300 miles up the hills of Pennsylvania.

Whatever their motivation, Veneto says, he’s grateful to count them as followers.

“I’m pushing this cart for the flight crews of 9/11. At the end of the day, it’s the likes and the shares and the comments and the messages that help expand my mission. I’ll take it from wherever it comes. I’m just grateful that I’m in a position to be able to do this, and I thank anyone and everyone who’s helped me along the way.”

Veneto expects to arrive in the Shanksville area by September 10, and to push into the Flight 93 National Memorial on Monday, September 11.

“I’ve still got a lot of miles ahead of me, but I’ve got a lot of support behind me, too,” he says. “I will make it to Shanksville by September 11, whatever I have to do.”

Followers of Veneto’s journey can visit <http://resport.io/push3> to see his location in real time during the Push. His website is www.pauliespush.com.

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Paulie’s Push is a 501c3 Non Profit Organization registered in the State of Massachusetts. For more information on covering Paulie’s Push, contact press@pauliespush.com. For press releases, the media guide, photos, video and b-roll, visit pauliespush.com/media.