



RUN FOR THE WALL

Quarterly Newsletter

“We Ride For Those Who Can’t”

April 2014

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THE EDITOR’S NOTES

Hello RFTW Family,

A comment was posted on our website forum recently about the lack of gratitude of some RFTW participants, and as this year’s Run is just around the corner, this is a good time to talk about it.

The post was about some of our riders complaining in the past about the food we receive as we travel across the nation to DC. Sure, eventually we get tired of the dry hamburgers and hot dogs, but please remember who is providing this food to hundreds of us. Many of our riders jumped to the defense of the cities, various veterans and civic organizations, and others who make sure we have food to fill our empty stomachs on the long ride.



I think Shadow said it best: “Perhaps one has missed what this mission is about.”

Shadow reminded us that these communities hold fundraisers all year long and dig into their budgets and into their own pockets--just so they can provide us with a meal.” I don't care if it's a grilled cheese, I am grateful—and thankful for even the meager fixin's that are provided us. If you think it isn't good enough, think about our men and women in harm's way and what they eat. And if what is offered to us at each stop still isn't good enough, there is always a restaurant nearby. But don't gripe where others can hear you. God bless those who provide for us to break bread on the Mission.”

Barbara “Happy Feet” Montoya said some communities are smaller than the "pack" as it comes through their small villages. “With the economy being what it is, folks are struggling. Please do not take more than you can eat. Typically, there is enough food for a second helping. And PLEASE be respectful, and don't forget to thank the folks that lovingly prepare our meals.”

Pelican talked about several "little people" in Colorado City, TX who had “hosted us, entertained us, and kept our glasses full, struggling to empty the very overflowing trash bags positioned around the facility (shoot, the trash was taller than they were)!!!! Well, being the way were are, we helped them pack down the trash into the bags, pull them from the cans, tie the tops closed, and position them where directed. We also helped others pick up the used paper plates and such left on the tables. It only took a few minutes, and helped express our gratitude for what they had just provided us.”

Please remember just how much trouble people all across our nation go to in order to welcome RFTW to their cities and towns. Let's leave them with a good feeling about the kind of people we are. Let's thank them for the food they prepare for us, the fuel they donate, and above all let's help police the area we eat in. If everyone picked up just a few items of trash after a meal, the area would be clean and our hosts would have less work. It's the least we can do to say thanks for all they do for us.

Judy “Velcro” Lacey

*Freedom is never free. It is paid for with the blood of the brave.
It is paid for with the tears of their loved ones. It is up to us to
preserve and defend that which they have paid so dearly for.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Well, we are now less than a month out – and if you are like me, you are ready to go NOW. But I will have to make the best use of my time at this point in making sure that all preparations have been or are scheduled to be completed. Bike is due to go into the shop in the next week. I have an appointment with my doctor to make sure that I am ready. (YES! At our age – VN Vets - that is a prudent step to take!) I have been hydrating for the past two months and cannot let up now! And I believe that I have everything that I will need in the way of supplies. I will start laying everything out, checklist in hand, while my bike is in the shop. In years past, checklists have been published, but at this point, it becomes pretty much like any other long-distance trip. HELMET, Tool Kit, a couple of extra quarts of oil. bungees, “Fix a Flat,” windshield cleaner (if you don't have a windshield – GET ONE), CASH for fuel stops – and make sure you have a full tank first thing every morning, bungees, cold weather gear, hot weather gear, and RAIN GEAR!. Did I say bring extra bungees? Don't try to bring everything – we do have chase vehicles to help get us to a shop should we break down, but then again make sure that you have the basics. A roll of good old TP can come in handy after a couple of days of Sloppy Joe sandwiches!

Speaking of chase vehicles – should you need one, don't just stand there and wave to them as they roll by – They'll surely wave back, being the friendly people that they are, but they won't stop unless you make it perfectly clear that you are in need of their assistance. Once they all go by, you are pretty much left to your own devices. And don't try to wave them down from a rest stop. They may or may not see you – get up on the shoulder of the highway (preferably outside of the yellow line!) and jump up and down like you're on a pogo stick, waving your arms, or should I say flailing your arms, like there is no tomorrow! NOW you have their attention! We mean to leave no one behind!

All Registration will be at the Host Hotel – The Four Points by Sheraton on Foothill in Rancho Cucamonga. We are working on having a tent or canopy set up in the parking lot so that we do not overcrowd the lobby with people trying to get registered. Most, if not all, of the meetings will be held at the Host Hotel as well. Leadership meetings will be held on Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning. An FNG meeting is scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, as is a Blessing of the Bikes. Vendors and RFTW Merchandise Trailers will be set up at the Host Hotel as well (make sure you have a business license from the city of Rancho Cucamonga). The Tuesday evening event will be a Meet and Greet this year held “off campus” at the Game Works arcade in the Ontario Mills Outlet Mall on 4th Street. This promises to be an enjoyable evening. We will be receiving the keys to the Kias that have been loaned to us BY Kia Motors of America, and we'll be presenting the Combat Heroes Bike Build project to the young Marine for whom it was built. We also will be hearing from the CEO of Casa Colina, a trauma rehab facility devoted to our returning veterans in need of their services. There will be Pizza and camaraderie. The event starts just after 4:30 in the afternoon and will last until 7:00 PM.

Don't forget the ride to Riverside National Cemetery on Tuesday morning – **YOU WILL HAVE TO BE REGISTERED TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EVENT – NO EXCEPTIONS.** The Ride to Riverside National Cemetery will take place on Tuesday morning, May 13th, from the Victoria Gardens Mall parking lot in Rancho Cucamonga, staging point for RFTW to leave the following morning. Stage after 0800 on Tuesday, Rider's meeting at 0911, and KSU at 0936 for the half-hour ride.

A detailed schedule of activities in Rancho will be included in this issue and will also be covered under a separate post in the President's Latest News as well as the Forum. Keep in mind that schedules are subject to change, so check the Host Hotel bulletin board when you arrive in Rancho. Of special note is that the schedule for the morning of the 14th will be strictly adhered to, at least to the best of our ability. **DON'T BE LATE!** By 0815 all that will be left in the parking lot are the portable latrines and a very loud echo!

Also The Old Guard (Guardians of the Tomb of the Unknown) has invited us to a rehearsal of a Torch Light Tattoo Ceremony. The tattoo itself will be held on the evening of Wednesday May 28, but the rehearsal will be on Summeral Field (?) at Ft. Meyer at 0930 Tuesday, May 27. Anyone still in the area is welcome to attend. I am told that the gate will expect RFTW riders to be attending and will provide directions to the parade field where motorcycle parking will be reserved ON THE FIELD. I really have no further information on this opportunity at this time.

REGISTRATION -- Now is a good time to **check expiration dates** on your Insurance Card, Registration and Driver's license to be sure that they don't expire before **May 26**. If they do, renew now so you will have the new ones for registration. Put them in your wallet now. Not a bad idea to photocopy and put a copy in your luggage. **All adult passengers must have a photo ID to register. Minor children must have both parents' written permission to participate in RFTW.**

VENDORS – You **MUST** have a valid Rancho Cucamonga Business License. You will be asked to produce it and will not be allowed to set up if you cannot do so. Also, generators will not be permitted. All vendor coordination is being done through Carol Olmstead this year. You **MUST** see her **BEFORE** setting up shop. The coordination must be done even if you are an information booth only. **SPACE IS VERY LIMITED.** No

vehicles – NONE – will be allowed to be part of your set-up – so bring an EZ-Up if you were planning to use an awning pulled out from a motor home. Your motor home will be across the street.

And then the list of reminders:

HYDRATE!

RFTW has a “No Pet” policy. NO PETS, PLEASE -- ***SERVICE*** ANIMALS ONLY!

Hydrate!

ALL REGISTRATION will be at the Host Hotel.

Hydrate!

Timing at venues is of prime importance. If anyone is considering inviting speakers, participants, entertainment, etc., that activity must be coordinated through Carol Olmstead or Harry Steelman. Last-minute requests in Rancho will not be considered.

Hydrate!

Once you get your wrist band WEAR IT AT ALL TIMES!

Hydrate!

HELMETS are MANDATORY everywhere on the Run.

Hydrate!

Motorcycles or any RFTW vehicles are NOT to be left under the breezeway or blocking the drive / entrance at ANY hotel or venue. NO EXCEPTIONS here either. This a safety issue related to emergency entrance and egress. If you leave it there it is subject to being towed. Yes, this does mean YOU! One or two bikes is NOT OK!

Hydrate!

Secure your gear.

Hydrate!

PRACTICE RIDING SKILLS!

RIDE SAFE and ***HYDRATE***

Harry “Attitude” Steelman
RFTW XXVI BOD

► RFTW 2014

NEW HOST HOTEL!

If you haven't made hotel reservations yet, keep in mind that our host hotel has been moved to **FOUR POINTS HOTEL by Sheridan** on Foothill Blvd. in Rancho Cucamonga. For more hotels in the area, see all routes' hotel lists on the website.

CR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Central Route needs a few good people! A Platoon Coordinator is needed, as well as a Morning Raffle Leader. Also needed are volunteers for the Fuel Team and Staging Team. Anyone interested in learning more about these positions, please contact the following:

George Creacy (Fuel Team) 801-564-1052 or geocreacy@msn.com.

Dick McKay (Staging Team) 719-648-8585 or dikmckay@msn.com

Ken "Catfish" Ward
RFTW 2014 CR RC
513-252-7980
kenward.1976@gmail.com

SR FUEL AND STAGING TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED

We still need a few more Fuel Team and Stage Team volunteers on the Southern Route. You must be riding all the way from Rancho to DC this year, and you must have gone all the way at least once before.

If you would like to volunteer for the Fuel team or Staging team, please contact me by email at joker195@gmail.com. Please provide the following information: Name, road name, email address and cell phone number.

Mike "Joker" Sotzen
SR Advanced Team Leader

REGISTRATION

Pre-Registration opened on January 1. The fee structure has changed slightly. If you elect to pay during the online registration process, the fee is \$30. If while pre-registering, you elect to pay at RFTW (meaning you'll pay when you arrive at your sign-in location) the fee goes to \$35. If you elect to do a "walk-in" registration (i.e. do not pre-register online), then the fee is \$40.

There is no fee for Active Duty, but be sure to indicate this fact on the registration form, and check "**Active Duty/Free (ID Required)**" at the bottom of the form, then hit Continue. You will be required to show Active Duty ID at your sign-in location.

When pre-registering for a couple, be sure to go through the entire process, including paying the \$30 fee for each person. This is necessary to assure that both of you receive a status of PAID.

These are the registration stats through April 15:

Route	Total Pre-Reg	Sign-in Rancho	FNG Total FNG	Rancho
Central	304	210	105	58
Midway	249	195	53	26
Southern	313	200	102	48

Note that these numbers are down around 20% from this time last year, but that's not unexpected, since a record number turned out for our 25th anniversary last year. I expect that total Run participation will be around 1,600 for RFTW this year.

John "Wicked" McKee
RFTW BOD, Director of Risk Management

CR REGISTRATION NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Central Route registration can still use help. You can be on 2, 3, or 4 wheels, going all the way or part way. Please contact Tigger at rftwkris@gmail.com or 816-294-3522.

MIDWAY ROUTE STILL HAS OPENINGS

The Midway has a few spots left open on the advance team. Also, the Missing man coordinator may have several open locations to fill.

SR MISSING MAN FORMATION OPENINGS

Southern Route still has a few openings in the MMF. Contact Flame at rftw.flame@gmail.com.

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Run For The Wall is NOT a party, picnic, or 5-star 10-day cruise. It is a trek that can have various hardships associated with it. Mother nature has in the past thrown lots of her tricks at us, with snow, hail, searing heat, freezing cold, rain, sandstorms, severe thunderstorms, and flooding. But the Run has endured all these years.

The State Coordinators (mostly unseen) do an awesome job planning our route through their areas. They are responsible for, among other things, fuel stops to include a minimum number of pumps to make fueling easy, parking for staging, and rest room facilities. They arrange hotels, not based on 5-star ratings, but on four walls, a roof, clean sheets, and a bed that doesn't move unless you insert quarters. Some arrange and plan wreath-laying ceremonies and visits to local Veterans Memorials, VA Hospitals, and schools. They also contact local communities and groups for fuel and meal donations.

Now with all that said, where am I going? Well, in the past we have had complaints of the hotels not being up to some folks' standards (you don't have to use the host hotels); memorials dropped/bypassed due to complaints by some of a lack of local population attending our visit. Well, the local population built these memorials for the veterans; thus we have an obligation to take these veterans to their memorials whether the local population comes out or not. Some have been dropped because of a few complaining there is no cover/shade and it's too

hot or too cold or it's too far to walk. Humans by nature complain, regardless of the situation, as we always feel it can/should be different/better....BUT.....

I am reminded of a conversation I had after RFTW I and RT II. I met a lady, Patty Hopper, and her husband Earl Hopper SR from Task Force Omega. While discussing the POW/MIA issue I was asked why I wasn't wearing a POW/MIA bracelet as involved in the issue as I was. I replied that I had worn one from 1972 until just recently (this was 1989) when I stopped as the nickel plating had worn off and the bracelet had a tendency to turn my wrist green from the copper. Her reply made me feel two feet tall and has stayed with me all these years.

“What do you think a POW or MIA would give to wear a bracelet that turned their wrist green?”

So while riding on Run For The Wall and you're hot, cold, wet, unhappy with the walk to a service, your room, food, or bathroom facilities ... think:

“What do you think a POW or MIA would give to be in your shoes?”

Roger “Cowboy” Mead
USAF 1957-77
RVN 1972-73
RFTW 1989, 95, 2001 -

INSURANCE WHILE ON RFTW

John "Wicked" McKee
RFTW Director of Risk Management/Purchasing

Please remember to check with your insurance carrier about coverage while you're on the Run. Some riders in the past have been told by their carriers that Run For The Wall provides insurance for them by virtue of Run For The Wall's insurance provided through American Motorcyclist Association, AND that their personal insurance would not cover them while on a "poker run."

First and foremost, Run For The Wall's insurance policy provided through AMA is purchased by Run For The Wall to protect Run For The Wall, Inc. from lawsuits arising from our activities while traveling from LA to DC. Our policy DOES NOT provide coverage for riders and other participants.

While I cannot speak to the matter of coverage during a "poker run" by their specific policies, I see no such "Exclusions" in my policy provided by AllState. Also, Run For The Wall is NOT a "poker run."

I suggest that any rider who has been informed that they are not covered by their "paid-for" insurance because they're on a "poker run" review their policies to determine if any such exclusionary language is part of the policy. Furthermore, they should inform the uninformed insurance agent(s) as to the nature of Run For The Wall.

Bottom Line: There is no need to contact your insurance agent other than to renew your policy if it is due to expire before or during The Run.

“ALL THE WAY!” WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

Some people are not clear on exactly what "All The Way" means. It appears that the perception of "All the Way" is that a participant is starting from some point along the route and riding all the way to Washington, DC.

This is not the case (unless your hometown is Rancho Cucamonga). Within the Run For The Wall concept, "All The Way" means that you will be registering and starting the Run in Rancho Cucamonga, CA and riding all the way to Washington, DC. If you go All the Way from Cucamonga to DC, you are entitled to wear the "All the Way" patch. If you start somewhere other than Cucamonga, you may wear a "Participant" patch.

GET YOUR BIKE READY TO GO

By John "Shooter" McCabe (2009)

- 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 (68 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 sightseer—you are part of the overall bike safety team. Our Road Guards' 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. Recheck 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.

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, POWMIA 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 4wheelers.

Let's 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, POWMIA 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.

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.

FUEL STOP REMINDER

One thing that is unique to RFTW and particularly stressful to FNGs, is our fuel stops. This year all three routes will be pumping only premium, high octane fuel during fuel stops. Pumps will be turned on prior to the arrival of the main pack, by members of our Fuel Team. You will pull up to the pumps two at a time side by side. Shut off your bike and have \$1's and \$5's in a pocket or tankbag, easily accessible.

The amount of fuel put in your tank will be rounded up to the nearest dollar, for example: if your bike takes \$6.37 of fuel, the fueler will ask you for \$7; please have the exact amount of bills ready. The excess amount goes to fuel our Chase Vehicles, which you will appreciate if you need them along the way. Do not ask for change, and do not argue with the fueler. If you feel a mistake has been made, after staging your bike, take it up with your Platoon Leader; he will follow up for you.

All bikes must fuel first, then stage, then take any restroom or refreshment breaks. This is a process that has evolved over 20 years and is the safest and most efficient way to fuel this many bikes in a timely manner. Please respect the members of the fuel crew; they have volunteered their time to help make your RFTW experience the best possible.

WHAT TO PACK FOR THE RUN

Lots of FNGs have asked for suggestions on what to bring on Run for the Wall. Tailor your checklist to your own personal needs—you may want to bring additional items, you may want to leave some things at home.

<p>Motorcycles American & POWMIA 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 Fixaflat 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 ziplock 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!)</p>	<p>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) Laundry detergent (in heavy ziplock bag) Small sewing kit Money Credit Cards/Traveler's Checks Driver's License Insurance information Padlock Trash Bags for covering T-Bag in rain, laundry, etc. Ziplock bags (all sizes) organizes & keeps stuff dry Extra pair of boots Jeans (2or 3 pairs) T-shirts (at least 6) Long-sleeved T-shirt (for the Mojave desert) Ear plugs Warm sweat shirt Underwear & Socks (at least 6 pair) Thermal underwear Sun glasses or goggles (2 pair) 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</p>
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Chapstick (With Sun Block added) Personal first aid kit Medications in marked containers Prescription glasses	Waterproof Ground Cloth/Tarp Sleeping Bag Sleeping Mat or Cot Folding chair or camp stool Flashlight with extra batteries
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HOW WE RIDE

By Colin Campbell (2009)

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 arm out and elbow bent up. *Hand making a fist.*

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



Right turn



Left turn

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.



**STOP or
Slow down**



Speed UP

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.*



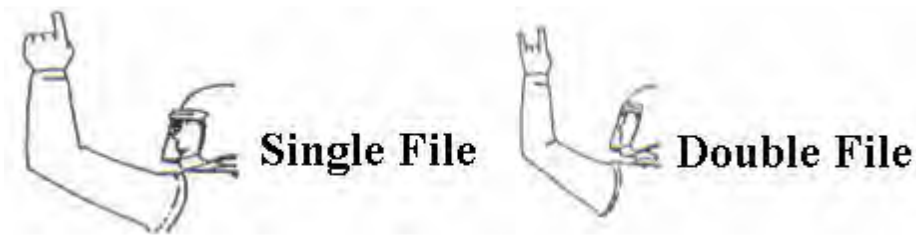
**Hazard in the
Road**



**Close the Ranks
open and close fist**

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. Riders' 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 rollon and rolloff. 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 semis 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.

Divebombing: 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 divebombing.** 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 divebomb 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.

Misc:

Cash: Take extra \$1 and \$5 bills for gas. When we fill up, total is rounded up; the extra money helps gas up the support vehicles.

Throttle rockers will add some comfort to your ride (available at HD 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!!!

RUN Q&A

Q. How fast does the pack ride?

A. A general guideline: 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 23 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 website.

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

A. 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 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 motorcycle handling 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.

MISSING MAN FORMATION

The Missing Man Formation consists of five bikes at the head of the pack. The two riders at the front are the Route Coordinator and Asst. Route Coordinator. The rider on the left in the second row is the Missing Man rider; the open space on his right, behind the Route Coordinator, represents the Missing Man. In the third row are the MMF Coordinator and the Head Chaplain.

The Missing Man Formation (MMF) Coordinator for the Southern Route is Jennifer “Flame” Connors at 409-466-8321 or rftw.flame@gmail.com; for the Midway Route Dee “Shortstack” Barker at jndbarker@charter.net; and for the Central Route Tom “Bones” Pogue (tomwpogue@comcast.net). If you would like to ride the MMF, contact your route’s MMF coordinator to see if any positions are still open.

First priority for MMF is FNGs (first-time riders) or anyone who has not ridden MMF in the past.

MINOR CHILDREN

If you are traveling with a minor child, you must have a notarized letter of consent stating that child has permission to participate in RFTW signed by **both** parents and or legal guardians. RFTW will keep that letter, so you should have two letters so you will have a letter for after the run.

MISC. REMINDERS

Here’s a collection of excellent reminders that have been posted on the RFTW website Forum.

Make sure your gear is secure—the riders behind you will be very grateful. Double-check at every stop.

If you'll put together packets of one \$10 bill, one \$5 bill, and four \$1 bills you'll be able to get through any gas stop without the hassle of digging out the right bills. Just put a packet of money in an easy-to-reach place after you stage so it'll be ready for the next gas stop. Remember, we don't give change (we round up to the next \$), so don't hand the fuel crew a \$20 bill and look for change. We use all "overages" to help buy gas for the chase trucks and support vehicles.

If you have patches with bad words, be prepared to cover them up when going into the schools (duct tape works great as a temporary fix).

If there is an accident, unless you are involved in it **do not stop**—proceed around it and continue on; RG, Chaplain corps, and chase will attend to it. If you stop on a freeway, you can cause a bigger accident.

We don't stop to put on rain gear if it starts to rain. If you think that it might rain, put it on now. The weather changes fast; have changes of clothes handy—you can add or remove clothes at gas stops.

It's a good practice to call your credit card company before you leave for the Run and alert them that there may be an unusual volume of activity during the dates you will be on the Run. If you're like me and don't use your card regularly, your Run expenses can look exactly like a card thief on a spending binge. The card companies' computers look for unusual spending patterns and will shut your account down in a New York minute, which, needless to say, could be very inconvenient and embarrassing. The other good thing is if you tell them when you will be back home and someone where you were tries to use the card (like a hotel clerk, etc.) after you arrive home, it will be blocked.

Gators - Tire tread on the road

Zipper - That line that separates the lanes

Snakes - Those nasty asphalt lines on the lanes (slippery when wet)

Fog Line - That line near the shoulder

If you are passing an 18-wheeler and hear thump thump, it means he's running on a flat and soon that tread will start coming off. Trust me, it hurts like heck to get hit by it, so be watchful.

If you see a Road Guard come up, tap the top of his helmet and point down—this means he/she wants to get in the lane of travel in front of you. Let him in!

Practice down-shifting to slow down instead of hitting the brakes.

Don't overpack your bike; you will be tired at the end of the day and have to cart that heavy bag into the hotel. Pack light. You will soon learn this is not a fashion show, it is a mission. Take clothing that dries fast and washes out.

Morning meetings are **MANDATORY!** There's nothing worse than missing an exit because you weren't at the meeting to hear about the route change due to construction.

The one thing that all FNGs have a hard time learning is to SNAKE around a vehicle. It is a simple maneuver but opposite of the way most riders do all of the rest of the time, so old habits are hard to break. To snake around a vehicle, the platoon leader will give a signal, then pull out to the number one lane. Each rider behind will then pull up to the same location behind the vehicle being passed and then pull out into the number one lane, one at a time. Just start thinking of it now. Done right the platoon looks like a great snake going around a fixed object.

While under way, do not leave your Platoon, unless it is an emergency. Road Guards are moving past the pack, and if you pop out in front of them, an accident will happen. In case of a need to exit the pack, signal your intentions, make sure it's clear and move out. Give a thumbs up as you exit so the rest of the pack knows that you are OK. If you need a Chase Truck to pick you up, after you have stopped, wave your hands above your head until you see a Chase Truck. Do not attempt to re-enter the Pack while it is moving, go on to the next stop and join it there.

DO NOT DIVE BOMB ANYONE, especially the Road Guards or a Big Truck (Editor's note: dive bombing a semi is a huge no-no. Some truckers are severely inconvenienced by our long line of bikes; add to that the insult of cutting them off, and RFTW will have blown the good will we have been trying to establish with truckers for years now. Some will honk when we pass—a thumbs-up will go a long way in gaining their cooperation!) If you make sharp, almost 60 degree turns in front of trucks or other vehicles, you are actually slowing down a little bit and you can see the results by noticing that the rider behind you is now beside you, to your left! And the vehicle you just passed is now right on your tail. You also have caused the driver to tap his brakes, which may cause some concern by the motorcycles still behind him. And the Road Guards to take great notice of your actions. Extend your return to the right lane over a longer period and keep your speed up.

If you pre-registered that is only part of the registration process, You still must check in with registration wherever it is that you are joining RFTW, show current proof of License with MC endorsement, current Insurance for the bike you are on and current registration. Passengers **MUST have photo ID** and register separately.

If you're an FNG, the FNG meetings are mandatory. It's a big circle of strangers listening to how they are going to be transformed into a ribbon of motorcycle harmony going across the country. And they won't be strangers to each other for very long!

► PRE-RUN ACTIVITIES

PRE-RUN MEETINGS/EVENTS

Host Hotel: Four Points by Sheraton
11960 Foothill Boulevard
Rancho Cucamonga, CA

SUNDAY, MAY 11, 2014

4:30 – 5:30 pm	BOD Executive Session	Four Points Conference Room	2014 RFTW Board of Directors
7:00 – 9:00 pm	Leadership ONLY Registration	Four Points Lobby or Pkg. Lot?	SR/CR/MWR Registration Teams

MONDAY, MAY 12, 2014

8:00 - 8:30 am	BOD/Route Leadership Briefing	Four Points Conference Room	BoD, RC's
8:30 - 9:30 am	All Routes Finance Orientation	Four Points Conference Room	Hargrove, Gladwill, Steelman RC/ARCs, Registration/ICO Teams, Route Finance Teams, Chase Drivers
9:30 – 10:30 am	Merchandising Meeting	Four Points Conference Room	Gladwill, All Merchandise Teams

12:00 - 1:00 PM Lunch

1:00 - 7:00 pm	All Routes Registration Open	Four Points Parking Lot	McKee, Steelman
1:00 - 7:00 pm	All Merchandise Open	Four Points Parking Lot	Gladwill, Merchandise Teams
1:00 – 2:30 pm	MWR Leadership Meeting	Four Points Conference Room	RC/ARC, Saging/Fuel/MOH/Chase Teams, Leadership Support, Hydration, RGC

3:00 – 4:30 pm	CR Leadership Meeting	Four Points Conference Room	RC/ARC, Staging/Fuel/MOH/ Chase Teams, Leadership Support, Hydration, RGC
7:00 pm	Registration & Merchandise Close		

TUESDAY MAY 13, 2014

7:30 - 8:45 am	Limited Registration (RNC Run)	Four Points Parking Lot	McKee, Steelman
8:00 - 8:30 am	BOD/Route Leadership Briefing	Four Points Conference Room	Board, RC's
8:00 am	Staging for RNC Run	Victoria Gardens J.C. Penny Lot	All wishing to Participate
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	Merchandise Open	Four Points Parking Lot	Gladwill, Merchandise Teams
9:00 am - 8:00 pm	All Routes Registration Open	Four Points Parking Lot	McKee, Steelman
9:00 – 10:30 am	SR Leadership Meeting	Four Points Conference Room	RC/ARC, Staging/Fuel/MOH/Chase Teams, Leadership Support, Hydration, RGC
9:11 am	Rider's Meeting for RNC Run	Victoria Gardens J.C. Penny Lot	All wishing to Participate
12:00 - 1:00 pm	Lunch		
2:00 - 3:00 pm	Joint FNG Orientation	Four Points Grassy Area	RC/ARC, RGC, Sr. Chaplin, Fuel Ldr, Staging Ldr. Steelman
3:00 - 3:30 pm	Blessing of the Bikes	Four Points Parking Lot	Chaplain Corps

4:40 - 7:00 pm Meet & Greet -- Game Works (Ontario Mills) -- ALL RIDERS

4:45 pm	Presentation of Kias	Game Works (Ontario Mills)	Steelman, Wormmeester, Kia Reps
5:15 pm	Presentation of the Colors	Marine Corps Color Guard	ALL RIDERS
5:20 pm			Presentation by Casa Colina CEO ALL RIDERS
5:30 pm	Presentation of Combat Hero's Bike Build Project.		Game Works (Ontario Mills)ALL RIDERS
7:30 pm	Interdenominational Prayer Time	Four Points Parking Lot	Chaplain Corps
8:00 pm			Registration & Merchandise Close

DEPARTURE SCHEDULE

Victoria Gardens Mall
J.C. Penney Parking Lot
Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Wednesday, May 14, 2014

5:45 am	Registration Opens		
6:30 am	Registration Closes		
	(Riders with clipboard "in hand" at 0630 may complete registration.)		
6:45 am	Riders' Meeting chaired by Harry "Attitude" Steelman, Pres., BOD		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (6:45) Opening Prayer • (6:50) Presentation of Colors by American Legion Post 262 • (6:55) Pledge of Allegiance • (6:56) National Anthem • (7:00) Why We Ride: 		

- “We Ride for Those Who Can’t”
- “Honoring All of America’s Warriors”
- Remembering the KIA/POW/MIA from Vietnam
- Remembering the KIA/POW/MIA from Iraq/Afghanistan
- (7:03) Taps
- (7:05) Welcome to RFTW XXV - 2014 by President Harry “Attitude” Steelman
- (7:06) Recognition of:
 - FNGs
 - Active Duty Military
 - Medal of Honor Recipients
 - Blue Star Families
 - Gold Star Families
- (7:07) Introduction of RFTW Board of Directors
- (7:08) Recognition of Volunteer Leadership
- (7:09) Introduction of SR, CR & MWR Route Coordinators
- (7:10) Rider Orientation/Safety Briefing (Steelman)
- (7:18) Closing Prayer

**7:20 am Riders Dismissed to Plt. Leader. Briefings at platoon staging areas.
15-20 minutes – Guaranteed!!!**

7:35 am Midway Route Departs

7:50 am Southern Route Departs

8:05 am Central Route Departs

RIDE SAFELY

PRE-RUN DINNER TUESDAY EVENING

Because of the last-minute loss of our previous host hotel, we have no place to have our dinner/ceremony the night before we leave. This year we will have a “Meet and Greet” sort of gathering at Game Works, an arcade-type facility in the Ontario Mills Mall. This will be a very informal gathering the evening before we depart. A short talk will be given by the President and CEO of Casa Colina, a brain injury facility in Pomona, CA that is committed to the rehabilitation of our wounded veterans who are now returning. Again, this is an informal gathering of participants focused on meeting old friends, making new ones, and welcoming our FNGs. There will be pizza and adult beverages will be for sale on the premises.

RUN TO CAMP PENDLETON

May 12 (Monday) 0900. This is not a RFTW run, but for those who wish, I invite you to join me for a ride down to Camp Pendleton to tour the Wounded Warrior Bn. \$80,000,000.00 facility just for our Marine Wounded Warriors. See firsthand how our warriors are taken care of and prepare for their future. This is an "all morning" ride; straggle back (I have meetings to get back for). I need a rough count on numbers going. For those in SoCal - if you prefer, you can meet me at the Main Gate. Email me for details/questions (Doug@Lyvere.com), and if you're planning on going, I need number of bikes and people.

Doug Lyvere
SgtMaj, Marine, ret
415-309-2510

RIVERSIDE NATIONAL CEMETERY RIDE

“Arlington West”

The Mission and the Goals of Run For The Wall focus on accountability in wartime actions, "emphasizing that no one should be left behind." It took decades for a National Memorial to be dedicated to those thought (known?) to be Prisoners Of War or Missing In Action. The Tuesday, May 13, before RFTW "Day One," is the opportunity to visit that memorial. A ride to Riverside National Cemetery will take place on Tuesday morning, May 13, from the Victoria Gardens Mall parking lot in Rancho Cucamonga, staging point for RFTW to leave the following morning. Stage after 0800 on Tuesday, Rider's meeting at 0911, and KSU at 0936 for the half-hour ride.

The National Prisoner of War / Missing in Action Memorial was dedicated in September 2005. Viet Nam veteran Lewis Lee Millett, Jr., son of MoH Recipient Lew Millett, sculpted the bronze statue which depicts an American serviceman on his knees with hands bound by his captors. Lee will be with us to present the Memorial and its design. The balance of the POW/MIA program will also include the widow of a pilot missing in action over Laos on 13 October, 1968. Michael "Bat" Masterson was later listed as a POW before our government changed the designation back to MIA.

The Fallen Soldier/Veterans' Memorial is also at Riverside National Cemetery. Erected in 2000, it is dedicated to all service members who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Riverside National Cemetery is also home of the Medal of Honor Memorial and one of four recognized as a National Medal of Honor Memorial Site. Dedicated in 1999, its walls feature the names of all MoH recipients.

Expect to be back to the host hotel by noon, unless you wish to spend more time at RNC, or to visit the March Field Air Museum nearby. Try to schedule your time to be in Rancho Cucamonga on Tuesday morning to join us. **RIDERS AND PASSENGERS PARTICIPATING IN THIS RIDE WILL NEED TO BE REGISTERED AND DISPLAYING THE APPROPRIATE MARKINGS ON THEIR MOTORCYCLES AND WRISTBANDS.** Contact Jim “The Mayor” Frost for questions, or further information at rftwca@gmail.com.

► WASHINGTON D.C. ACTIVITIES

FRIDAY, MAY 23

- 6:00 p.m. RFTW BOD ceremony and Awards Presentation at Holiday Inn host hotel.
- 7:00 p.m. Evening Parade at 8th & I Marine Barracks
- 9:00 p.m. Rolling Thunder Candlelight Vigil at The Wall

SATURDAY MAY 24

- 8:45 a.m. FNGs to Arlington National Cemetery. Stage in Marymount University parking lot across from the Holiday Inn
- 10:20 a.m. Arrive South Gate of Arlington, National Cemetery
- 9:40 a.m. Depart for Arlington National Cemetery
- 11:15 a.m. Arlington National Cemetery RFTW XXIV Wreath Laying
- 12:30 p.m. RFTW Group Photo Lincoln Memorial - begin to assemble at Lincoln Memorial
- 1:00 p.m. RFTW Group Photo: please follow photographer's instructions
- 1:30 p.m. RFTW Mission Accomplished Plaque presentation at the Vietnam Memorial Wall

SUNDAY MAY 25

- 6:00 a.m. Rolling Thunder Participants stage in the Marymount University parking lot. Bring cameras, lots of water, and snacks.
- 6:30 a.m. Rolling Thunder Participants depart for the Pentagon North Parking Lot (staging for Rolling Thunder Parade).
- NOON Rolling Thunder Demonstration

NOTE: This schedule is subject to change - check schedule on line or upon arrival in Arlington.

Have a SAFE Trip Home Time to start planning for Next Year!

FRIDAY, MAY 23 - EVENING PARADE IN D.C.

The U.S. Marines Friday Evening Parade will be Friday night, May 23rd, in Washington, D.C. For the past six years we have reserved seating for RFTW. If you're not familiar with the Parade, you should google it. The Parade consists of the world-famous Marine Silent Drill Team, The Commandant's Drum and Bugle Corps, and the President's Own Marine Band. The performance is a major event in D.C. and well worth the time to attend it. I do not know at this time who the "Reviewing Officer/Official" will be, but the Marine Officer will be a Flag Officer. Past civilian reviewing officials have been Gary Sinese, all sorts of politicians, some of civilian leadership from DoD, etc. It's a major event.

We have blocks of seats reserved for RFTW. This is the only announcement that will be made. If you wish to attend, you must send me an email with first and last names for each person—like a check list—as I forward to Protocol when requested. If you come up with more names, please send an additional email with ONLY their names (don't add to an existing email, as I need an easy head count). This is not limited to RFTW or riders riding only all the way. Nor is it only for first-time riders or first-time attendees. Please send an email, don't just give me a list in person as I then need to type it myself. If you don't have a computer, odds are that a friend does. EMAIL to Doug@Lyvere.com. I will send a simple "Good to Go" back to you so you know I've received it. The cut-off date is when the seats are gone (sorry, no way to set a date). Although I have 400 seats, they go fast. PLEASE, if you decide to cancel for whatever reason, let me know.

This following is important. We will stage as a group to go in, BUT it doesn't have to be one group. I will start sending riders in groups of 25 to 50 IF the Barracks is ready in order to get better seating. We will meet at the corner of 8th & I Streets, SE (South East) regardless of how you get to the Marine Barracks. We will not have a RFTW convoy going to and from, or any assigned RGs, leaders, or guides of any type. Mapquest or GPS works fine IF YOU PUT IN THE CORRECT LOCATION. My recommendation is to get a cab unless you're familiar with DC. The actual address is 8th & I St SE (South East - if you do not include south east in your GPS, cab driver, whatever, you will go to the WRONG place). IF you are coming by motorcycle (I think most do), please do not be "yahoo's"—this is a sound restricted area. Don't gun your engines or have blaring music. Normal motorcycle engine noise is fine. The Barracks Marines respect our mission and go out of their way to accommodate us.

Parking for bikes - there is a park at the corner of 8th & I St SE (South East). Literally a park. BUT we are allowed to put our bikes in this park—grass and concrete. DO NOT park in the normal parking lot. Park RFTW tight, please—limited space and you will all leave at the same time. It is possible to go through the parking lot and then into the park. From past experience I can tell that non-RFTW will park in the same area when they see us park there. It's not restricted to just us.

Staging to go in is NLT 1900 (7:00 p.m.) at the corner. Please be patient. (I WILL BE THERE by 6:00 p.m. (1800).

Some strong suggestions: DO NOT bring weapons—you will be going through metal detectors. Leathers, the way we ride, are fine but hopefully clean and void of inappropriate comments (we all agree with what Jane Fonda is—just not the time and place, as there will be women and children). I would leave any metal you don't need (coins, nail clippers, etc.). Bring water. Bring a rain suit as it occasionally rains—rain by itself DOES NOT mean it will be cancelled. Decision is made by the Marines just before the event starts. LIGHTNING storms will PROBABLY be a cancel—think lots of rifles spinning through the air and antennas. Best bet—be there and see what happens. Get there early—there are some food/snack places along the street that welcome the business. Bring your cameras.

GOLD STAR FAMILIES

Gold Star Families, as defined by the Department of Defense, are those whose children were Killed In Action. Please let me know who you are, as KIA families MAY be honored in some additional ways. Please include your hero's name, rank, branch of service, where and when they were KIA. Send to Doug@Lyvere.com.

VIP ESCORTS AT ROLLING THUNDER

For specifics and to register as a VIP escort at Rolling Thunder on Sunday, send an email to Joe Baum at jbaum60@hotmail.com. As an escort at Rolling Thunder, your back seat passenger will be a VIP such as a Gold Star Family member, Blue Star Family Member, politician, etc. You will also be in the "lead" element, which is about 150 bikes (I think). If you have not seen Rolling Thunder, it's a huge plus being in the lead element AND a heck of an honor at the same time.

TUESDAY, MAY 27

The Old Guard (Guardians of the Tomb of the Unknown) has invited us to a rehearsal of a Torch Light Tattoo Ceremony. The tattoo itself will be held on the evening of Wednesday, May 28, but the rehearsal will be on Summerall Field at Ft. Meyer at 0930 Tuesday, May 27. Anyone still in the area is welcome to attend. The gate will expect RFTW riders to be attending and will provide directions to the parade field where motorcycle parking will be reserved on the field. Following the rehearsal there will be a photo opportunity and an opportunity to have lunch on Post. You will need to produce a photo ID to gain entrance. This is NOT an RFTW-sanctioned event and we will not be providing any rider support.

► OUR STORIES

RFTW COMBAT HERO BIKE BUILD

On January 2 SSgt. Charlie Linville, the Marine who will receive the first RFTW bike, along with his wife, and advisor Triple Amputee Gunny Sgt Meyers, arrived in Medford OR. They were met at the Airport by a Marine detachment in dress blues Color Guard, 30 Young Marines, and 45 Old Guard bikers with a flag line. Ray "Too Tall and his Wife Kay McDowell had flown in to help out. They were all picked up by John "Hardcharger" Barker and his wife Dee "Shortstack." When they left the airport they were under escort by the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and 50 veterans on motorcycles.

The next day Hardcharger and Too Tall took them to Thunderstruck Custom bikes where they met with owner Mark Daley Jerimiah Thiring of Thiring Custom Paints. Charlie was examined and they took stock of what he needed to make the bike work for him. At noon he was again escorted by Deputy Sheriffs from Jackson County's Sheriff Department, along with 75 motorcycles, to Tou Velle Lodge for a party and meet and greet. Charlie was escorted via vehicle down a quarter mile of flags by the VFW and MIAP organizations. He also had another full color guard by the Marines in Dress Blues. He was overwhelmed at the reception and grateful for RFTW for its assistance in getting him on a motorcycle.

Our first RFTW bike build is coming together; there was a fundraiser here and another one set for April in Boise ID, Charlie's hometown, again by riders of RFTW.

Semper Fi.
John "Hardcharger" Barker



RUN FOR THE WALL—2014

Again we mount our iron steed,
to ride in freedom for our brothers in need.
We will ensure none are forgotten,
our promises will not be broken.
The days and miles are long,
but in our hearts we carry a song.
It's one of love, honor, and respect,
It's our promise to never forget!
Our goal is set in stone,
so no veteran ever feels alone.
We ride for those who can't,
mission first is our chant.
Soon you will see us all as one,
riding to The Wall before our Mission is done.
We will stand in quiet reflection,
and say a prayer for the names written.
And though another year done,
we will guarantee we will again ride into the sun.
Until they are accounted for and brought home,
each and every mother's son.
May the Great Spirit guide,
protect and comfort those who are about to ride!!

— Chuck "The Shadow" Gyurek

REFLECTIONS ON RUN FOR THE WALL 1989-2013

By Evo Red

Last year I rode on the 25th Anniversary Run For The Wall (RFTW), the annual cross-country motorcycle ride from California to Washington, D.C. At its heart RFTW is a demonstration to draw attention to the POW-MIA issue from all USA wars. To accommodate its growing number of riders The Run will have three separate routes in 2014. I've always ridden the Central Route. Throughout that route a wealth of support is received from cities, American Legion Posts, VFW Posts, Harley-Davidson dealerships, civic groups, motorcycle groups, various individuals, casinos, church groups, a motorcycle dealership, a Moose Lodge and a gas station. Rather than being a travelogue, what follows is my 24-year introspective of taking part in this heartfelt gesture.

Going "All-the-Way" back in 1989 on the First RFTW transformed my riding attitude into a passion. The catalyst wasn't so much the run's POW-MIA focus, though to me as a Vietnam Veteran that was sacrosanct. I was struck rather by the camaraderie found within our group of less-than-20 that rode the full route from San Diego to D.C. Needless to say I became attached to Run For The Wall multiple times riding part way and eight times riding the full route including taking over in 1992 from founder James Gregory to co-coordinate the ride with Rod "Bungee" Coffey.

I hadn't made the full Run in five years. My last time on the 20th Anniversary Run, I rode in the pack for all but one Navajo Nation side trip to Window Rock. Once back home my aging body lingered for over a month with the ill effects of that trip. This time to smooth things I planned to ride a bit off-schedule away from the pack. In retrospect, I was forced into a similar scenario in 1989 fending for myself while playing catch-up from my Harley Softail's five breakdowns and no chase vehicle.

During the months leading to The Run I'd been flip-flopping on whether to go or not. At the same time in honor of the 25th Anniversary I was steadfast to update the original "RFTW White Patch" as I had done for the 20th Run. The exemplary artwork of that first patch unquestionably exemplified the spirit of the run. Before placing an order I emailed the RFTW Board with my 2013 design, asked if The Board was interested, waited a month (no response) and then went to production. One hundred 25th Anniversary Whites were made, financed by RFTW founder James Gregory, Terry & Laurie Porter and myself. The 25th Whites were a far cry from my first RFTW Patch attempt, an ad hoc effort that resulted in twenty "All-the-Way" patches from a vendor at our Front Royal base camp the last day of The '89 Run.

Out of nostalgia I dug up my original riding vest, a vest from a time long before the dawn of the 2-piece RFTW back patch. Few within the original group have converted to the "new" 2-piece set. Perhaps "the new" conflicts with our pride of being part of the "original old" that had never been an FNG (*Funny New Guy*)? Stashed in the closet, my vest lacked a few significant emblems: Rainelle, Wentzville, II Field Force Vietnam, Black Gourd Society, St. Louis VA Clinic and such. Those patches were added along with a 2013 White; I even acquiesced to sewing on the large "Run For The Wall" Rocker, the top half of the aforementioned RFTW 2-piece. Once my riding doubts had vanished I added a red & black "All-the-Way 2013" bar.

Often times on RFTW, besides the POW-MIA issue, riders have a secondary motive for making the ride. Mine was to take my "MATES" cap, a gift from some Aussie Vietnam Vets, to The Wall. I wore that cap en route whenever possible. In 2008 twenty Australian Veteran bikers arrived in Los Angeles intent on making the cross-country trek to D.C. Their first day in the USA on the way to Bodfish, CA – for a welcome BBQ hosted by my friend Dave Barr at whose house I'd already arrived – one rider crashed into a rock-faced slope along the Kern River...and was paralyzed. The accident turned an occasion for a memorable once-in-a-lifetime ride into an event of life-altering doubt and sorrow. I had given each of the Aussies a 20th RFTW White Patch and in return received various commemorative items including the MATES ball cap. The cap honored all the wars in which our two countries had served together. I planned to take the cap coast-to-coast as a symbol of the downed Aussie Vet having made the Run.

I knew from my participation on the 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th RFTW that the run had grown into what we had envisioned it could become. Along with that growth, however, its atmosphere had changed to one bound by procedural necessity. The run's earlier biker/brotherhood feeling was long gone, replaced by a consciousness not unlike that of being a pawn within a massive regimental operation. The mission of RFTW remained steadfast; but, the run had evolved. The Central Route's designated cadre – placarded, arm-banded, cap-coded, pinned and radio-connected – alone numbered nearly 100.

The visual image of “The Pack” is the salient expression of RFTW. *The pack is RFTW*. That huge motorcycle column – witnessed by all, veterans, family and friends – relays a beyond-doubt message. It's a “walk-the-walk” demonstration of heartfelt remembrance.

The first morning, Day One, the military operation began anew. I stood in a 50-rider queue for 30 minutes waiting to use the head, a line continuously being cut by RFTW cadre. The routine of waiting prompted a reflection to my army time back in the day. The run's start was a reunion of sorts, my chance to renew friendships with James “Gunny” Gregory, Skipper, Redlite, Snuffy and assorted other long time riders. Pretty much on time, off we went on a warm, good first day to Williams, AZ.

On Day Two, I left the pack at Holbrook, AZ headed for Window Rock in the Navajo Nation. Warriors, including all who had served in the Armed Forces, are revered by The People. For me, bypassing Window Rock was out of the question. Several times I have shared the pack's experience of genuine welcome within The Nation.

I have an unforgettable memory of one previous run, a run on which we were running two hours late. Our first stop in the Navajo Nation was just off the interstate for a short reception at the Senior Center. At least two dozen Elders were there, seated in the meeting room waiting to welcome us. They had likely been there a couple of hours additionally, arriving early not to miss us. We exchanged mutual thanks, ours for their waiting – theirs for our service. Back on route towards Window Rock we noticed scatterings of people waving at us from just off the roadway. They were intermittently parked or standing on either side of the road throughout our entire path. Once on site our welcome at the memorial involved Code Talkers, Navajo dignitaries, food and pins given to us with the Great Seal of the Navajo Nation. The cold weather of the ride combined with the local wind had caused some of us to shiver as we stood for the festivities. Amid all the commotion I spotted a rider in the crowd standing there wrapped in a Navajo blanket! My chance to lightheartedly rag on him was not missed. The next thing I knew I was wrapped in a quilt! I still have that quilt, treasured and often put to use. *The following year I located the quilt giver and gave him an embroidered sweatshirt with my club's logo*. The giving of a blanket is a ceremonial honoring, in this case honoring a Veteran. The popularly known Pendleton blanket has been honored by all the nations for years; it is given out to people both Native and non-native as a form of honoring.

The Central Route's itinerary from Albuquerque to The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Angel Fire included a detour for Platoon #5. We were sent to Espanola, NM for a ceremony with city officials and local school children at the town's Veterans Memorial. That side trip afforded me some face time with road guard Mike “Many Bikes” Sekiya, a friend, fellow W&F MC brother and longtime RFTW rider. Earlier when I had doubts of making the run, I chose Mike to distribute my share of White Patches. He first hooked up with RFTW in 1998, rode All-the-Way in 2002 and has logged ten coast-to-coast trips usually serving as a road guard. It had been five years since I'd been to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park at Angel Fire, NM. Each time I'm there I recall meeting Doc Westphall and marveling at what he had accomplished. His thoughts of love for his son had spread out to touch every Vietnam Vet. I have a treasured photo of Doc, myself and my son Joe. *As far as I know Joe is one of only two riders of Vietnamese heritage to have ridden All-the-Way on RFTW. The other rider is my wife Huong – wed in Saigon July 4, 1968 – who made the trek to D.C. on the back of my '86 Softail, “Evo Red.”*

The Angel Fire museum, the chapel and the memorial's hill top location set a somber mood. The indelible tone of the Vietnam War is instilled by the more recent addition of a paused in flight, combat crew manned, Bell HU-1 Huey helicopter. *A few days later a similar vintage Huey "restored to duty" would hover above the pack and escort us along a portion of our route.*

So far with the days having been hot, rider's dread of wet weather was minimal. That changed when we were caught in a downpour outside of Junction City, KS. I got thoroughly soaked...everything in my pockets, in my wallet and all that I was wearing including my thick leather jacket now waterlogged to double its weight. Luckily The Church of The Nazarene in Junction City was our day's end. My personal welcome there came from a Kansas guy I'd been looking for, a longtime friend, a burly, bushy bearded, extremely likable biker named Frank. For the past 22 years Frank had met RFTW in his home state, notably setting up a special RFTW toll free lane onto the Kansas turnpike. We hugged; he got soaked; I handed him a White Patch.

As the miles continued to pile up I was keeping a close eye on my Wide Glide's odometer waiting for it to read 156,000. That number hit just before our fuel stop at the Topeka Service Center. Once there I coerced a rider into taking a picture of me on my Harley with my hands at 2 fingers and 5 fingers. At first guess one might think the "2 & 5" were meant to signify "RFTW 25". Actually the "2" was for the two bikes that I'd ridden on the Run, the "5" for the five hundred thousand miles they now totaled: my '86 Softail (344,000 miles) and my '03 Wide Glide (156,000 miles).

Our stop at VFW Post 5327 in Wentzville, MO – the hometown of the 1st Vietnam War Memorial in the USA – was another site of a longstanding welcome. I stayed for the reception ceremony but left prior to our sit down dinner in the Hall. My plan was to ride to St. Louis in order to be there ahead of the pack to snap a photo of RFTW rolling into the Jefferson Barracks VA Hospital. Before leaving town amid a now darkening drizzle, I rode over to pay my respects to "the column with an eagle atop", the simple First Memorial. While feeling honored by the memorial, its Wentzville Fire Station backdrop dimmed my mood. I was proud when the Wentzville Firefighters had formed a chapter of W&F MC, the international firefighter/Harley-rider club that I founded; but, that chapter was now void. *I was surprised to see in the station among the rigs a pink fire engine! The color was likely in support of the fight against breast cancer.*

I had brought along a dated T-shirt from an early RFTW stop in Mt. Vernon, IL at "Big Wheeler" the next stop after Jackson Barracks. My plan was to surprise someone with the shirt. As I exited the interstate it became obvious the Big Wheeler Truck Stop had vanished. Instead, the parking lot at Dale's Harley-Davidson had become the Run's new Mt. Vernon stop. I rode up, dismounted and began my search for the person who had been at Mt. Vernon the longest supporting the Run. Answer, "Jean, she's over there."

I found Jean at a serving table bent over an aluminum tub, hands encased in disposable gloves mixing a huge vat of pulled-pork, prepping to feed the riders. She had been at the Mt. Vernon stop on every run of the full 25. Jean was surprised by the shirt but was wrought with emotion when I handed her a 25th Anniversary White Patch.

She inquired about Smoke Murphy. *Smoky was still riding cross-country to The Wall in his 80s.* She was sad to hear from me that he had recently died. "He was a very nice man; rode to The Wall each year for his brother," she sighed.

That evening in the lobby of our Corydon, Indiana hotel I had two additional patches sewn onto my vest: an In-Memory-Of Smoke Murphy – given to me at the run's start by Skipper – and the MoH John P. Baca patch. The hotel lobby was all but empty with only two of us there in need of sewing. The other guy, ahead of me, was resolutely watching and directing the by-hand emergency repair of his age-split vest. When my turn came the seamstress made quick work of my two patches but had to redo the off-kilter sewn Baca patch. No charge. I tipped her nonetheless with a new \$2 bill. The bill drew a surprised look, a comment and a smile. At one time

passing out \$2 bills was a RFTW custom. The bills created with locals a money trail of the pack's passing. When I got home of the fifty deuces I'd brought along only one remained.

One RFTW compassionate change for the better is the inclusion of visits to hospitalized vets at places such as Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis and Robley Rex in Louisville, Ky. I'm comfortable riding in a pack. It didn't seem like any big deal when the Platoon Leader asked me to ride the leg to the Robley Rex VA Medical Center in place of the Assistant Platoon Leader. I've probably done 50,000 miles of group-riding, most of which was ridden side-by-side. My longest pack experience was setting-up and leading a 9,000-mile tour around the USA. As expected my position was at the leader's right. Long story short, I did a shitty job. My hand signals were off. I was having trouble peripherally picking up the Platoon Leader's signals and I didn't want to preempt his with my own. The worst came when I basically spaced-out. In hindsight, I blame my spacing on being awe struck in the moment reflecting on the dream of our 1989 pack becoming a reality. As we neared the Medical Center the Platoon Leader gave the "ride staggered" signal. He said I didn't; but, I think I spurred this formation change. No mishaps occurred, surely there was some confusion but no one much noticed. Nevertheless, my riding ego got rightly squashed, squashed enough that I'm pretty much done with leading packs.

Run For The Wall as implied was a *Vietnam thing* at its inception. Its scope quickly grew to encompass POW-MIAs from any prior wars and all new conflicts. In line with that scope I noticed one rider wearing an alternative RFTW patch. Its statement was more attuned to the now, in simple words a "Run For Them All."

The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Frankfort is likely one of the most impressive war memorials in the United States. Its imposing sundial design incorporates a giant gnomon whose shadow falls across the 1,103 names of the state's deceased vets.

The Central Route stops in Charleston, WV at the state capitol for a welcome from the Governor, a visit to the West Virginia Veterans Memorial, and a group photo on the capitol steps. I didn't have many, so all along the route I had been conservatively giving out my White Patches. Asking me for one wouldn't work. During the ceremony at the state's memorial I stood evasively in the background. Adjacent to me away from the bustle was an elderly couple. He was leaning against an outer stone accoutrement to the memorial, decked out in a VFW cap & vest, aided by a cane and partially supported by his wife. I noticed "Founder" embroidered on his vest. Knowing firsthand what founder entailed, I saw a kindred spirit. "Have you been to the RFTW Ceremony before?" I asked.

VFW Post Founder's wife, "We've been here the last eight years, since we learned about it."

I handed him a White, "Here's a patch for you."

The front of the pack is led by two riders riding side-by-side. Behind them is an open space for the Missing Man. That space is partnered by a solo rider. It is an honor to be the solo rider in the Missing Man Formation. In 1989 we figured the open space was a nice idea and simply took turns riding the solo slot. The Missing Man Formation today has a coordinator and assistant, a hard-to-get-on list, dual identifying arm bands for the solo rider and a pin and embroidered patch awarded afterwards. Usually each leg of the route has a different person riding Missing Man. Peter, another from the Original '89 crew, arranged for me to ride Missing Man on the leg into our RFTW hometown of Rainelle, WV. I can't think of anything on The Run that I could have wanted more than receiving that honor.

I didn't ride into Rainelle with the pack in 1989; my Softail had broken down again and I was on the road somewhere trying to catch up. I have fond memories of later years in Rainelle, though. At the town park we would load up kids on our scoots and pack them around the city. I did this enough times to have memorized a set loop through the town's back streets. At home on the wall is a photo of my son, Joe, crouching before a small boy at the park and autographing the sleeve of his shirt. My Softail and Joe's Wide Glide can be seen in the shot's background. My usual Rainelle "camp" for the night was Oak Knolls, the Crawford Home B&B

located eleven miles east on Route 60. The place is a big white two story house with three guest rooms that sits on a knoll back from the south side of Route 60. I have stayed there on separate runs with Joe, Long George and my wife. Always, whenever I was at Oak Knolls Mr. Crawford could be found in his easy chair in front of the living room fireplace. Meanwhile, Mrs. Crawford handled the heavy stuff. Her hospitality was not unlike that of your elderly country mom or granny. In the morning she served breakfast on an immense wooden table in the kitchen. *Change again; Oak Knolls is no longer a B&B.*

In Rainelle, I thanked the Missing Man coordinator and gave him and his wife pins. I handed the Central Route Coordinator a White Patch and later gave one each to the Platoon #5 Leader and Assistant. I passed out “gold coins” with my club logo to the kids at Rainelle Elementary and was reunited on the grounds with James Gregory who had been riding the Southern Route. We walked about a bit and then made our way over to the school auditorium for a scheduled ceremony. From the stage Gunny called the other three Original 1989 riders up for a short introduction: Don Pierce, Peter Boyle and me. Later as the ceremony was winding down I snuck out an auditorium side door. It was afternoon and my plan was to ride straight through, another 290 miles, to Fairfax, Virginia. I’d be skipping Friday’s last day, a ride from Lewisburg, WV to a parking lot just outside of D.C. to disband. Instead on Friday morning I intended to be at The Wall. *I was stuck in the tradition of The Run’s end being The Wall.*

The first few years of the Run just prior to visiting The Wall we would stop at the Marine Memorial to take various group photos. What sticks in my mind from that tradition wasn’t the picture-taking at the memorial. It was a happening one time amid the parked bikes. I had been riding on-and-off, Softail-to-Softail, alongside Bad Bob. His bike was damn near a rat with its plain dull black paint and worn chrome. Bob was a mellow guy but gave the opposite impression from his imposing stature and black patch over one eye. When possible he rode in jeans, engineer boots and vest-only with his long hair free to the wind. This riding garb partially exposed his chest tattoos, portraits of his two ex-wives justifiably inked out with heavy black Xs. As we were dismounting to walk to the memorial, three elderly ladies drifted over to Bob. The resulting visual became etched into my brain when I was obliged to capture it to film. Through the lens of their camera I snapped a shot of Bad Bob being swarmed by his new-found fans in their long summer dresses. Two old gals stood behind while Bob posed on his Hog with the third *ready to hit the road*; all four posed at ease amid dopily grinning faces.

Veterans have various reasons to visit The Wall. People visiting there can be solemn, ignorantly disrespectful, or devastated. When I’m there I often remember Chaz from Illinois. Chaz was an average size guy, had a black goatee, covered his head with black do-rag and was damn near always happily waving and yelling at any cows he saw as he rode along the RFTW route. He was the sole survivor of an RPG hit to his chopper. “I was blown right out the door,” he said.

As we approached The Wall, Chaz’s legs gave out and his tears ran. Shoulder to shoulder with Chaz supported between us, we three from The Run descended the path to the panel holding the names of his brothers-in-arms.

I also think of Country Ed Shepard from the ’89 Run. Country was a bushy bearded, jovial, rotund fellow from Bend, Oregon. At work he told his boss that the only time off he needed was when it came time for RFTW. When May arrived his boss wouldn’t let him off; so, he quit. Country rode a beat up Kawasaki with a Harley saddle, his “Kawaharley”. To toughen its suspension for the heavy load and the long haul he welded metal plates onto its sides, in effect converting the bike to a suspensionless hardtail. By the time we reached D.C. his rear tire was shot; no problem; the crew chipped in and bought him a new one. At The Wall was the only time Country’s face registered utter sadness.

My own Wall story comes not from direct loss. I volunteered from Germany for Vietnam, spent 15 ½ months in-country, got shot at a few times, but pretty much skated. My traveling coast-to-coast to honor those-who-gave-all simply seemed a necessity.

The weather Friday morning was cool and drizzly. I had on my MATES cap and my Original RFTW Vest as I walked down to the center of the Memorial. Nearby off in the grass on a temporary stage sat Colin Powell surrounded by cameras and facing a TV interviewer. *I noticed both of their suits were beginning to get damp.*

I asked a couple of ladies at The Wall if they would take my picture. One said she would, asked me if I was a Vietnam Veteran and thanked me for my service. I thanked them both for their support. Photo taken, I took off my vest, folded it, placed it at the base of The Wall alongside my MATES cap and walked back to my Harley.

► OTHER STORIES

LAST LIVING ORIGINAL CODE TALKER

At 92, Chester Nez has experienced more than most in today's society can begin to imagine, everything from prejudice because of his cultural and ethnic origins, to his time as a soldier on the front lines for months on end without relief.

He sat proudly in his wheelchair at a recent book signing for his memoir *Code Talker*, written in collaboration with Judith Avila, surrounded by family and admirers. He spoke about his war experiences, and the honor he feels even today for serving in a unique capacity as a warrior with a rifle and a warrior with words – Navajo words.

Growing up in the Checkerboard of the Navajo reservation was not easy, but for young Chester it was a life of beauty structured around work and the joy of family. Spirituality was part and parcel of each day, an ingrained appreciation of the layers of life and nature and how they come together within each person.

When he went to boarding school he was faced with something totally outside his experience. It was rarely fun or joyful. His memoir reveals that Chester used his cultural spirituality to rise above often-cruel circumstances that were demeaning and mean-spirited. *Walk in beauty*, he often reminded himself, whether he was being threatened by matrons at school, or later when facing the formidable attacks of Japanese soldiers on the various islands where his native language became the secret code that very likely shortened the war and saved many lives.

At an event in Las Vegas, N.M., at the Plaza Hotel, Chester responded to questions from the audience about his war experience. Avila, his memoirist set the stage. "Imagine yourself in a different life," Avila said. "Imagine yourself as a young boy being sent off to boarding school, away from your family, away from everything you know. Imagine yourself going to war."

Chester was part of a Marine recruitment targeted toward young Navajo men who were fluent in English and Navajo. He didn't know that at the time; he only knew his country was in jeopardy and as a warrior it was his duty to serve. It wasn't long before he learned he and 29 other young Native Americans were being asked to develop a code that would baffle the enemy and turn the tide of war in favor of American forces.

And they had 13 weeks to get it done.

The code talkers, down to 29 by the time they entered into the conflict, were at the front lines from day one. While others were getting R&R to recover from shell shock following extended time in the trenches, the code talkers were put back into play on another island, never getting the relief made available to other soldiers.

"What we were doing was necessary," Chester said. "We had a job to do and we did it."

He says he does not consider himself a hero. "We were needed and we served." His unassuming manner hides the soul of a warrior. It is the Navajo way to be respectful and not show off or be prideful. In the case of the code talkers that was easy since their efforts were cloaked in secrecy until 1968. The men continued to go unrecognized until 2000 when Congress authorized the Congressional Gold Medal be struck in their honor. In July 2001, in the Capitol Rotunda, the presentation was made to the original 29 (many of them posthumously), thanks to Senator Jeff Bingaman of New Mexico and Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii who sponsored the bill. Code talkers who were trained after the initial 29 (about 400) were recognized with the Congressional Silver Medal several months later.

The original 29 left their homes and their families without notifying anyone where they were going, or what they would be doing, partly because they didn't know and partly because communication on the reservation was limited. Before they shipped out they wrote home about their military service, but nothing about what they would be doing. That secret would remain with them for decades. Some of them took it to their graves unable to survive after returning home and finding they were still regarded as second class citizens after serving with honor and being respected by their Marine peers. As long as they were soldiers, they had value. When they came home life went on, but they had changed. Worse yet, they couldn't tell their families so they could be honored among those closest to them.

Chester says this broke many of the men. They turned to drinking or just gave up. Post-traumatic stress disorder took its toll. Called shell shock at the time, the symptoms were treated for a few months after the soldiers returned home, but the men lived with the aftereffects for the rest of their lives.

Chester was fortunate in that his father was a man who understood that spirits of the dead Japanese were haunting his son. Treatment by a medicine man was ordered. The dreams abated after the healing ceremony, but returned later in life.

During Chester's talk a member of the audience stood and said she worked for the V.A., which now recognizes the healing way ceremonies and the work of medicine men as valuable treatments for Native Americans returning from war zones. The audience applauded loudly and looked to Chester, who nodded gravely. His hearing is poor and most of the communication with Chester during the event was through Avila or his grandson Latham, but he seemed to understand how important this is, that Native American culture and tradition is being respected.

Someone in the audience asked how Chester felt about having the sacred Navajo language used as an instrument of war.

"It was not wrong to use it as a code," he said. "In the long run we used it to defeat the enemy. It was the best thing we ever did."

Chester credits his spiritual and cultural background with keeping him steady and focused during wartime, but he also credits the Marines with shaping his life after the war.

"I learned a lot in the service. I respected the traditions. I was treated with respect, and what I went through, they supported and helped me. I am so proud to have served. I am so proud of what we did."

Back home he faced a rude awakening. When he registered at a federal office in Gallup in 1945, the functionary handling his paperwork took pains to remind him that even though he was wearing a uniform he was still the same, reminding him he wasn't a "real citizen," and that he couldn't even vote, which at the time was true. It wasn't until 1962 that New Mexico became the last state to approve voting rights for Native Americans.

Chester intermingles his feelings about going off to boarding school and going off to war, perhaps because the comparisons are so radically different. When he went to boarding school there was no respect for his language or his culture. In the Marines he was quickly accepted and received high praise for his work and dedication. His language became a vital factor in the war effort. The military newspaper *Chevron* couldn't say enough good things about the Navajo recruits, their strength, endurance, performance and dedication. Nothing was said about their secret mission, but as with all Marines, they had to live up to the physical and rigorous training standards. They out did themselves and continued to be a source of pride for the Marines. Chester said he and the other Navajo men were a little uncomfortable with the recognition but warmed by the respect and acceptance.

His treatment by matrons and other staff at boarding school was anything but respectful. "They would take us so far (going home) and drop us off. We would walk sometimes 15 miles or so to get home. They treated us terrible, terrible. They hit us, kicked us, and picked on the smallest ones who couldn't fight back." The value of his education was something that would stay with him. The memories of cruel treatment remain as a reminder of the high cost.

The only time he felt uncomfortable during his military service was when Army personnel stopped him and Francis (another code talker) and accused them of being Japanese. "I speak perfect English," Chester argued. "How can you think I'm a Japanese?" The soldier was sure the two dark-skinned code talkers had killed American soldiers and stolen their uniforms.

The soldiers marched the code talkers back to camp and presented them for investigation, only to find they were the ones in deep trouble. Chester smiles at the memory, but makes no comment.

If anything distresses him it is that no one seems to care about something that made such a critical difference during wartime. "You try to explain what you went through and they just kick it aside," he said.

It is interesting to note that the night before Chester's appearance before more than 200 people in Las Vegas, he had spent six hours in the V.A. hospital receiving a blood transfusion. When it was suggested that perhaps he should postpone his speaking engagement, he was adamant that he meet his obligation. This remarkable veteran can be assured people do want to hear his story. Everyone in the packed room listened intently and many waited more than two hours to buy his memoir. He signed every book and patiently waited while countless people posed with him for a photo. He is the living embodiment of a Navajo who walks in beauty.

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Chester Nez receives an American flag during the rededication of the Code Talker Hall, Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., on April 4, 2014. The flag was flown over the Marine Corps War Memorial on the first day of spring in honor of Cpl. Nez's attendance at the Platoon 382 Hall rededication. Cpl. Nez is the last of the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers of World War II, and also the last living member of the famed Platoon 382.



► VA NEWS

VA REMOVES INCOME REPORTING

On March 24, 2014, the VA announced it is eliminating the annual requirement for most veterans enrolled in VA's health care system to report income information beginning in March 2014. Instead, VA will automatically match income information obtained from the Internal Revenue Service and Social Security Administration.

ADAPTIVE HOUSING GRANT ELIGIBILITY

Veterans and active-duty military personnel with service-connected amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, are now presumed medically eligible for grants up to almost \$68,000 to adapt their homes, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced on March 19, 2014.

EXPEDITED PROCESSING FOR 100%

Starting March 17, 2014, veterans who have a VA compensation rating of 100% permanent and total (P&T) may receive expedited processing of applications for Social Security disability benefits.

What do I need to know about the VA and Social Security programs?

Both Social Security and VA pay disability benefits. However, their programs, processes, and criteria for receiving benefits are very different.

A VA compensation rating of 100% Permanent and Total does not guarantee that you will receive Social Security disability benefits. To be approved for Social Security benefits, you must meet Social Security's definition of "disability." We consider you disabled under Social Security rules if:

- You cannot do work that you did before;
- We decide that you cannot adjust to other work because of your medical condition(s); and
- Your disability has lasted or is expected to last for at least one year or to result in death.

If you receive VA compensation, this will not affect your Social Security benefits.

As a veteran rated 100% P&T, how do I receive expedited processing for Social Security disability benefits?

First, you must apply for Social Security disability benefits. You can do this in one of three ways:

- Complete [your application online](#);
 - Call our toll-free telephone number, **1-800-772-1213**. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call us at **TTY 1-800-325-0778**; or
 - Call or visit [your local Social Security office](#).
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► OTHER NEWS

VETERANS CEMETERY AT ANGEL FIRE!

Gov. Susana Martinez announced on Tuesday, April 15, that the Angel Fire area was selected as one of four proposed sites for rural veterans' cemeteries across the state. Officials plan to build the three- to five-acre cemetery on a parcel of donated land adjacent to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

"We felt that Angel Fire was very deserving, especially with the fact that it has the first nationally recognized Vietnam memorial park," Martinez said.

Martinez said the Angel Fire cemetery is expected to serve an area that includes 21,000 veterans and their families in Angel Fire, Taos, Raton, and other parts of north and northeast New Mexico. New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Timothy Hale said the Angel Fire site was chosen partly because it is more accessible to people in outlying areas.

"One of the good deciding factors also was the direct road from the Clayton area direct into Angel Fire," he said. "There's a very small veteran population out in that far northeast corner. But for access to those veterans, Angel Fire was one of the natural choices."

Each cemetery is expected to be about three to five acres in size. Developers Harry Patterson of Wichita Falls, Texas and his business partner Stan Samuels of Angel Fire have about 450 acres adjacent to Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park and have offered to donate as many of those as the state needs for the cemetery.

State officials estimated each cemetery will cost about \$1.5 million, for a total of \$6 million, according to New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services public information officer Ray Seva.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will pay for all but 10 percent of the cost for the cemeteries, Seva said. The New Mexico Legislature has approved the 10 percent down payment of \$600,000 required by the Department of Veterans Affairs, though the state can apply for a special VA cemetery grant to recover that cost.

Several Angel Fire residents and supporters have been lobbying for the local site since the governor announced her Strategic Veterans Cemetery Initiative in July. At that time, Martinez said state officials hoped to "provide resting places that meet the highest federal standards" for the many New Mexico veterans who live far away from the federal cemeteries in Santa Fe, Fort Bayard near Silver City and Fort Bliss near El Paso, Texas. The federal cemetery closest to Colfax County is in Santa Fe.

The other three cemeteries will be built in Carlsbad, Gallup, and Fort Stanton.

Construction could begin in November or December

24 MEDALS OF HONOR AWARDED

WASHINGTON — Seeking to correct potential acts of bias spanning three wars, President Barack Obama will award the Medal of Honor to 24 Army veterans, including an Arizonan, following a congressionally mandated review to ensure that eligible recipients were not bypassed due to prejudice.

The unusual mass on March 18 honored veterans, most of Hispanic or Jewish heritage, who had already been recognized with the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest military award. Only three of the recipients are living.

The Army conducted the review under a directive from Congress in the 2002 National Defense Authorization Act. The law required that the record of each Jewish American and Hispanic American veteran who received a Service Cross during or after World War II be reviewed for possible upgrade to the Medal of Honor.

The Pentagon said the Army reviewed the cases of the 6,505 recipients of the Distinguished Service Cross from World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars and found an eligible pool of 600 soldiers who may have been Jewish or Hispanic. The Army also worked with the National Museum of American Jewish Military History, the Jewish War Veterans of the USA and the American GI Forum, the largest Hispanic-American veterans group, to pinpoint potential medal recipients.

Of the 24, eight fought in the Vietnam War, nine in the Korean War and seven in World War II.

The three living recipients are all veterans of the Vietnam War:

— Spc. 4 Santiago J. Erevia of San Antonio, for courage during a search and clear mission near Tam Ky, South Vietnam, on May 21, 1969.

— Staff Sgt. Melvin Morris of Cocoa, Fla., for courageous actions during combat operations in the vicinity of Chi Lang, South Vietnam, on Sept 17, 1969.

— Sgt. 1st Class Jose Rodela of San Antonio for courage during combat operations in Phuoc Long province, South Vietnam, on Sept. 1, 1969.

Posthumous recipients:

—Sgt. Candelario Garcia, born in Corsicana, Texas, for courageous actions during combat operations in Lai Khe, South Vietnam, on Dec. 8, 1968.

— Spc. 4 Leonard L. Alvarado, born in Bakersfield, Calif., died during combat operations in Phuoc Long province, South Vietnam, on Aug. 12, 1969.

— Staff Sgt. Felix M. Conde-Falcon, born in Juncos, Puerto Rico, killed during combat operations in Ap Tan Hoa, South Vietnam, on April 4, 1969.

— Spc. 4 Ardie R. Copas of Fort Pierce, Fla. killed during combat operations near Ph Romeas Hek, Cambodia, on May 12, 1970.

— Spc. 4 Jesus S. Duran of San Bernardino, Calif., for courageous actions during combat operations in South Vietnam on April 10, 1969.

— Cpl. Joe R. Baldonado, born in Colorado, killed during combat operations in Kangdong, North Korea, on Nov. 25, 1950.

— Cpl. Victor H. Espinoza of El Paso, Texas, for courageous actions during combat operations in Chorwon, North Korea, on Aug. 1, 1952.

— Sgt. Eduardo C. Gomez, born in Los Angeles, for courageous actions during combat operations in Tabudong, South Korea, on Sept. 3, 1950.

— Pfc. Leonard M. Kravitz, born in New York City, killed during combat operations in Yangpyong, South Korea, on March 6-7, 1951.

— Master Sgt. Juan E. Negron of Bayamon, Puerto Rico, for courageous actions during combat operations in Kalma-Eri, North Korea, on April 28, 1951.

— Master Sgt. Mike C. Pena, born in Newgulf, Texas, killed in action during combat operations in Waegwan, South Korea, on Sept. 4, 1950.

— Pvt. Demensio Rivera, born in Cabo Rojo, Puerto Rico, for courageous actions during combat operations in Changyong-ni, South Korea, on May 23, 1951.

— Pvt. Miguel A. Vera, born in Puerto Rico, killed during combat operations in Chorwon, North Korea, on Sept. 21, 1952.

— Sgt. Jack Weinstein of Saint Francis, Kan. for courageous actions during combat operations in Kumsong, South Korea, on Oct. 19, 1951.

— Pvt. Pedro Cano, born in La Morita, Mexico, for courageous actions during combat operations in Schevenhutte, Germany, on Dec. 3, 1944.

- Pvt. Joe Gandara, born in Santa Monica, Calif., for courageous actions during combat operations in Amfreville, France, on June 9, 1944.
- Pfc. Salvador J. Lara, of Riverside, Calif., for courageous actions during combat operations in Aprilia, Italy, May 27-28, 1944.
- Sgt. William F. Leonard, of Lockport, N.J., for courageous actions during combat operations near St. Die, France, on Nov. 7, 1944.
- Staff Sgt. Manuel V. Mendoza, born in Miami, Ariz., for courageous actions during combat operations on Mount Battaglia, Italy, on Oct. 4, 1944.
- Sgt. Alfred B. Nietzel, born in New York City, for courageous actions during combat operations in Heistern, Germany, on Nov. 18, 1944.
- 1st Lt. Donald K. Schwab, born Hooper, Neb., for courageous actions during combat operations near Lure, France, on Sept. 17, 1944.

NATIONAL MOMENT OF REMEMBRANCE

Please enter this day and time on your calendar: May 30 at 3 p.m.

May 30 is the original and traditional Memorial Day, established in 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his General Order No. 11. Memorial Day was first observed on 30 May 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery.

To help re-educate and remind Americans of the true meaning of Memorial Day, the "National Moment of Remembrance" resolution was passed on Dec 2000 which asks that at 3 p.m. local time, all Americans "voluntarily and informally observe in their own way a Moment of remembrance and respect, pausing from whatever they are doing for a moment of silence or listening to 'Taps.'"

The Moment of Remembrance is a step in the right direction to returning the meaning back to the day. What is needed is a full return to the original day of observance. Set aside one day out of the year for the nation to get together to remember, reflect, and honor those who have given their all in service to their country.

But what may be needed to return the solemn, and even sacred, spirit back to Memorial Day is for a return to its traditional day of observance. Many feel that when Congress made the day into a three-day weekend in with the National Holiday Act of 1971, it made it all the easier for people to be distracted from the spirit and meaning of the day. As the VFW stated in its 2002 Memorial Day address: "Changing the date merely to create three-day weekends has undermined the very meaning of the day. No doubt, this has contributed greatly to the general public's nonchalant observance of Memorial Day."

On January 19, 1999 Senator Inouye introduced bill S 189 to the Senate which proposes to restore the traditional day of observance of Memorial Day back to May 30th instead of "the last Monday in May." On April 19, 1999 Representative Gibbons introduced the bill to the House (H.R. 1474). The bills were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Government Reform.

Sen. Inouye introduced the bill every Congress until his death, but to date, there has been no further developments on the bill. Please write your Representative and your Senators, urging them to support these bills.

Some advocate making Armed Forces Day a national holiday in place of Memorial Day.

MARINES OPEN EXPERIMENTAL COMBAT UNIT TO WOMEN

The Marine Corps will open a stateside combat unit to women to collect data for the military's overall effort to integrate them into combat roles by 2016.

Females will make up a quarter of the 460-Marine unit and be placed in infantry squads, artillery gun sections, and tank crews, officials said. A male Marine will serve as the commander and a female Marine will be placed as the task force sergeant major.

The unit will be called the Ground Combat Element Experimental Task Force. Its purpose will be to "evaluate the physical performance of individual Marine volunteers in the execution of individual and collective tasks in an operational environment," according to a release from the Corps.

Capt. Maureen Krebs, a spokeswoman for the service, said all Marines will be receiving informational material and volunteers will be requested later this spring. The unit was expected to be formed in the fall at Camp Lejeune, N.C., Krebs said.

Former Defense Secretary Leon Panetta announced in 2013 the Pentagon's plan to open combat roles to women by 2016. Since then, the Marine Corps has taken a lead in collecting research and testing women in jobs previously limited to men.

In November 2013, the three female Marines became the first women to graduate from the Marine's enlisted infantry training course. So far, 40 female Marines have completed it. The Marine Infantry Officer Course was also opened to women, though of the 14 women to try, none have yet graduated.

A year earlier, the Corps assigned active-duty female company officers, gunnery sergeants and staff sergeants in non-combat military occupation specialties to 20 previously all-male battalion-sized units.

This time, women will be serving in combat roles to test if they can withstand the physical rigors of the jobs. After the Task Force takes effect, leaders will assess the female Marines' performance through the summer of 2015.

Men and women will have to meet the same physical standard within the Task Force. The exact specifications of that standard have yet to be decided.

Much of the debate over women entering combat roles has revolved around physical standards.

This week, the Army tested 89 male soldiers and 58 female soldiers at Fort Stewart, Ga., in a variety of typical combat tasks to figure out what the standards should be. The soldiers carried ammunition cans, dragged wounded comrades, and loaded 65-pound anti-tank missiles among other combat activities.

Military brass has made a point to emphasize that physical standards will not be lowered to accommodate women and those requirements remain a challenge for both genders.

The Marines will need the cooperation of the Army in setting up the Task Force, Krebs said.

Women volunteers who lack training in the military occupational specialty for which they apply will have to go to the training school for the MOS before joining the Task Force. In the case of artillery and tanks, that would mean an Army school.

"We're working extremely closely with the Army on this," Krebs said. "We're building this from the ground up."

► BRINGING THEM HOME

RFTW Riders to Honor WWII KIA

By Les "Easy" Williams & John "Hardcharger" Barker

Private First Class Lawrence S. Gordon's story was a seven-decade-long mystery of a Saskatchewan, Canada-born soldier fighting for the U.S. Army. Lawrence Gordon was born in Canada to U.S. citizens, which made him a dual citizen of Canada and the U.S. When WWII started out he was living and working in Montana and he joined the US Army to support his country.

On August 13, 1944, he was missing and presumed dead after a battle at Saint Lo, north of Normandy, France. It is believed his remains were placed in a German vault, as soldier x-3, because scraps of a German uniform were found with his remains.

His family requested information from the U.S. government for decades, but their efforts were frustrated every time. His nephew and namesake Lawrence R. Gordon, said he promised his father he would find his uncle's final resting place. Lawrence R., a lawyer from Medicine Hat, Alberta, went searching for his uncle to fulfill that promise.

After cooperation from both French and German officials and after U.S. documents were declassified, PFC Gordon's remains were located and a DNA match confirmed he was the missing family member. Lawrence R. is preparing now for the return of his uncle's remains to the U.S. this summer, with final interment in Eastend, Sask., on Aug. 13, 2014, 70 years after the PFC went missing. More information on PFC Gordon's story can be found at War and Military Records, www.warhistoryonline.com, and in a Feb. 24, 2014, article on the identification of his remains at www.cbc.ca/news.

When several RFTW riders heard about this, they set about to right the wrong and honor this American Warrior and are planning on travelling to Eastend for the funeral. They also wanted to take something to the WWII Memorial in D.C. after the visit to the Vietnam Wall on Saturday, May 24. When the family of PFC Gordon found out about this they were so moved that our riders would remember him in this way that they are now coming to the Memorial to be present and receive a plaque from riders.

We are inviting any and all riders to participate in this event after the close of events on Saturday at the Vietnam Wall. Also anyone who wants to travel to Eastend is welcome to join the event. Coordination of the event in Eastend is being handled by Les "Easy" Williams, boodawglkw@gmail.com, (970) 744-8624. The family wants everyone to know that they are honored and humbled by how the RFTW riders are honoring their loved one.

Others Brought Home Recently:

Pfc. Arthur Richardson, U.S. Army, Company A, 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry Regiment, 24th Infantry Division, was lost on Jan. 1, 1951, in South Korea. He was accounted for on March 21, 2014. He was buried with full military honors.

Cpl. William S. Blasdel, U.S. Marine Corps, Company H, 3rd Battalion, 11th Regiment, 1st Marine Division, was lost Oct. 28, 1953, in North Korea. He was accounted for March 10, 2014. He was buried with full military honors in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific.

Cpl. William F. Day, U.S. Army, Company C, 32nd Infantry Regiment, 31st Regimental Combat Team, was lost on Dec. 2, 1950, in North Korea. He was accounted for on March 6, 2014. He was buried with full military honors April 5, 2014 in La Center, Ky.

Capt. Douglas D. Ferguson, U.S. Air Force, 555th Tactical Fighter Squadron, was lost on Dec. 30, 1969, in Laos. He was accounted for March 5, 2014. He will be buried with full military honors May 2, 2014 in Lakewood, Wash.

Sgt. Paul M. Gordon, U.S. Army, Company H, 2nd Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, was lost on Jan. 7, 1951, in South Korea. He was accounted for Feb. 12, 2014. He will be buried with full military honors June 20, 2014, in Williamstown, Ky.

Pfc. Donald C. Durfee, U.S. Army, Company M, 31st Infantry Regiment, 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), was lost on Dec. 2, 1950, in North Korea. He was accounted for Jan. 30, 2014. He was buried March 6, 2014, in Rittman, Ohio.

Sgt. 1st Class John C. Keller, U.S. Army, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, was lost on Nov. 2, 1950, in North Korea. He was accounted for Jan. 29, 2014. He will be buried with full military honors May 2014, in Florida National Cemetery.

Pfc. William T. Carneal, U.S. Army, Company D, 1st Battalion, 105th Infantry Regiment, was lost on July 7, 1944, in Saipan. He was accounted for Jan 21, 2014. He will be buried with full military honors April 25, 2014 in Paducah, Ky.

Pfc. James R. Holmes, U.S. Army, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, was lost Dec. 1, 1950, in North Korea. He was accounted for Jan. 14, 2014. He will be buried with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery in May 2014.

Cpl. Cristobal Romo, U.S. Army, Company L, 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, was lost Dec. 12, 1950, in North Korea. He was accounted for Jan. 13, 2014. He was buried with full military honors in Riverside, Calif., March 22, 2014.

► EVENTS / REUNIONS

May 30, 3 p.m.

National Day of Remembrance

All Americans should observe in their own way a Moment of Remembrance and respect on this solemn day of mourning, a sacred day of remembrance set aside to honor those who paid the ultimate price for our freedoms. At 3 p.m. please pause for a moment of silence and to listen to "Taps."

August 29 - 30, 2014

Angel Fire, NM - Labor Day weekend

This reunion is centered around laying memorial bricks along the pathways at the Angel Fire Vietnam Veterans Memorial. There is a lunch at the memorial, plus some very good opportunities to ride.

July 31 – Aug 3, 2014
Colorado Springs, CO

Your chance to meet the RFTW Board of Directors, as the BOD will be holding a face to face meeting there. There will be guided and unguided group rides for attendees.

Host hotel is Colorado Springs Marriott, 5580 Tech Center Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80919.

Be sure to check out the nearby New Day Cafe at 5901 Delmonico Drive.

Meet and Greet Thursday evening the 31st.

Guided and unguided group rides for attendees.

Local Colorado Springs attractions like Pikes Peak, Garden of the Gods, Peterson AFB, Fort Carson, and the Air Force Academy, to name a few.

Dinner banquet on Saturday evening, when you will get a chance to ask the RFTW Board of Directors questions and express concerns.

Felix Claudio of Colorado Ride Like a Pro will be offering a class or two at reduced RFTW rates.

September 26 - 28, 2014
Kerrville, TX -

This reunion has traditionally been held at the YO Ranch Resort, with an awards banquet.

► **SICK CALL**

Jim “Paladin” Lenz

It’s been said of Paladin that if he didn’t have bad luck, he’d have no luck at all. Last year, on his way to join the Central Route in Williams, he was run into a guardrail by a cage merging into traffic. Put him in the hospital and pretty much totaled his Harley. He was devastated that he couldn’t join the Run.

His two-wheel days are over, so he ordered a custom-built VW trike from a builder in the Phoenix area. But on the way home, the trike kept losing power. He called the trike maker several times to come out and work on it, then continued until it lost power again—over and over. He finally had to stay in a motel until the trike was repaired. He started home again, but broke down again—in the hot desert. Hwy Patrol got there and while he was hydrating, the RD paramedics cleaned out his clogged fuel filter and got his trike running. He took off—and it broke down again. He called a tow truck, and while the trike was being loaded, Paladin stepped back and fell and cracked his head on the bed of the tow truck. The same paramedics arrived again, and Paladin went to the hospital with a broken foot. So for the second year, he’s missing the Run. This poor guy just can’t get a break. Paladin, we’re all praying for a good recovery. And then we’re going to wrap you in bubble wrap!!

► CLOSING THOUGHTS



When the northern Virginia-D.C. area got a healthy foot of snow late in February, some creative souls saw a motivated opportunity. They created this detailed snow sculpture in the parking lot of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Va.

This old video tells the story of how veterans were treated after they returned from WWI and couldn't find jobs.
<http://www.youtube.com/embed/sNOsIB5VMSQ>

WWII sniper still has what it takes:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQRpAxGVg4M&feature=youtu.be>

You Are Not Forgotten

