

RFTW Newsletter Online

April 1999 Edition

"The Run For The Wall" Start's 19 May, 1999 @ 0800"

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Change Information

Included on a separate sheet is the updated information on the schedule for this year's run. The major changes are:

1. *We will leave from the **TA Truck Stop at the intersection of I-10 and I-15 in Ontario, California on 19 May, 1999. We will not be leaving from the Queen Mary.***
2. *The first night we will be stopping in Ash Fork, Arizona.*
3. *The second night we will be stopping in Gallup, New Mexico.*

From this point on, the schedule will be the same as before.

General Information

Hopefully by now you've made your reservations for this year's journey. *"The Run For The Wall, XI". We will leave the parking lot of the TA Truck Stop in Ontario, Ca. at precisely 0800 in a two bike abreast formation that we will maintain the entire trip.* You still have time to practice if you are not comfortable riding two abreast in formation. Before departing the parking lot, **all riders will be required to sign-in.** The sign-in has two purposes; first, we need your address to send you future newsletters. Second, a phone number to give us a point of contact



should it become necessary while we're on the road. *Also, a request from the newsletter editor, I would really appreciate it if you would print your information on the sign-in sheet so we all can read it, in case of an emergency.*

Our cross-country journey will take 11 days and cover 10 states. It will include ceremonies put on by veteran and civic organizations; visits to war memorials, VA hospitals, and other stops that are appropriate to make sure our **POW/MIA's** are remembered. There is no need to concern yourself about getting lost, just follow the bike in front of you. Many people have a lot of apprehension about riding 2,600 miles - one way. The truth is we only ride one day at a time. Most of you have had experience doing day rides solo or with clubs. Look at it as eleven one-day rides, and you certainly won't be alone.

Plan on at least 3 weeks (you can do it in two if you skip the DC stuff and iron butt it home). IF you camp, two people could do it on about \$500 round trip (bikes only); if you motel it or have a larger vehicle you may have to double or triple that . The Run will help with the cost of chase vehicles when they have a bike on board.

For those who are riding with us for the first time, you'll be given a **FNG** button to help others identify you as a "**Funny New Guy\Gal**" so they can offer you support as we travel across country. Don't let the emotions you'll feel deter you, we were all scared, embarrassed, anxious, fearful, worried, and apprehensive our first trip, so hang in there. Enjoy the release and healing, the parades, the recognition and the "**Welcome Home**". Watch the people as you ride away and know that many others wish they could go with you part or all the way. We didn't train alone and we didn't fight alone. As we travel across our country, you'll soon become one of '**The Family**' of veteran's that supports veteran's and the "**POW/MIA**" issue. You certainly won't be alone on this journey we all ride with you. I hope to see you there.

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View from the front.....

By the time you read this edition of the newsletter, your bike should already be cleaned up and ready to go, oil changed, tires checked and your route mapped. Now if only someone would stop by my house and do mine!

The planning for this years run has continued right on schedule. The local coordinators have checked and rechecked our route and our supporters across the country are anxious to start the bean pots cooking. The board has continued to meet on a regular basis and has started to plan for RFTW 2000 and beyond.

Some improvements this year.....If you are planning on camping, you will be able to sign up and pay at the morning meeting and then just roll into the campground and set up your tent. There will be no requirement to register at the campground as long as you sign in with us on the morning that you intend to camp. If you intend to camp every night, you need to sign in every morning. We will have to pay for our own camping in Ash Fork and Limon - \$5.00 per camper at each stop.

The road guards will be wearing new lemon-yellow armbands this year to make them more visible on the road and more accessible to you. The road guards will know the up to the minute schedule on the Run. They will know the exact departure times from our gas and lunch stops. They will also be acting as your contact with the Run. If you have questions, comments, complaints or suggestions, and you can't find me, just see a road guard and ask him to pass the info along.

We have upgraded our communications system this year. In addition to the radio units that the road guards and chase truck have, we will have several digital telephones that work off of the AT&T nationwide system. That way we can keep track of our chase trucks when they are hauling someone to a dealer. We will also be able to phone ahead from the road to give our supporters an idea of how many mouths they will have to feed. Additionally, we will publish a contact phone number before the Run that you can leave with your family if they need to reach you. We will be happy to pass along

any messages.

We will have our group photo for the Rolling Thunder Poster taken on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial this year. We will go from the Iwo Jima over to our reserved parking area between the Lincoln Memorial and the Wall and go to Lincoln Memorial for the photo before going to the Wall. Krazy Ric, the photographer, will be set up and waiting for us. He suggested this change so as to be able to make sure that everyone will fit into the picture.

One change that you should be aware of.....Due to the high number of four wheel vehicles that joined us last year, we have decided to make a change in the order of the pack on the road. The motorcycles (all of them, bikes, trikes, sidecars and trailers) will be together in one pack followed by designated chase vehicles. (two breakdown trucks, a support truck and our last man jeep) The rest of the four wheelers will be approximately one-half mile back led by a team of road guards. Both groups will leave in the morning from the point of departure together; however, when the motorcycles stop for the midmorning gas stop, the four-wheelers will continue on to the lunch stop without stopping for gas with us. The four wheelers do not require gas as often as the bikes and sending them ahead to lunch will allow the midmorning gas stop to go quicker. Also sending them ahead to lunch will allow them to gas before we get there and to set up and park and welcome the bikes into the lunch stop. After lunch, we will all leave together, again with the four wheelers one half mile back, and repeat the procedure for the mid-afternoon gas stop. The four wheelers will go directly to the overnight stop to make camp, check into the hotels, etc., and set up to welcome us in. The only exception to this procedure will be when the run stops at a location for a visit, such as Angel Fire, the VA medical centers and the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial. All of the vehicles will make these stops. It is hoped that this change will make gas stops smoother and quicker and will also ensure a safer passage across the country.

For those of you that have been on the Run for a while, you realize that we have grown significantly over the years; for you FNG's, in a couple of years, you'll look back at RFTW 1999 and say "Wow, we had such a small group back then". That kind of growth is good for the Run. We reach more citizens with our message and provide much needed healing for more and more people. The down side to this growth is that from time to time, people may view the Run as an on the road party rather than the mission that it is. There have been instances of people pulling into gas stops, filling their tank with gas and then getting a six pack to finish off with friends before getting back on the bike. There was one arrest last year for driving while intoxicated. The Run is asking that you refrain from the use of all intoxicating substances while we are underway. No one cares what you do in the evening. But to drink during the day creates problems for the entire Run, both actual and perceived. The perception of the civilians that see us at gas stop is crucial to our mission. If we are viewed as a dedicated group of veterans honoring our missing and dead brothers, we can usually count on those people to speak highly of us, and to become supporters of our cause. If we are perceived as just another biker gang, drinking and driving our way across the country, no matter how many American and POW-MIA flags we fly, we will leave behind a negative image. Additionally, there aren't many of you out there that want to be riding next to someone at 65 miles per hour that doesn't have the clear judgment that they should. So the bottom line is if someone is believed to be impaired, they will be asked to put their bike on the trailer until we get into the campground. Nuff said on that!

We will again be camping on the football field and using the school showers and rest rooms in Rainelle. As you know, this is a public school funded with public funds. It was brought to our attention last year that it is against the law in West Virginia to allow the use of any tobacco products on school property at any time by any individual. If you are going to be camping in Rainelle, please honor their request that you step off of the property to smoke.

We are attempting to put together a FAQ (frequently asked questions) sheet for the Run. This hand out would be included in the Run packet distributed at the beginning of the Run and would also be published on our website. We need your input to determine what questions a newcomer would most likely want to have answered. Please submit your suggestions via either e-mail or regular mail as soon as you can.

For those of you that have been asking, yes, tee shirts and all the other merchandise we have can be ordered before the run. Check the merchandise section of this newsletter for selection, prices and how to order.

For those of you that travel with Smith & Wilson protection (no, not Smith & Wesson!) you will be glad to know that the friends of Dr. Bob and Bill W. will be meeting nightly during the Run. See me for a contact person, and times and

locations of the meetings.

Finally, we received a suggestion that it would be a good idea to have someone ready to pick up the ball in the event that I get hit by a truck or meet some other untimely demise. If you have any interest in this job, please let your interest be known. Your responsibilities for the foreseeable future would be minimal. You should be ready to engage in discussions about the Run, and to assist in some of the planning and execution. If you think this is something you would be interested in, contact Beanie, the Chairman of the Board of Directors, at Beanie@rftw.org or leave a message on the Run phone at 847.328.9903.

See you in May
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Marine Corps Silent Drill Team

Arrangements have been made to attend the viewing of the Marine Corps Silent Drill Team and Marine Corps Marching Band on Friday night May 28th at 7:30 PM. The Viewing will be held at the Marine Corps Barracks located at 8th and I streets in Washington D.C. For those who would like to attend this function you must sign up with the Road Guard Don before Friday May 28th. Please keep in mind that those who would like to attend this event will not be able to make the RFTW Dinner on the same evening. "There is no charge to attend this event, just sign up for attendance with DON during the 99 RUN".

I would like to add that I attended the Marine Corps event last year and it is something to behold. The music and the Marching precision are truly a site to behold. If you have trouble locating Don see Cookie, a.k.a. Randy Schadowsky, and I'll point him out to you.

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Rainelle School Million Penny Drive

We have reached 69,000 pennies! (\$690.00) thanks to your generosity. The Million Penny Drive is to help the kids of Rainelle (WV) School obtain proper playground equipment. The drive will make a donation to the school in memory of Lee Venerable (killed in a motorcycle accident last August). Lee was the husband of Rainelle School Principal, Monica Venerable. Lee was a strong supporter of RFTW and many of us received assistance from him. Additional contributions may be sent to:

QMC Patrick McCarthy (RFTW)
U.S. Naval Observatory
3450 Massachusetts Ave NW
Washington DC 20392-5420

Please make all checks/money orders payable to The Rainelle Million Penny Drive and include your road name.

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The Remains of 3 Vietnam MIA's ID'd

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The Pentagon said Wednesday it has identified the remains of three American servicemen who had been listed as missing from the Vietnam War. They are Navy Cmdr. John C. Mape of San Francisco, Air Force Maj. John E. Bailey of Minneapolis, and Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class John F. Hartzheim of Appleton, Wis.

Mape was flying an armed reconnaissance mission over North Vietnam on April 13, 1966, when his A-1H Skyraider was destroyed by a surface-to-air missile. Remains illegally excavated and removed from the site were confiscated by Vietnamese authorities in 1994 and given to U.S. officials. They turned out to be from Mape.

Bailey was on a combat strike mission over North Vietnam on May 10, 1966, when his F-105D Thunderchief slammed into the ground with its canopy in place. His remains were recovered from the site during a joint U.S.-Vietnamese excavation in August 1995.

Hartzheim was on board an OP-2E Neptune flying a reconnaissance mission over Laos on Feb. 27, 1968, when the plane was hit by a 37mm anti-aircraft round. Shrapnel from the explosion struck Hartzheim and he was unable to parachute from the plane before it crashed. A series of visits to the crash site by joint U.S.-Lao teams in 1994-96 recovered the remains.

With the accounting of Mape, Bailey and Hartzheim, 2,069 Americans are now listed as unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War.

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Memorial Day and Taps

The Genesis of an Honored Tradition

By Bob Necci

Most civilizations have embedded in their culture the practice of honoring their dead. In the United States, since the time of the Civil War, our war dead have been honored on Decoration Day, or as it is now known, Memorial Day. The location and date of the first ceremony paying tribute to Civil War casualties is unknown. Even before the fighting between the North and South ended, women in many communities in the South, where most of the battles had taken place, began the practice of placing flowers on the graves of fallen Confederate soldiers. Generally, graves of Federal soldiers who had died south of the Mason-Dixon line also were decorated with flowers.

Spontaneous gestures of remembrance also took place in the North, as in the village of Waterloo, N.Y., which honored its war dead on May 5, 1866, by closing its businesses for the day, flying the flag at half-mast, decorating the graves of fallen soldiers, and holding ceremonies at three cemeteries in the area. In 1967 a proclamation by President Lyndon B. Johnson and a joint congressional resolution officially recognized Waterloo, N.Y. as the "birthplace of Memorial Day."

The first national Memorial Day was on 30 May, 1868, was observed by more than one hundred communities who honored those who had died in the Civil War. The most noteworthy ceremony was held in the National Cemetery at Arlington, VA. General Ulysses S. Grant presided, and General James A. Garfield presented the following remarks: "I am oppressed with a sense of the impropriety of uttering words on this occasion. If silence is ever golden, it must be here beside the graves of fifteen thousand men whose death was a poem of music of which can never be sung. With words we make promises, plight faith, praise virtue. Promises may not be kept, plighted faith may be broken, and vaunted virtue be only cunning mask of vice. We do not know one promise these men made, one pledge they gave, one word they spoke;

but we know they summed up and perfected, by one supreme act, the highest virtues of men and citizens. For love of country they accepted death, and thus removed all doubts, and made immortal their patriotism and virtue."

It is not known whether "Taps" was played at these first ceremonies, but it is the bugle's call that easily evokes tears on Memorial Day and at other times when American's formally honor their dead.

Few know the origin of "Taps". The composer, Daniel Butterfield, was not a musician and did not have any formal knowledge of music or notes. He was a Union general in the Civil War, and his unit had taken part in a fierce battle at Gaine's Mill near Richmond, Va., on June 26, 1862. At this battle, General Butterfield was seriously wounded. If his unit had broken, the Army of the Potomac could not have withdrawn safely and the North would have suffered yet another defeat.

Following the battle, President Lincoln visited the General and his troops and told them no reinforcements could be committed as replacements for their losses or to enhance their brigade strength. Morale sank to a low ebb. Butterfield must have sensed the mood and began turning over in his mind the phrases that would express the strange quietude that hung over the thousands of tents where men slept. The next morning, he called in his brigade bugler and whispered his melody to him. In practicing this melody, the brigade bugler was visited by buglers from different units who came by and inquired about the music they were hearing.

Soon "Taps" was being played throughout the Army of the Potomac. "Taps" was officially adopted by the Army in 1874. General Butterfield was a Medal of Honor recipient during the Civil War and died in 1901. He was buried in the U.S. Military Academy Cemetery at West Point with full military honors and to the saddest song of all, his beloved "Taps".

Taps

*Day is done,
Gone the sun,
From the lakes,
from the hills,
From the skies,
All is well,
Safely rest.
God is nigh*

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Questions, Answers & Addresses

Q: Where can I write to obtain the latest information on American POW/MIA's still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia?

A: There are several organizations and individuals throughout the country who are actively working to resolve the issue of live Americans in Southeast Asia. Several publish newsletters with the most updated information and are dedicated Americans. Only a few are listed here.

U.S. Veteran's Dispatch
P.O. Box 246
Kingston, NC 28502
(Monthly paper \$18/yr)

Task Force Omega

of Southern California
P.O. Box 687
Glendale, CA 91740

POW Computer Network
P.O. Box 68
Skidmore, MO 64487
(816) 928-3305 (modem)

Q: Where can I obtain current information about the M.I.A. whose bracelet I wear?

A: If you wear a POW/MIA bracelet and wish to learn more about this person, or to write to a returned POW, or send them your bracelet, send your letter in a properly stamped envelope to the appropriate branch of service with a cover letter asking them to forward your letter to the appropriate person (or family). Because of the Privacy Act, the Casualty Officers are unable to give out addresses, but they are more than willing to forward mail upon request. The addresses are:

Army
Lt. Col. Rosemary Salak, USA
H.Q.D.A. (DAPC-PED-P)
2461 Eisenhower Ave
Alexandria, VA 22331-0482
(800) 892-2490

Marine Corps
Major Mark Ward
(Attn: Ann Hammers)
HQ USMC (Code: MHP-10)
Washington, DC 20380-0001

Air Force
Mr. George E. Atkinson
Chief, MPD
HQ AFMPC/DPMCB
Randolph Air Force Base, TX 78150-6001
(800) 531-5501

Navy
Lt. JG Lisa Flores
Department of Navy, NMPC-N64DD
Washington, DC 20370-5640
(800) 443-9298

**Vietnam Veterans Memorial
(Washington, DC) brochure**

Write to:
Mall Operations/Vietnam Veteran's Memorial
National Park Service
National Capitol Parks - Central
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, DC 20242

Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Directory of Names

For a copy of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Directory of Names send a check for \$30.90 (including shipping) to:
Guest Services
3055 Prosperity Ave.
Fairfax, VA 22031-9300
(703) 849-9300

Computerized Version of the Directory of Names

For information, write to:
Vietnam Veterans Of America
Westchester County Chapter 49
P.O. Box 224
Pleasantville, NY 10570

Chuck Mangi
Q.L.P. PC Consultants
31 Dingee Road
So. Salem, NY 10590
(914) 763-9266

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Unconditional Love

-----Butcher----

A story is told about a soldier who was finally coming home after having fought in Vietnam. He called his parents from San Francisco. "Mom and Dad", I'm coming home, but I've a favor to ask. I have a friend I'd like to bring home with me. "Sure," they replied, we'd love to meet him. There's something you should know the son continued, "He was hurt pretty badly in the fighting. He stepped on a land mine and lost an arm and a leg. He has nowhere else to go, and I want him to come live with us." I'm sorry to hear that, son. Maybe we can help him find somewhere to live. "No, Mom and Dad, I want him to live with us." Son, said the father, you don't know what you're asking. Someone with such a handicap would be a terrible burden on us. We have our own lives to live, and we can't let something like this interfere with our lives. I think you should just come home and forget about this guy. He'll find a way to live on his own.

At that point, the son hung up the phone. The parents heard nothing more from him. A few days later, however, they received a call from the San Francisco police. Their son had died after falling from a building, they were told. The police believed it was suicide.

The grief-stricken parents flew to San Francisco and were taken to the city morgue to identify the body of their son. They recognized him, but to their horror they also discovered something they didn't know - their son had only one arm and one leg.

The parents in this story are like many of us. We find it easy to love those who are good-looking or fun to have around, but not people who inconvenience us or make us feel uncomfortable. We would rather stay away from people who aren't as healthy, beautiful, or smart as we are. Thankfully, there's someone who won't treat us that way. Someone who loves us with an unconditional love that welcomes us into the forever family, regardless of how messed up we are.

Tonight, before you tuck yourself in for the night, say a little prayer that God will give you the strength you need to accept people as they are, and to help us all be more understanding of those who are different from us!!!

There's a miracle called Friendship

*That dwells in the heart
You don't know how it happens
Or when it gets started
But you know the special lift
It always brings
And you realize that Friendship
Is God's most precious gift!*

Friends are a very rare jewel, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed They lend an ear, they share a word of praise, and they always want to open their hearts to us. Show your friends how much you care.... write or call on your friends right now.... with a little note, card, phone call, whatever you have and tell them how much they mean to you ... because sometimes tomorrow is too late.

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The RFTW Board of Directors - 1999

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The "Run for the Wall" Daily Schedule FOR 1999

DAY 1 - May 19 (Wed)
Start: 8:00 T/A Truck Stop (71 miles)
Gas: *Barstow, Exit at Lenwood* (54 Miles)
Gas: *Ludlow Exit* (79 miles)
Lunch: *Needles, W. Broadway Exit* (62 miles)
Gas: *Kingman, Exit 53* (86 miles)
Dinner: *Ash Fork, Exit 144*
Total Miles: 378

DAY 2 - May 20 (Thu)
Start: 8:00 *Ash Fork KOA* (45 miles)
Gas: *Flagstaff, Exit 198* (93 miles)
Lunch: *Holbrook, Exit 285* (95 miles)
Hotel/Camp: *Gallup, Exit 16*
Dinner: *Window Rock* (30 miles)
Total Miles: 233

DAY 3 - May 21 (Fri)
Start: 8:00 *Gallup KOA* (60 miles)
Gas: *Grants, Exit 85* (80 miles)
Lunch: *Albuquerque, Exit 233* (107 miles)
Gas: *Romeroville, Exit 339* (98 miles)
Dinner: *Cimarron*
Total Miles: 345

DAY 4 - May 22 (Sat)
Start: 7:30 *Cimarron Inn* (31 miles)
Visit: *Angel Fire Memorial* (69 Miles)
Gas: *Raton, Exit 451* (112 miles)
Lunch: *Pinon, Exit 110* (95 miles)
Hotel/Camp: *Limon, Exit 135*
Dinner: *Hugo* (13 miles)
Total Miles: 312

DAY 5 - May 23 (Sun)
Start: 8:00 *Limon KOA* (97 miles)

Gas: *Goodland, KS, Exit 17* (73 miles)
Lunch: *Oakley - Exit 76* (85 miles)
Gas: *Hays - Exit 159* (90 miles)
Dinner: *Salina, KS - EXIT 252*
Total Mileage: 345

DAY 6 - May 24 (Mon)
Start: 8:00 *Thomas Park* (105 miles)
Gas: *Topeka Texaco, Exit 1* (40 miles)
Lunch: *Kansas Turnpike, Milepost 415* (40 miles)
Gas: *Oak Grove, Exit 28* (95 miles)
Gas: *Columbia-Midway Truck Stop - Exit 121* (95 miles)
Dinner: *Wentzville, Exit 203*
Total Miles: 375

DAY 7 - May 25 (Tue)
Start: 8:00 *Wentzville VFW* (45 Miles)
Visit: *Jefferson Barracks VAMC* (80 miles)
Lunch: *Mt. Vernon, Exit 95* (107 miles)
Gas: *Dale, Exit 57* (50 miles)
Dinner: *Corydon, Exit 105*
Total Miles: 282

DAY 8 - May 26 (Wed)
Start: 8:00 *Campground* (30 miles)
Visit: *Louisville VAMC* (45 miles)
Visit: *Frankfort Mem., Exit 53B*
Gas: *After Memorial* (55 miles)
Lunch: *Mt. Sterling, Exit 110* (85 miles)
Dinner: *Huntington, Exit 11*
Total Miles: 215

DAY 9 - May 27 (Thu)
Start: 8:00 *University Inn* (60 miles)
Gas: *Quincy, WV* (20 miles)
Photo Op: *Glen Ferris* (50 miles)
Lunch/Dinner: *Rainelle*
Total Miles: 130

DAY 10 - May 28 (Fri)
Start: 8:00 *Rainelle Lodge*
(110 miles)
Gas: *Raphine, Exit 205* (86 miles)
Lunch: *Tom's Brook, Exit 291*
(85 miles)
Visit: *Iwo Jima Memorial*
Visit/Photo: *Lincoln Memorial*
Visit: *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*
Dinner: *Generous Georges*
Total Miles: 281

DAY 11 - May 29 (Sat)
Start: 10:30 *Hotel*

Visit: *Tomb of the Unknowns*

Lunch: *DC Ramblers*

Total Miles: 35

DAY 12 - May 30 (Sun)

Start: 6:45 Hotel

Rolling Thunder Parade

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Wedding Announcement!

The wedding of Fyrecker and Dave will take place at the Fairfield Inn, Ontario, Ca., on May 19th, 1999. Because we met on the Run For The Wall, and we both have a number of friends on the Run, we decided last year that the best way for many our friends to attend the wedding would be to have it the night before the Run started. Now that the starting point for this year's Run For The Wall has been moved back to Ontario, there was no reason to have the wedding on the Queen Mary. Please remember, the Run For The Wall means a lot to both Fyrecker and me. The wedding is not meant to detract from the purpose of our being in Ontario, rather it's to add to it. Over the years we veterans have dealt with many losses. Fyrecker and I would like to celebrate a new beginning with you

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Happenings

From: Fyrecker@ibm.net

Date: Fri, 15 Jan 1999 16:59:05 -0800

Hi.. A couple of neat things happened this last week. I just wanted to share them with you so that you might put them in one of the newsletters. They both involve members of the RFTW family and happened indirectly.

The first one.

I was surfing the net and ran across an entry in one of the Viet Nam sites written by a women in Pennsylvania. She used to own an antique shop. Someone brought in a whole bunch of stuff she wanted to sell on consignment. One of the items was POW/MIA bracelet. She didn't like the idea of it being put on the market. Her words were " It seems sacrilegious." So she kept it and put it on. Of course she was well aware of what it was and the meaning. Now almost 30 years later, she has Parkinson's Disease and is not expected to live very long. She was trying very hard to locate a member of the family of the name on the bracelet, because she is afraid that her family will throw it away when she is gone. That goes against her grain. Good for her. When I read her note, my jaw dropped, and I typed a note that I emailed out as fast as this old 'puter would work. The name on that bracelet is Michael Bouchard.... Yes, the one and only. Since I know his son, I told her I would try to contact him. I understand that right now he is going through some difficult times, and I haven't heard from him yet. So, plan B. I gave her several options. I told her I could leave it at the Wall in DC, when we go in May, or that I would be more than proud to wear it myself until Michael can get back to me and that I would see that he gets it back. She mailed it out to me the next day. It now rests on my wrist along with the ones I have worn for so many years with Bobby and Mitch's names. So, Michael, if you are reading this, it is safe, and sound, and when you are up to it, and able, I will get it to you...let me know. And, this kind lady gave me her address and would love to hear just

anything from a member of the family. As we all would love to do...

The other really neat experience last week was this. I went to Denny's for breakfast one morning after I took my daughter to school at 5:30(Yawn) (that's what happens when teen aged girls take over as head cheerleader and head of the dance squad. Mom gets no sleep. Anyway, I always wear my leather jacket with the RFTW patch and rocker. It was hanging on the back of my chair. A man and woman were sitting nearby and behind me. When they got up to pay their bill, he stopped and asked me about the jacket and what it was all about. I could tell, he was not dumb, but really wanted to know the connection with it. So I went into it. And I carry a copy of the Biker issue with me almost everywhere now. So I pulled that out and started to show him of the trip in 98. I asked him if he was a vet. Yes, he said..The Nam.. He told me he was with the Rangers 75th....WOW..Bells went off in my head.(First I thought it was the rocks rattling around or the beginning of a migraine) but not so... I flipped through the 32 page spread and asked him if he noticed anyone there that he recognized. He took a few minutes. Had to stop and dry his eyes a couple times. But then he pointed right at Ghost... (Tom Titus) (Then he told me that man was in my group over there. He told me his name. I didn't tell him. My mouth dropped and my eyes fogged. (Must be Idaho Smog..) I got his name and went home and E mailed Ghost. He was very happy ..Said it made his day to know where one of his guys was. The man and his wife were just passing thru here on their way back home in Montana.....

Anyway, I thought that was neat and wanted to share it with you. It shows that positive things are happening. And we gotta focus on that more..... the good things we can do for each other and the help we can give to the vets..... the healing's... and never forget those we ride for.. the missing.....

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