



RUN FOR THE WALL

Quarterly Newsletter

“We Ride For Those Who Can’t”

April 2008

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THE EDITOR’S NOTES



Vietnam Remembrance Day is April 27. To all Vietnam veterans everywhere, thank you for your service and I want you to know that I will never forget the sacrifices you made for us. Welcome Home, brothers and sisters.

You’ll notice a lot of changes in this issue of our newsletter. The Board has decided to move certain parts of the newsletter to new sections of the RFTW website. This was done not only to streamline the newsletter, but also to make certain articles available at all times, not just in one issue. Thus, any stories to do with veterans, as well as VA info, from will now be found in a new section on the website called “Veterans News.” Stories by FNGs will be found in a new section called “FNG Stories.” And all events will be found under “Related Events” and not in the newsletter. Be sure to check these new sites each time you visit the RFTW newsletter.

It won’t be long before we leave on our annual journey across America once again. But this year is a very special year—it is RFTW’s 20th pilgrimage. And this year we will have a very special escort: four helicopters that saw service in Vietnam will leave Ontario with us and accompany both the Central and Southern Routes on and off across the country. Be sure to read “Helicopter Escort” in this issue. And be prepared to feel more emotion this year than in your previous years of traveling with RFTW. I look forward to getting articles from some of you after this year’s Run. Please share with us if you have a healing experience this year.

Now I’d like to tell you about an exciting project to honor veterans.

I live in Lake Havasu, Arizona, which is the home of the historic London Bridge. It is our city’s treasure. It was built in 1831 for foot and horse and buggy traffic, but since it was installed in Havasu in 1971, it has been used not only by cars but also trailers and boats, huge motor homes, and construction equipment working on the island. The bridge is getting too much traffic and must be preserved before it deteriorates.

For several years, the city has been talking about building a second bridge to the island to alleviate traffic on the London Bridge. It is now coming together, with preliminary plans and committees set up to study how to go forward. It will be called the “Freedom Bridge,” and it will be built in honor of all veterans. The plan was expanded to include a Memorial Park and Memorial Walkway. Our vision includes a large park with a memorial to each war, including, perhaps, a small-scale replica of the Vietnam Wall. We expect it to be one of the largest memorial parks in the U.S. At this time, we also expect to have the first Memorial to honor Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

The Freedom Foundation, created to bring the bridge and memorial park to reality, will create this huge memorial without taxpayer money. To accomplish this, we will be selling commemorative bricks, similar to the ones RFTW laid at the Angel Fire Vietnam Veterans Memorial in New Mexico, to raise the money for this project. It will also give anyone, anywhere in the world, the opportunity to honor their loved ones, whether veterans or civilians.

I'm working on the Commemorative Brick Committee and have also been appointed Veterans Liaison to the Freedom Foundation. I'll be contacting veterans and patriotic groups to ask to be allowed to tell their members about the Freedom Bridge.

The most exciting part of the Freedom Bridge is the Veterans Plaza, a large area with the war memorials and the engraved bricks honoring veterans and their families. There will also be a "Freedom Walkway," paved with engraved bricks, which will extend from the new bridge to the London Bridge—about a half mile. Visitors will be able to walk the entire length and read plaques giving the history of our past wars and quest for freedom.

I'm so excited about being a part of this project. I've already ordered a brick for my grandfather, who fought with the Navy in the Spanish American War.

Most details are worked out, and you'll be able to purchase bricks on our website in the next month. But if you'd like to have a brick placed in the first ceremony, go to the website and place a reservation now: <http://www.havasufreedombridge.com/>. When you place your final order, be sure to name Run For The Wall as your preferred organization to receive \$5 of each brick sold.

I hope you'll think about honoring your loved ones at this wonderful memorial.

Never forget,
Judy "Velcro" Lacey

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings once again, RFTW Family and FNGs.

As I write this, I am aware that there are less than 50 days and a wake-up call before we will once again make our way across America, taking the message of the POWs/MIAs with us. Our mission is to carry that message so that America won't forget, and so that young Americans will learn. I want to say thank you to each of you for your commitment to carry that message.

As many of you know, there have been several changes in the Run this year. Be sure to check out the website for all route-specific changes that have been made. I know that change can be difficult, but to accommodate the growing number of riders, some changes must be made. We can also view these changes as an opportunity for repeat riders to see new communities of America, and for those new communities to see Run For The Wall. What better way to further spread the word of the Mission to new parts of the country. Please know that the State Coordinators along with the Route Coordinators have worked extremely hard to put things in order so that we may carry out our mission.

I look forward to seeing all of you again this May in California, or somewhere along the way.

Ride Safe!

Never Forget!!!

Mark "Straightarrow" Rittermeyer
President, Run For The Wall

► RFTW 2008

HELICOPTER ESCORT

This year, a unique event will shed a clear and powerful light on just what it means for veterans to come home. In the roar of motorcycle engines and the throb of helicopters; veterans and volunteers will undertake a journey that spans America to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

Wings & Rotors Air Museum's four combat-certified, Vietnam era helicopters will escort RFTW, Rolling Thunder, and other veterans groups from California to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC.

For the first time in the history of the "Ride," four restored, fully operational and combat-certified Vietnam era helicopters—three UH-1 "Hueys" and an OH-58 Kiowa—will fly along with the riders, making layovers along the way at Vietnam Memorials and other Veterans' memorial sites. The ceremonial stops will be made on both the eastern and western legs of the flight.



FROM THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE, RIVERSIDE, CA:

Volunteers at the Wings and Rotors Air Museum in French Valley, Murrieta, California are working feverishly to get three Hueys ready for another type of mission. This cross-country journey will celebrate the service of those who fought the war, acknowledge the pain many still feel and remember the 58,000 who never came home from Vietnam.

The upcoming assignment: "Flying Thunder, Flight to the Wall 2008," departs May 14 and will arrive at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall war memorial in Washington, D.C., on Memorial Day weekend, with 43 stops in between. Pilots and crewmembers will stop at Vietnam memorials and air shows along the way, accompanied by two filmmakers creating a documentary.

It's the first such flight ever attempted. It's an endeavor that will cover 5,000 miles across 16 states and could cost \$300,000. Organizers say the journey will be paid for by sponsorships and private donations. The trip takes place on the 40th anniversary of the Tet Offensive, the Communist all-out attack on South Vietnam that, while a major U.S. victory, turned the tide of the American public against the war.

The Huey that flew with the Navy Seawolves owns a particularly grim resume. Shot down by small-arms fire in 1965, it was repaired, transferred from the Army to the Navy and went back on duty. In 1970, it crashed, killing all four crewmembers. Sent back to the U.S. for repairs, the Seawolf returned to Vietnam for another tour of duty, only to be damaged by large-caliber ground fire and patched together once again before the war ended. Then it spent more than 20 years in storage before restoration began in 2007. The upcoming flight marks the first time since 1975 the bird will fly.

Another Huey bound for Washington returned from the war and did a stint spraying mosquito repellent in Florida. The third, a troop transport, pulled duty with an outfit that called itself the "Outlaws" and then continued flying military missions in Germany and the U.S. before the Army retired it in 1995.

Limited by their fuel range, they can remain airborne 90 minutes, and they'll be inspected before and after every flight. Mandatory maintenance comes after every 20 flying hours. A caravan of ground vehicles will accompany the flying corps, carrying oil, other lubricants, gauges, valves, other spare parts and tool chests. All three Hueys required hundreds of hours to scrape away the grit, patch the bullet holes and paint and return the innards to working order.

The flight is being made in conjunction with Rolling Thunder and Run to the Wall, organizations of motorcycle enthusiasts who for years have journeyed to the Vietnam Memorial.

FROM WINGS AND ROTORS AIR MUSEUM:

During Flying Thunder 2008 Flight to the Wall, Wings and Rotors Air Museum will be paying tribute to our fallen and to those who fought in the Vietnam War. We want to remember as many as we can BY NAME. To do this we are offering you the chance to have YOUR Veteran remembered during this historic memorial flight, and at the same time help us fund the flight.

We will imprint your Veteran's photo and name on a beautiful 5x7 color image of the Vietnam Memorial Wall. Then we will carry this on board our Huey for the entire round trip, from California to Washington DC. After the trip the image will be returned to you with the date, serial number of the helicopter and certificate that it flew over the Vietnam Memorial Wall. This memorial print will only cost \$50.00. To order your Memorial Image, send a **COPY** photo of the person you would like to remember, their name and other information, with a check or money order to: Marketing Director, Wings and Rotors Air Museum, 37552 Winchester Rd, Suite 8, Murrieta, Ca. 92563. Make check out to *Wings and Rotors Air Museum*. Deadline April 15, 2008. *OR call for more information 951-662-5653 or email Marketingdirector@wingsandrotors.org*. You can order a Memorial Image on the website: <http://www.wingsandrotors.org/memorial.html>.

For more info, www.Flyingthunder.org. On the website you can order patches (shown above) for this historic event. Watch a great video on the project: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjbHWNCJbBg>. The following poem, by Shayne Meder, USAF, Ret., aircraft painter/marketing director for Wings and Rotors Air Museum, is featured on the video.

TO HONOR THOSE WHO TOOK THE FALL

We will remember you and your brother too,
Through the day and into the night
On the long and epic flight.

In the jungles brave men fought,
And after the war only peace they sought.

Their brothers' names on a granite wall,
The memories of them still stand tall.

The time has come to honor their life,
Their bravery, courage, and selfless strife.

So hear the Thunder and feel its heart,
Full of spirit and pride from the very start.

PRE-RUN EVENTS

From Jim Frost, CA Coordinator

There will be Tuesday activities again in 2008: a run to Riverside National Cemetery in the morning, a Blessing of the Bikes in early afternoon, and a meet & greet dinner (free if you are registered for the Run) in the early evening. You may wish to time your arrival early enough to visit with friends from both routes on Tuesday. Note the starting point is moving from Ontario to Rancho Cucamonga, CA., near the intersection of I-15 and Foothill Blvd (Route 66). Google: "Victoria Gardens, Rancho Cucamonga, California."

Tuesday, May 13:

- 9:30 a.m. Run to Riverside National Cemetery and its Medal of Honor Memorial and POW/MIA Memorial. Meet at host hotel.
- 4:30 p.m. Blessing of the Bikes at Central Park, NW corner of Milliken Ave. and Base Line Rd.
- 5:30-7:30 p.m. Meet, Greet, & Mingle dinner at Central Park. May be your only time to mingle with riders on both routes.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

From Mike "Tanker" McDole, Risk Management Director

Registration Forms, and all Minor Release and Waiver of Liability and Indemnity Agreement must be signed and witnessed by the AMA Insurance Communication Officer at the time of RFTW registration. Pre-registration and early release of forms before the event is not an option according to the AMA regulations.

If you want to start with us in Rancho Cucamonga, registration is offered the day prior to and the morning of our departure. Folks cannot join us during the day (such as at gas or lunch stops) but can register at our evening stop or morning departure point.

The registration process, as monitored by the AMA Insurance Communications Officers (ICOs), will check each vehicle operator for:

- Valid motorcycle endorsement as required in the state of your motor vehicle license
- Current vehicle registration
- Current proof of liability insurance

These requirements have no flexibility. Do not ask the ICOs or registration staff to make exceptions. Put your documents on your pre-departure checklist and make sure you have them stored safely prior to your departure to join the Run.

There is a modest fee of \$10 per participant (not per bike), most of which goes to cover our AMA liability insurance. Exact change is required at the time of registration: No checks or credit cards accepted.

Also, morning meetings, conducted daily, are required by AMA for each participant.

MISSING MAN FORMATION

RFTW rides the lead element in the Missing Man Formation (MMF) as we cross our great land. This formation signifies our Mission to:

- Promote healing among all veterans, family and friends
- Honor the memory of those Killed in Action (KIA) from all wars
- Support our military personnel all over the world
- Ride for those who can't.

The formation looks like this:

Left Column	Right Column
Row 1 - Route Coordinator	State Coordinator
Row 2 – Missing Man Rider	Vacant
Row 3 - MM Coordinator	Lead Chaplain

When seen from an overpass, the Missing Man Formation effectively communicates our Mission with pride and emotion in ways unique, yet held common with each viewer.

Each day volunteers are afforded the Honor to ride the MMF. The position is not to be viewed as “an easy ride” in the front, or a reason to get out of the pack for a few hours. The vacant position in the MMF is truly sacred ground, a place of Honor and Dignity. The Missing Rider in the middle of the right column has given of self to a level our society can never fully repay, and is with us in spirit every yard of our journey from Rancho Cucamonga to DC. The MMF assignment is one of the most powerful experiences you can have on the Run.

The selection criteria for the MMF assignment:

1. Preference goes to FNGs.
2. Next is someone who is not an FNG and has not ridden MM before.
3. After steps 1 and 2 are satisfied we will consider a “repeat.”

If you are interested in a MMF assignment you should contact the Missing Man Coordinators. For CR, contact Bill “Honeybuns” Kable at tenrpipe@msn.com (Please note the “r” between the “n” and “pipe”).

At the completion of your assignment you will be given a MMF pin to wear with pride, or for use in other suitable service.

Missing Man Formation Riders – Southern Route

We are now ready to take reservations from riders who would like to ride in the Missing Man Formation on the Southern Route. This position is only open to FNGs or riders who have been on the “Run” and have never ridden the MMF. Please email your requests to Della “Pocket” Morris at donmorris@earthlink.net. Let me know if you would like a longer or shorter segment and if you prefer a particular segment. I will do everything I can to fill your request; however I cannot guarantee it. If you are not going “All The Way,” let me know where you are joining the Run. Make sure you put RFTW MMF in the subject line of your email as most of you will end up in my Spam Blocker. Your email will then be moved to my Inbox and answered within 24-48 hours.

See you in May,
“Pocket”

HOW WE RIDE

By Colin Campbell

Run For The Wall follows a very regimented set of rules developed over the years to provide for the safe travel of this large contingency on its way to Washington DC and *The Vietnam Veterans Memorial*. Foremost in our desire for safety is that every rider become adept and comfortable riding in accordance with these rules. If for any reason you are not comfortable riding in this manner, please discontinue your ride with the column. If you are not capable *and* comfortable riding “like we ride”, you could pose a danger to yourself and your companions by attempting to ride in a tight formation. Above all, if a maneuver looks too dangerous or awkward for a rider (particularly a new rider) to complete safely, he or she should do what needs to be done to protect himself or herself to avoid an accident.

The rules are outlined as follows:

❖ Signals



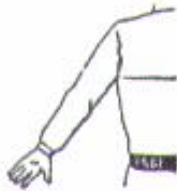
Right turn



Left turn

Right turn: Left arm out and elbow bent up. *Hand making a fist.*

Left turn: Left arm straight out from body. *Hand straight out in a fist.*



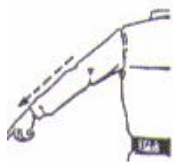
**STOP or
Slow down**



Speed UP

Slow: Left arm down to side. Press flat palm up and down parallel to the ground imitating a braking motion.

Speed up: Pump left fist up and down



**Hazard in the
Road**



**Close the Ranks
open and close fist**

Hazard: Point at the area on the road with your hand and index finger (left or right side).

Close Ranks: Left hand overhead, *open and close fist*



Staggered



Side-by-Side

Staggered Formation: Left arm raised overhead, index finger extended.

Side-by-Side Formation: Left arm raised overhead, index and little finger extended.

Blinker: Left arm out and elbow bent up. Thumb and forefinger contacting each other to indicate blinker on.

- ❖ **Distance Interval** – 2 seconds; visual marker for distance interval is one empty center stripe between cycles at 50 to 60 mph and two empty center stripes between cycles above 60. When in a *side-by-side* formation, the left side rider is responsible for maintaining the correct interval. The right side rider is responsible for aligning himself with the left side rider. Rider's shoulders should be directly across from each other in the proper configuration. Every rider is responsible for maintaining the correct interval in a *staggered formation*.
- ❖ **Deceleration:** Unless a complete stop or an emergency stop is anticipated, riders should decelerate by rolling off the throttle and down shifting rather than braking. The appearance of brake lights in the formation increases the incidence of dangerous “rubber banding”. Rubber banding (excessive acceleration and deceleration) increases accidents, wear and tear on equipment and increases rider fatigue. Increasing and decreasing speed should be accomplished utilizing small, incremental throttle roll-on and roll-off. Maintaining interval and position requires VERY slight throttle adjustments on an almost constant basis. Rapid acceleration and deceleration is very undesirable and should be avoided.
- ❖ **Riding the Zipper:** The centerline and the fog line are lovingly called the *zipper*. It's simple: do not have any part of your cycle or body beyond the zipper. If you do, road guards will hate you and semi's will kill you. **Just Say No** to hanging foot pegs, handlebars or anything else over the zipper.
- ❖ **Sky popping:** Whales stick their head out of the sea just to the level of their eye to “take a look around”. This is called “Sky Popping.” Sticking out of your lane to see what's ahead is a great way to shorten your trip. Road guards travel much faster than the columns both in the left hand lane and on the right shoulder. Pulling out in front of one is a disaster for both riders. **Just Say No** to “sky popping”.
- ❖ **Road Guard Courtesy:** You may receive signals/directions from road guards during your trip. Please comply immediately with these requests. Please do not take anything personally. Road guards are doing a very difficult job and are protecting our safety: Your cooperation is paramount to their success. At times, road guards need to pull into a column or pass through a column. When a road guard signals he needs in, immediately slow and give them the right of way. If you collide with a road guard, it is your fault - no questions asked.
- ❖ **Dive-bombing:** Pulling in too close after passing a vehicle is called “dive bombing.” This is a “no-no.” Trucks that are passed by the column should be given at least *one truck length* before riders pull back into their lane. Pulling in too quickly causes the truck driver to hit his brakes and makes them angry with us rather than being our fans. **No dive-bombing.** The same situation is true when the column moves into the left lane to pass slower moving traffic. At times there may be vehicles traveling in the left lane preventing the entire column from gaining access to the left lane as a unit. Do not speed around one of these vehicles and dive-bomb in front of them just to maintain your position within the column. Slow, pull in behind such a vehicle and rejoin the column after you have successfully passed the slower traffic in the right lane.
- ❖ **Passing signals back.** Please pass signals from the platoon leaders all the way back down the column. When you receive a signal, check your rearview mirror to make sure it was passed back.
- ❖ **CB Radio etiquette:** There will be a designated communication channel. Please do not talk on this channel unless you are performing an official function. All riders are welcome and encouraged to monitor the communication channel, but please maintain radio discipline.
- ❖ **Fueling:** During fuel stops on the Southern Route, fueling personnel wear an orange arm band and cap which indicates lines for premium grade fuel or a green arm band and cap which indicates the regular grade fuel line. On the Central Route, all fueling personnel will be wearing green vests and caps. File in

side-by-side, two riders to a pump. Pay to the nearest dollar rounded up. Any excess monies collected will go toward future free fuel stops and fuel for chase vehicles.

RUN Q&A

By Ron "Hammer" Young, Central Route Coordinator

Q. How fast does the pack ride?

A. A general guideline is the pack will ride at about five miles an hour below the posted speed limit. There will be times when the speeds will be less.

Q. How does the pack enter the highway?

A. We work with local and state authorities to aid our entrance onto the highways. The lead element will slowly enter the highway and maintain a slow speed as the pack follows. There is no reason to ride fast to "catch up" with the pack. The lead element continues a slow speed until the last man vehicle reports he/she is on the highway. At that point the Route Coordinator will slowly increase speed in five mile per hour increments at the rate of about 2-3 mph increase per minute. This increase is given to the Assistant Route Coordinator who is leading the 1st Platoon, who will then slowly bring the pack to the assigned speed. The Platoon Leaders will follow suit, and are responsible for maintaining the proper distance. As you can see, there is no reason to ride faster than the speed limit - follow these guidelines and the platoons will bring you up to speed properly and reduce "rubber banding."

Q. When will itineraries be available?

A. Daily itineraries will be finalized and posted a few weeks prior to departure. Please understand the incredible amount of work that must be finalized before this information is locked down. The notices and itineraries will be posted to the web site.

Q. How do I reserve my spot in the pack?

There are no reservations of riding spots in the pack. We ride two columns, side by side as conditions allow, and positions in the pack likely adjust as we do fuel stops. If you want to ride near someone ride in front or behind them, not to their side as those positions will adjust if riders fall out of formation.

Q. How much does it cost to go All the Way?

A. Cost of lodging, meals and gas to ride All the Way is largely a matter of personal preference. If you camp, some sites are free or reduced prices. Hotels will be indicated on our Route Schedule (see 1 above) and we often get a modest group discount from the standard rack rate. Gas is sometimes provided by supporters, but given the current state of gas prices, the level of future support cannot be certain. Most meals are provided free by local volunteers. Also, allow enough funds for emergency repairs and maintenance of your vehicle.

Q. Can I ride with the Run in my car?

A. Our number one goal is safety of the Run participants and the public. Personal vehicles can travel a few miles ahead or behind the pack, but cannot intermingle with the pack at any time. Due to limited space at most of our gas stops we ask you proceed to another station or skip a gas stop. Our gas stops range are spaced from 70 to 114 miles apart so "cages" will not need gas as often as the pack.

Q. Do I have to ride a certain brand of bike?

A. No, all bikes are welcome as long as they are safe, licensed and insured in accordance with your state's laws. If you go All the Way you will likely ride more than 5,800 miles depending on your hometown. Be sure your bike is up to a ride of this length, and allow for routine maintenance during the trip. Plan for tire and oil changes as appropriate.

Q. What special skills are needed to ride with the pack?

A. Riding with the pack requires good skills, and you must be a competent, safe rider. Courses such as the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Experienced (Advanced) Rider's Course will help you sharpen your existing skills.

WHAT TO PACK FOR THE RUN

Lots of FNGs have asked for suggestions on what to bring on Run for the Wall. When we thought about it, we decided that a lot of RFTW “old timers” might also find this information helpful. We went through our email and RFTW Bulletin Board posts from the past several years and brainstormed to compile this list. Tailor your checklist to your own personal needs—you may want to bring additional items, you may want to leave some things at home. Thanks to Mark “Straight Arrow” Rittermeyer, Pup, Ghost, Iron Mike, Doorgunner, Sizzmo, Duct Tape, Deekin, Nuguyabe, Spook, Shadow, Suzanne S., Little Mac, Dragonrider, and others who contributed to this list.

<p>Motorcycles American & POW-MIA Flags for bike T-bag and/or saddle bags Water bottle ("sport" bottle or "Camelback") Bungee Cords (lots of 'em) Duct Tape Tool kit Regular & allen wrenches Screwdrivers Spark plugs & wrench Wire ties, zip ties Shop rags WD 40 Clamps Rope Jumper cables Funnel Can of Fix-a-flat Tire repair kit Replacement light bulbs Fuses Super glue 6' of 1/4" plastic hose or turkey baster (to siphon gas) Motorcycle oil (however much your bike needs!) Helmet (DOT legal) Bandanna or "do-rag" Jammies (or shorts or sweat pants) Hankies Shower shoes Bath towel Wash cloth (in zip-lock bag!) Toilet Kit Toothbrush Toothpaste Soap Deodorant Shampoo Comb and/or brush Roll of TP in Ziploc bag (be prepared!) Sun block (Don't leave home without it!) Chapstick Personal first aid kit Medications in marked containers Prescription glasses</p>	<p>Sun glasses or goggles (2 pair) Ear plugs Laundry detergent (in heavy zip-lock bag) Small sewing kit Money Credit Cards/Traveler's Checks Driver's License Insurance information Dog tags for emergency identification Emergency info: Next of kin, home and work phone numbers, doctors' phone numbers, list of prescriptions Warm knit cap for under helmet and/or sleeping Heavy jacket Light weight jacket Chaps Warm gloves Summer gloves Rain Gear (jacket, pants and galoshes) Padlock Trash Bags for covering T-Bag in rain, laundry, etc. Zip-lock bags (all sizes) organizes & keeps stuff dry Extra pair of boots Jeans (2-3 pair) T-shirts (at least 6) Long-sleeved T-shirt (for the Mojave desert) Warm sweat shirt Underwear & Socks (at least 6 pair) Thermal underwear Medications, glasses prescription, bank information Cell phone and/or pager Road Maps and Run Schedule Business cards (to exchange with new friends) Note pad & pencil Camera and film Items you want to leave at The Wall List of names you want to locate on The Wall</p> <p>Campers Tent with pegs Waterproof Ground Cloth/Tarp Sleeping Bag Sleeping Mat or Cot Folding chair or camp stool Flashlight with extra batteries</p>
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Misc. Reminders:

- Cash: Take extra \$1 and \$5 bills for gas. When we fill up, total is rounded up; the extra helps gas up the support vehicles.
- Throttle rockers will add some comfort to your ride (available at H-D dealers).
- Morning meetings are mandatory.
- Take showers at night so you won't be late for the morning meetings.
- If you get sleepy while riding, give a heads-up to the riders around you and pull off where safe. You can catch up at the next stop. RIDE SAFE!!!

GET YOUR BIKE READY TO GO

By John “Shooter” McCabe

- If your tires need changing, change them now. If tires are good, check inflation just before we leave; have a tire pressure gage on hand.
- Change the oil just before leaving.
- Check all lights and have extra bulbs on hand.
- Check suspension air lines (for air shocks).
- Check operation of all switches; make sure things that should work do.
- If you have spoke wheels, get them checked at the dealer for spoke tension!
- Change air and fuel filters.
- Check brake and hydraulic clutch fluid levels.
- Check clutch and brake cables.
- Check every bolt, nut, screw you can get to, make sure things are tight.
- Check your luggage, make sure straps are not rotted or torn. (I have dodged sleeping bags, small luggage bags and other things falling off bikes...not fun for Road Guards at 90+mph)
- Make sure your bike is ready. If nothing else, take it to a dealer and have them go over it for you. The money you spend there will not compare to the funds it will cost you if things go wrong and you are 3500 miles from home.
- Make SURE you are ready, get the bike out and practice speed control at 65 mph by easy throttle movements NOT brakes. Practice slow maneuvering; we all know how to ride at highway speeds but it's those slow maneuvers we will be needing that may need to be honed a bit. Remember, we will be maneuvering in close proximity to other bikes (6-8 inches between bikes at times)—be ready for it.
- If you plan on riding two-up, take a few rides two-up and practice rider and driver communications. If you are a rider, your eyes are just as important as the driver's in a close formation ride. You are NOT a sight-seer—you are part of the overall bike safety team. This will be my 4th year as a Road Guard. Our job starts the morning you all get to the parking lot at the truck stop. When you come into the lot there at Rancho Cucamonga, please go SLOW, and tell the Road Guards which route you will be taking so we can get you to the proper lines. Have your gas tank FULL. Re-check your luggage one last time—make sure it's tight and secured on your bike. There will be a bunch of riders, bikes, media, and normal traffic in that parking lot so be careful and keep your head up.

See you all in Rancho Cucamonga...

THE ROAD GUARD

By Joe "Firefly" Cappel

ROAD GUARDS: insanity on two wheels or guardian angels in black? Perhaps it is a blend of both. This is an introduction to the functions of a Road Guard in relation to RFTW. It is hazardous duty to say the least, which is why only the very experienced need apply. It is necessary to be riding solo while on duty as well as have two years experience riding with RFTW, although not necessarily all the way. One cannot assimilate the myriad of experiences encountered on RFTW if he is working hard as a Road Guard and the type of formation riding that is necessary may not have been done before as well.

A Road Guard's duties are similar to those performed by a funeral procession escort with many side jobs thrown in. First and foremost, the R/G must try to the best of his ability to get the pack safely from point A to point B. This entails knowing the route before hand, directing traffic and constantly monitoring the pack for safety issues such as rider positioning in the pack, erratic behavior, items in danger of falling off bikes, open saddlebags, mechanical problems that the rider is unaware of, etc. Limited instruction must be given to those who need help in learning to ride formation properly. Road Guards will also give the O.K. to newer riders at the rear of the pack who have become competent to move up to the main body and likewise relegate someone to the rear who needs their skills honed for a time. Often they might have to run traffic breaks on the freeway or get the pack around a slow moving vehicle in such a way so as not to impede the progress of that vehicle. Since it is imperative to travel as an unbroken pack at all times, the Road Guard must control the traffic at all intersections that might pose a threat to the group's safety. This may require working closely with the local police escorts. Often the police will block a busy intersection with his vehicle and a Road Guard will take over for him as he moves up to block the next one. This is called "leap-frogging." Since time is of the essence in these situations, what appears as "maniacal" riding by the Road Guard will ensue. They will also clear a lane of traffic on the freeway so the pack can merge safely up the onramp. They will position themselves to point the way whenever a change in direction occurs to prevent stragglers from getting lost.

Anywhere from ten to fifteen miles prior to a destination exit, the Road Guards will break away from the pack en masse and rush to the proper exit to set up traffic control, take command of the gas pumps to be used and set up the staging area. This breakaway time usually only gives them a maximum of five minutes to get set up.

Needless to say, the Road Guard must be constantly briefed as to where the group is going next; route changes, escorts to work with, etc. A "forward observer" might even be sent out occasionally if there may be suspicion of something ahead that might cause a possible rerouting or time delay. Of course, they cannot be afraid to ride faster than the pack, even in horrible weather conditions.

They must be polite and tactful. Many people come on the run to do a difficult thing for themselves. They need to be given respect and consideration. Sometimes an upset cage driver will be encountered when he is being held up for a few minutes while the pack passes. The Road Guard must work to calm him down, explain the mission, and maybe even give him a mission statement and a pin. It usually works.

Road Guards must stay in communications with one another, either visually or by radio, including the ride leader and the chase vehicles. It is not the intent to leave anyone behind or not to obtain help for an injured rider.

At day's end, when everyone else is kicking back, the Road Guard may become a problem solver, because he is visible and has communications. Such is life. But also at the end of the day, he might be approached by one or more riders, given a hug and thanked for all his hard work of keeping them safe. This is what drives us to do what we do.

The following added 2008 by Shooter:

With the Road Guards doing what they do, it must be mentioned that you as a rider have a responsibility to these Angels in black. When the Road Guard is working with a rider on the road keep your spacing and do not get involved with the efforts of the Road Guard. Stay in line and follow any directions you may be given.

If you wish to separate from the group to travel ahead—for example, to get pictures—signal your intention to move into the left lane, look for Road Guards as they may be traveling a bit faster than you may be expecting. Accelerate and move out ahead of the formation, do not ride next to someone for any reason, keep moving and clear the area of the pack as soon as practical. Do not try to rejoin the pack into the same position you left, just fall in at the back of the last platoon and ride to the next scheduled stop then rejoin the pack normally.

At the fuel stops or at any stop, follow the directions of the Road Guards; they have the latest news and information which may conflict with the published schedule or route. Keep in mind that the Road Guard is dealing with everyone not just you; he deals with all of the riders every day. The Road Guard is part psychiatrist, part cop, part lookout, part sheep dog, but maybe most important, always a friend.

MISSING MAN TABLE

On Friday, May 23, a Missing Man Table will be set up in the lobby of the Holiday Inn at Ballston, in DC. The exact location in the lobby has yet to be determined. A “RFTW XX Book of Remembrance” will be placed on the table for everyone to sign or to place a hand written note or object of expression. The book will be dedicated to all POWs, MIAs and KIAs from all wars, and is a memento from RFTW XX. It is also a continuation of the Missing Man Formation, which began in Rancho Cucamonga.

Cowboy and Hammer will leave the “Book of Remembrance” at the Vietnam Wall on Sunday, May 25, or at another designated time.

Both Southern and Central Route riders are encouraged to participate in the signing of the “RFTW XX Book of Remembrance.” The book will be available for signing on Friday, May 23 from 1700 to 2100 hours, on Saturday, May 24 from 0700 to 1100 hrs, and then from 1300 to 1700 hrs. On Sunday, May 25, four hours from 0700 to 1100 hrs. Objects that can be placed in the book are: hand written notes of expression, patches, photos, coins and pins.

Participants from both routes are invited to serve “duty” at the table in DC for approximately one-hour intervals. Road Guards and others from both routes are invited to volunteer as Table Guards, and stand table duty also for approximately one-hour intervals. A signature page will contain all the participants and Table Guard signatures that participated at the table. In addition, all participants will receive a Missing Man pin or patch.

All volunteers should contact “Dutch” Stevens, SR Road Guard and ICO, to have your name placed on the duty roster for the Missing Man Table in DC. He will assign your one-hour time slot.

With respect for the Missing Man Formation on the run, please contact Dutch only in Rancho Cucamonga, CA or Washington, DC. This will give FNGs and other volunteers from both routes equal opportunity to sign the duty roster. Quiet respect and honor will be expected at the table by removing your caps. Please, no alcohol at the table.

ROBLEY REX

If you have been with the CR to the Louisville VAMC you have met Robley Rex, one of a handful of our country's remaining WWI veterans. "Rex" has been a friend of RFTW for many years, and enjoys wearing his RFTW leathers to meet us at the Louisville VAMC. Up until a few years ago Rex was known to find his way onto Cruzr's Harley and rack the pipes. (The medical staff now asks he stay off the bikes—hurtful words at anyone's age.)

On May 2, 2008 Robley Rex will be 107 years old! You can send Rex an early birthday card if you like to:

Robley Rex
c/o Christopher East Health Care
4200 Browns Lane
Louisville, KY 40220

The VAMC shared that Rex is doing well and that he wants to join us in May to offer his encouragement for our Mission, health permitting.

BIKE SERVICE AVAILABLE

Dealers closest to the Run's Rancho Cucamonga, CA starting point:

Honda Yamaha of Redlands, Redlands, CA (909) 793-2833; Farther away, but their service department is also open on Monday, May 12th.

Yamaha of Cucamonga, Rancho Cucamonga, CA; (800) 523-2414

John Burr Cycles, Fontana, CA; Honda, Yamaha, Kawasaki (909) 823-1552

Mountain Motorsports, Ontario, CA; Honda, Suzuki (909) 988-8988

Pomona Valley Harley-Davidson, Montclair, CA: (909) 981-9500

For the third year, PVHD has agreed to open their service department on the Sunday before the run (May 11th), and will open the entire store (including Service) on the Monday before the run (May 12th).

Call ASAP to schedule any anticipated service that you may require of these dealers. If you come into the area with a broken bike, BE SURE to tell them you're with RFTW, and give them as much notice as possible. During the weeks prior to the Run, we will continually emphasize the need to give you priority service to get you back on the road by Tuesday afternoon.

CHASE VEHICLE POLICY

Please note that the term "motorcycle" applies to any Run vehicles that can be safely loaded and transported on a chase trailer.

1. Chase trailers are provided only as outlined below. They are not to be used to transport personal property including functional motorcycles, motorcycle trailers or luggage.
2. RFTW will make reasonable attempts to assist riders with incapacitated bikes, but there are no guarantees this service will always be available. (There may be times when the trailers are full and the rider will either have to wait or make their own arrangements.)
3. Chase vehicles will provide free service for motorcycles broken down or incapacitated in case of an accident.
4. Oversized trikes or other vehicles exceeding the capacity of our trailers WILL NOT be transported. Capacity decisions rest with the chase truck driver.
5. Where a motorcycle is incapacitated due to an accident, the bike will be loaded on the trailer with approval from authorities and owner/rider release as appropriate.
6. If the motorcycle needs transported and has a trailer attached, the trailer can be loaded onto the chase trailer with the bike.
7. Assuming the rider is not injured, he/she is responsible for ensuring the bike is tied down safely and appropriately. The chase crews will assist, but ultimately the responsibility for securing bikes rests with the rider. The chase crews will not be responsible for bike damage.
8. In addition to item (7) above, the rider shall secure luggage so that it will not become separated from the bike. Should it be prudent to remove the luggage, it shall be secured to the trailer floor or placed in the truck bed prior to chase truck departure.
9. The chase crews will transport the motorcycle forward along the daily route to the next available dealership where it will be unloaded. The chase vehicle will then depart to catch the Run.
10. The Route Coordinator is the final authority on any questions concerning this matter.

SHOWERS FOR CAMPERS IN HURRICANE

From Krispy, WV State Coordinator:

VFW Post 9097 is going to provide transportation to showers for campers on Wednesday evening, May 21, 2008 in Hurricane WV. They would like to try to estimate the need for this service for campers. If you think that you may be interested, please call or email Gary Lewis at (304) 533-2022 or liltruck282000@yahoo.com by May 1, 2008.

FLAG PROTOCOL FOR BIKES AND CARS

By Steve "Hawgwash" Hill

As we get closer and closer to RFTW I thought I'd share a little protocol for those desiring to display the American Flag, POW-MIA Flag, Service Flags, or even your own State Flags. I hope that all riders will display flags on their bikes in addition to those driving support vehicles and other 4-wheelers.

Let' start with the American Flag. It is always displayed to the Flag's own right in the direction of movement. In other words, if displayed on the back of a M/C it will be on the right side as the M/C is moving. On a 4-wheeler it will be on the right side of the vehicle. When displayed with multiple flags, the order of precedence is American Flag, POW-MIA Flag (a position of honor directly adjacent to the American Flag), followed by State Flags and finally Service Flags in the following order: Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard. In the event multiple flags are flown, the American Flag may be in the center position provided it is on a higher staff than the other flags. If the flag is displayed on a flat surface, the blue field is to the viewer's upper left (whether vertical or horizontal).

Remember, we are on a mission and part of that mission is to proudly display the flags that so many of us have fought hard to protect.

HONOR GOURD DANCE IN D.C.

On Saturday, May 24, the Black Creek Gourd Society Honor Dance will be held at the National Museum of the American Indian, which is located on the National Mall between the Air & Space Museum and the U. S. Capitol Building. Participating will be the Black Creek Gourd Society of Mariano Lake, NM; the White Eagle Gourd Society of Shiprock, NM; and the Inter-Tribal Veterans Association, Osage Nation, of Window Rock, AZ. The Head Gourd Dancer will be Larry Anderson, Sr., founder of the Black Creek Gourd Society of Ft. Defiance, AZ, who participates in the welcoming of Run For The Wall each year in Gallup, NM.

The dancing begins at noon, and at 3 p.m. the Veterans Honor Dance will recognize all RFTW participants and their families for their service to our nation. RFTW will proceed to the Museum following our group photo at the Lincoln Memorial and visit to the Vietnam Memorial Wall. Riders will travel on their own to the Honor Dance. The National Museum of the American Indian is at 4th Street and Independence Avenue, about two miles east of the Lincoln Memorial. Depending on where they parked at the VVM/Lincoln Memorial, riders can either travel east on Constitution crossing over to Independence at 7th Street, 4th Street, or 3rd Street, or travel east on Independence to 4th Street. Parking in the area is on your own.

That morning at sunrise there also will be a sunrise wreath laying at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

See an article explaining the history and significance of the Gourd Dance and its meaning for veterans under "Other Stories."

For more info, call any of the following:

Larry Anderson, Sr. (928)729-2035

T. J. or Alta (505) 726-0427 or tjanderson08@yahoo.com

Paul Bemore (505) 379-6921

HISTORY OF THE GOURD DANCE

Editor's note: Our Native American friends welcome RFTW Central Route to Gallup, New Mexico, each year. During the gathering, our veterans are invited to join them in the Gourd Dance, a dance honoring warriors. It is an honor to be invited to participate in the Gourd Dance, and you will enjoy the experience more if you know the history behind the dance. There are two origins of the Gourd Dance, one by the Kiowa and one by the Cheyenne. The Gourd Dance we will see performed in Gallup is the Cheyenne Gourd Dance. The below history of the Gourd Dance is by the late Arthur Cometsevah, Southern Cheyenne Chief. We thank the Black Creek Gourd Society for providing this history to us.

The Gourd Dance and Songs have their origin from the Cheyenne Sun Dance. The Sun Dance is a ceremonial dance that is undertaken when a vow is made by a potential Sun Dancer. The vow is usually of a personal nature and once this vow is made, it has to be completed within the lifetime of that person.

The Sun Dance is held during the spring, when there is a renewal of all forms of life. It is a Thanksgiving to Maheo for the life that he has given. It is a Spiritual Renewal of Live, a rebirth to all forms of Mother Nature.

The dance and songs originated with the Dog Soldier Society. There are four societies: Dog Soldier, Kit Fox, Elks, and Bow String. Among the Cheyenne, there are forty-four chiefs and they all have the same authority. There is no one chief of the Cheyenne. These forty-four are the governing body of the tribe, along with the four societies.

There are other tribes that have their own gourd dances, but what we are mentioning here is the gourd dance of the Cheyenne. The following story has been passed on from one generation to the next. This is where the dance and its songs came from.

The story says that in the beginning when there were many different tribes that roamed the Great Plains area and fighting was frequent among them. These tribes roamed the plains area from the Canadian to the Mexican borders. A band of Cheyenne apparently had a skirmish with another tribe. Following the fight, a young warrior was mortally wounded and wasn't expected to live. In those days the tribe had to keep moving. The young warrior knew that he was going to die. He told his mother and father and the others of the tribe to leave him and for them to go on. He knew his condition wouldn't allow him to travel. After convincing his parents and the others, they finally left him behind. Before they left him, they made him as comfortable as possible. He was placed beside an embankment along with food and water. It wasn't too long before he became unconscious. How long had he been in this condition, there was no telling.

Soon after he regained consciousness, he opened his eyes to find himself in a large cavern that resembled a large teepee. The people gave him food and water and nursed him back to health. And throughout his recovery, he would be given some raw meat along with cooked meat. During this time, the people would sing and dance. He indicated to them that he really enjoyed the songs and dance. In turn, the people instructed him on how the songs were to be sung and how the dance was to be performed. There was a large buffalo hide that served as a drum. The gourd rattles were made from rawhide. There were only four songs that were/are sung to the dance. The participants were painted black and red. In the Cheyenne way, the color black signifies death and red signifies blood, the life-giving force. These colors are also used in the paints of the Sun Dance. The black paint comes from charcoal and the red comes from "Ma-eh-dome." This is the red Indian paint.

As he gradually regained his strength and was fit to travel, he was told by the Elders of the group that he would be going back to his people. He told the people that he didn't know the whereabouts of his own people. He was told they knew where his people were and that he would be accompanied by some young warriors of the group.

The morning came when he was to leave. Before he and the others left the group, he was given a meal of raw meat. He was told this would give him strength for the long journey back to his people. He was told to take the songs and dance back to his people, the Cheyenne. It was predicted by the group that these songs and dance would bring people together from all tribes. This has become a reality since other tribes take part in the Gourd Dance. After leaving the camp, they journeyed for several days and finally located his people. Before they left him, they gave him directions as to where his people were. The camp apparently was located over a rise. He was instructed not to look back until he reached the top of the rise. He followed their instructions and when he reached the rise, he turned around and what he saw were wolves. The people had turned into wolves. The songs that are the gourd dance songs are wolf songs. These are the wolf songs of the Cheyenne.

Upon his return back to his people, they were amazed to see him. He was later given the name; One-Who-Has-Returned-From-The-Dead. He told his people how he was taken care of by the Wolf people and how they had nursed him back to health. He also told them of the songs and dance that were given to him and the Cheyenne. The story goes that the songs and dance were later stolen from the Cheyenne. One of the Plains tribes had taken a warrior captive and they had him perform the dance and to sing the songs. Following this, they later killed him. The young warrior who was first taught these songs and dance was of the Dog Soldier Society. That is why it is deemed as a veterans dance, although one does not have to be a veteran to take part in the gourd dance. As mentioned, it was predicted that these songs and dance would bring people together and it is true. There are many other tribes that take part in the gourd dance. It was also mentioned by the Elders of the tribe that respect be given to this dance. Women may also take part in the dance. They are to dance behind the men, since this is a warrior's dance.

It was predicted that the gourd dance would serve as a purpose for bringing people together. People would use this dance to satisfy whatever needs they might have, whether it be emotional or physical. People would be looking within themselves to satisfy whatever might be troubling them. It could be deemed as a ceremonial dance, but is strictly a social dance.

Following World War II, some members of the tribe requested from the Medicine people that they be given the right to dance the gourd dance. Permission was given with the stipulation that the ceremonial part of this dance not be included. The older people actually do not take part in the dances of the pow wows—the tempo of the songs is too fast. The gourd dance is stationary and a lot less movement.

Initiations are usually part of the gourd dance. In the societies of the Cheyenne, they are initiated into that particular society. This, in a sense, is the proper way. A person from another tribe would not take part in another tribe's ceremonial dance. Permission would have to be given from that particular tribe. In the Cheyenne Way of Life, we are a humble people. From what has been told of the gourd dance and wolf songs, we want to share this with all tribes and any others wanting to take part in gourd dancing.

If you have any questions about the Gourd Dance, you may contact *Larry Anderson, Founder of Black Creek Gourd Society*, at (928) 729-2035; *Virgil Gatewood* at (505) 979-1642; or *T.J. Anderson* at (505) 726-0427.

RFTW GROUP PHOTO IN D.C.

RFTW will gather at the lower steps of the Lincoln Memorial at 12:30 p.m. for a 1 p.m. photo. If you want to order a print, KZ Ric will have order forms in hotel lobbies and also at the North Pentagon parking lot staging area on Sunday May 25 with the Rolling Thunder vendors from 7 a.m. to 10 a.m.

2008 MISSION DVD AND FLIER AVAILABLE

From Anne Perry, RFTW Public Information Contact

The 2008 RFTW Mission DVD video and flier are now available. Both may be viewed at either www.rftwcr-2008.us or www.rftwsr-2008.us. There are also other interviews with riders from the 2007 RFTW that may be viewed on these web sites.

The main purpose of each year's RFTW mission DVD video and flier is to offer our State Coordinators and Contacts effective public information tools as they seek to communicate about the mission of Run For The Wall.

In the past, the only way riders other than State Coordinators and Contacts could view the mission publications was via the Internet web sites. Anyone can continue to view both the video (via Windows Media File) and the flier (via Adobe .pdf file) on the sites. Last year's video and flier will remain available on the 2007 websites: www.rftwcr-2007.us and www.rftwsr-2007.us.

We know that many of our riders would like to have more information available to use in talking with potential supporters and riders from their own communities. Therefore, **while supplies last**, you may now acquire a 2008 RFTW Mission DVD and flier package for a donation of \$10 (to cover expenses and postage). Please make your check to RFTW and mail to: Anne Perry, 10965 Clyde Acord Road, Franklin, TX 77856. If you have questions, please call Anne, RFTW Public Information Contact, at 979-828-4374, or email her at aperry315@gmail.com.

RUN ADVICE

The following tips were posted on the RFTW message board in answer to questions from FNGs and others. There's some good advice here for making your trip this year a little better and more comfortable.

Buy 8 x 12' thin plastic paint tarps for ground cover, one for each night you'll be camping. They pack small, only cost about a buck each, and can be thrown away each morning.

It is also a good idea to have a list of your medications available as well as copies of the prescriptions.

A cool vest that you can wet down helps. Best way to use it is under a long sleeved shirt and over a t-shirt.

Recommend a spare clutch and brake lever. Just in case.

Under Armour "Heat Gear" tee shirts, instead of regular cotton—very light, protect from sunburn, wick away sweat, and pack very small. Wear them in your nightly shower and they'll be dry in the AM. Leaves room for the annual tee-shirt purchases.

UU drawers keep you relatively cool and you can wash them at night and they'll be dry in the AM. You can pack a couple pair of these in the space of one pair of cotton drawers or briefs.

Wear shorts under breathable overpants. Some come with pads for calf, knee, and thigh, lots of zippers and adjusters, and they ride well. Saves space, because you only have to wipe them off or rinse them in the evening and they'll be dry in the AM.

I have a snug hot weather riding jacket which seems to lower the air temperature as it passes through the nylon weave. The thin removable liner has worked well in 15 degree temps this winter. (When a vest is to be worn, it fits right over the jacket and doesn't raise the temperature. Of course, I also remove the jacket and wear only the vest when appropriate.) The jacket and overpants are light and pack in a small space.

Found some thin sock liners to wear, instead of regular socks, that wick away moisture, keep feet cool inside boots, and can be washed in the shower and dry by morning.

Waterproof gloves are thin, and they are just as warm as most winter gloves. Note: If it isn't cold or wet, wear your ventilated or fingerless gloves or your hands will sweat.

Comfy flannel drawers. Don't wear anything with thick seams that you have to sit on. Somewhere in New Mexico, after they'd soaked up some sweat, I could feel where EVERY seam was. (A sure sign that I hadn't had many 200-mile plus days in the saddle.)

If you want to give yourself a treat, go to LDComfort.com and check out the riders shorts. I have done some endurance riding in the past, and always thought I had found the answer with bicycle shorts, was always fairly comfortable even during multiple 1000+ mile days, but I finally bit the bullet last year and tried the LD Comfort shorts, and I cannot tell you how much difference it makes, absolutely unbelievable!!! They may seem pricey at first glance, but at the end of the day just wear them into the shower and wash them with bar soap lightly, hang them up, and the next morning they are ready to go again. I have probably about 40,000 miles on the pair I got and they are showing very little signs of wear, and I have never put them into a dryer yet. An added bonus is that Mario, the owner of the company will be on his 2nd or 3rd RFTW this year, great guy, and if you don't ask him he won't tell you about his company.

Also, the "Roo" pouch is VERY "handy" when in riding gear or in jeans. I wear them even when just going for a ride around town or short rides, I am hooked and am going to order another pair and a pair for the wife soon. Are they necessary—probably not, but they are one of the best accessories I have tried on a scooter.

I wear the Motoport AirMesh Kevlar pants during the summer here in Georgia. I find them cooler than wearing just jeans (especially black jeans). They are custom-fit and NOT inexpensive but provide a much higher level of protection than just about anything on the market.

OSI (www.osi-sports.com), which I learned about this brand from Ted "Oscar Bear" Riedel on the 2007 Run, makes some good stuff. I have the Cool Jacket (comes with liner) and Cool Overpant. With a long-sleeved tee (not a mock tee, please), the jacket seems to process and "condition" the air. The overpants work just as well with denims as with shorts.

With respect to abrasion resistance, most "motorcycle" gear is simply not up to that task. For a jacket or pants to be considered adequate for riding, most agree that it should be made of at least 620 Denier Cordura Nylon or Dynatec. Be wary of any manufacturer that does not state what their garments are made of or its denier.

I've been using the Panoptx glasses for years. I wear rigid contact lenses and really need something that keeps the wind, dust and road boogers out of my eyes. I swear by these things. I wouldn't be able to ride without them. I actually have two pair. One clear for night riding and one dark for sunlight. They make one with a photochromatic lens (lightens and darkens depending on brightness) but the dark doesn't get dark enough for me.

Cool ties and vests are essential. They also make inserts that fit on top of your head under the helmet. A little odd, but everything helps. I prefer using a camelback rather than water bottles; we carried two of them clipped to the rails on the tour pack. REI has insulated models designed for cross-country skiers. Works very nicely. You can pack them with ice and the water will stay cool through most of the day.

Last year, we added Pediolite to the water. This is the fluid they give infants to avoid dehydration. Contains lots of electrolytes and other helpful chemicals. Doesn't taste too bad and you can get it in different flavors. Readily available at the grocery store.

A little thing that made getting laundry done easier was bringing bleach/detergent tabs and a roll of quarters along. You don't have to buy the soap from the motel and you don't have to go looking for change. Very helpful when doing laundry at 3 a.m.

Don't forget the cell phone charger.

And camera batteries/charger.

LETTER FROM ONE OF THE “UNHOLY 8”

Hello All,

As a member of the original Board of Directors (Unholy 8 was one of the nicer names we were called), I would like to thank all of those who came before and after us who made RFTW what it is today. I am sure of one thing: 99%+ of those who aspire to lead this group have the best interests of the group in mind. Yes I disagreed with some of those before me, and I'm sure some disagreed with me—they let me know very plainly, and those who followed. So as you start the 20th Run, remember and thank those who came before you, and think of those to follow.

I have a Vietnam reunion in New Mexico May 15-18; I will try to see all at Chicks. If not, ride safe.

Semper Fi,
Charles “Chuck” Parola

► SICK CALL

Jack “Chief” Brammer

2007 Chase 2 driver Jack Brammer is awaiting word on his recent throat biopsy. Our thoughts are with you, Jack.

KZ Ric

Ric has been taking RFTW’s group photo at the Lincoln Memorial for a number of years now. He tells us he is now out of his wheelchair, but his arthritis is getting worse and he recently re-injured an old wrist injury. When you see him in DC tell him you’re thinking of him.

(Editor’s Note: If you know of someone who is ill or recovering from an accident, please let me know so we can send our best wishes here.)

► **WORTH READING/VIEWING:**

A great website with all things of interest to the Vietnam Veteran: <http://www-static.cc.gatech.edu/fac/Thomas.Pilsch/Vietnam.html>

For a beautiful tour across America: a reminder that Freedom Isn't Free: <http://oldbluewebdesigns.com/mybeautifulamerica.htm>

George Jones sings “50,000 Names Carved On The Wall”:
<http://home.comcast.net/~singingman7/TNOTW.htm>

Military Veterans PTSD Reference Manual—great information. <http://www.ptsdmanual.com/>

► CLOSING THOUGHTS

THE STAND

By Shadow

We are many who answered the call,
Riding as one and standing tall.
Honoring all those who have served,
Our country and freedom they did preserve.

20 years of honor is the cry,
Riding in Freedom for you and I.
The Mission is in the back of our minds,
What we do will stand the test of time.

The brotherhood, friendship and family we have known
As this annual event has so grown.
We have made a difference despite what they say,
Our ranks growing with each new day.

The veterans, family, children, and friends,
The many faces that seem to never end.
Smiles tears, cheers, and waves,
All of this in the Home of the Free and the Brave.

It grew from a small band of brothers,
Who dared take a stand and never forgot the Others.
20 years of Honor—who'd have thunk,
We'd still be out there with more than a little spunk.

Determined as ever to make our stand,
Until every last person can understand.
The Mission above all else,
The sacrifices of one's self.
For the greater good of all concerned.
A new beginning at every turn.

As 2008 draws near,
We need to give ourselves a hearty cheer.
For standing up for what is right,
And keeping the vigil thru the long dark night.
With the rooms all full as well as the tents,
We have certainly taken Our Stand and DIDNT FORGET!

You Are Not Forgotten



TO SUBSCRIBE TO A MAILED COPY OF THE NEWSLETTER:

APPLICATION FOR NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

The RFTW newsletter is published in January, April, July, and October. If you would like to have printed copies of the newsletter mailed to you, a one-year subscription is \$10, which covers the cost of printing and mailing. If you subscribe or renew by October 31 you will receive all four issues for that year. If you renew between October 31 and January 1, your subscription will begin with the January issue of the next year.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____ 2008

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ _____ FOR 1 YEAR _____ 2 YEARS _____

Please mail this form with your check or money order (made payable to Run For The Wall) to Judy Lacey, 3310 Thunderbird Drive, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406.

RUN FOR THE WALL



WE RIDE FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T

**To promote healing among Vietnam veterans and their families and friends
To call for an accounting of all Prisoners of War and those Missing in Action (POW/MIA)
To honor the memory of those Killed in Action (KIA)**