



RUN FOR THE WALL

Quarterly Newsletter

“We Ride For Those Who Can’t”

April 2010

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THE EDITOR’S NOTES



The establishment of Vietnam Veterans Day is spreading across the country. Arizona recently joined California, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Tennessee, and Wisconsin in declaring either March 29 or March 30 the day for recognizing veterans who served during the Vietnam War.

Meantime, there are two bills in the U.S. House expressing support for designation of a “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” H. Res 203, sponsored by Rep. Linda Sanchez (CA-39) and cosponsored by 38 others, was referred to the House Armed Services Committee on March 3, 2009 and subsequently referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel. H. Res. 234, also sponsored by Sanchez and cosponsored by 63 others, was introduced March 10, 2009. It was passed/agreed to in House on March 24, 2009. Both bills would establish March 30 as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” Please ask your Congressmen and Senators to support such a bill.

For those of you who know Robley Rex, you'll be happy to know that the Louisville Kentucky VAMC was recently renamed the Robley Rex Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center! Read more about it in this issue.

In just a few weeks we'll be meeting in Rancho Cucamonga for the beginning of RFTW 2010. As every year, we will have many FNGs, and they will each go home with memories that will last a lifetime. If you are an FNG, please share your experiences with us. Write your memories and submit them to me (judylacey@aol.com) for our July newsletter. Tell us how your journey with RFTW has impacted you. Don't worry about your writing or spelling; I can help you with that if you like. The important thing is telling your story.

See you soon in Rancho!

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.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By John "Ice Scout" King



Greetings,

We are on the eve of departure. Run For the Wall XXII will roll out of Rancho Cucamonga, California on Wednesday, May 19 on our way to Washington, D.C.

Everyone is eager to begin. It's been a long and harsh Winter. We have all been cooped up for much too long!

The Run's organizational work is almost finished. The Route Coordinators have assembled their teams and hammered out their procedures. The riders have made their plans, booked their hotel rooms, and readied their bikes.

The website forum has been very active with lots of good information covering everything from riding formations to fuel stop procedures; all with a lot of humor.

As April unfolds, it's time to get on the bike and shake off the winter blues. Get out on the highway and accumulate some miles. Good riding sense says to practice your emergency procedures. Take an MSF course if you can. We can all use an annual refresher, and anything we do to improve our safety is a smart move.

Now is the time to remember that we ride for those who cannot. Postings on the forum have introduced us to riders who will be with us to honor family members as well as our fallen comrades. FNGs have talked about how much being part of the Run means to them—for many, a once in a lifetime adventure.

Remember too those who have fallen in our nation's current wars. We honor our sons and daughters who have stood for us in Iraq and Afghanistan just as we honor our brothers and sisters who served in Vietnam. As a family, we honor all of America's warriors.

Finally, remember the countless thousands of ordinary Americans who are waiting for us as we travel across this wonderful country. In the small towns we visit, school children are preparing their own special celebrations for us. In the VA hospitals, patients and staff alike are looking at the calendar and grinning in joyful

anticipation. And in lonely corners of the country, folks are figuring out just when we will pass by their nearest freeway overpass so they can be there to salute us on our way.

Truly, we have been given a noble duty to discharge and in this, we are blessed.

Get ready!! It's almost time to ride!!

John "Ice Scout" King, Jr.
President, RFTW Board of Directors

► **RFTW 2010**

ONLINE REGISTRATION ENDS May 7

RFTW Registration Committee

You may pre-register online for the 2010 Run. You can use your credit card or PayPal to register by clicking on REGISTRATION and following the instructions. On-line Pre-Registration ENDS midnight May 7, 2010

HINT: Your registration isn't complete until you pay, and please add info@rftw.org to your accepted email addresses in order to receive your confirmation emails.

If you have not pre-registered and PAID on-line by Midnight Pacific Time April 30, 2009, you will need to register and pay at your RFTW beginning location.

Registration times in Rancho Cucamonga

Monday, May 17 – opens 1 p.m., closes 9 p.m.

Tuesday, May 18 – opens 9 a.m., closes 8 p.m.

Wednesday, May 19 – open only 60 minutes; please try to register Monday or Tuesday.

MISSING MAN SLOTS AVAILABLE ON CENTRAL ROUTE

Tom "Bones" Pogue, CR Missing Man Coordinator

There are still some Missing Man slots available on the Central Route. This year priority will be given to those who have ridden with RFTW previously but have not ridden in the Missing Man position. If you would like to honor the Fallen, please send me an email at tomwpogue@comcast.net. Please state if you will be going "All The Way," and if not, when you will be joining and departing. Also include a cell phone number that will be in use during The Run. If I can place you in a slot I will send an email confirmation by May 9. Slots do come available during The Run and Central Route Coordinator Arnie Swift will announce available slots, if any, at the morning meetings. I look forward to assisting the Missing Man riders in honoring those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

TAKING REQUESTS FOR MISSING MAN SLOTS ON SOUTHERN ROUTE

Della "Pocket" Morris, SR Missing Man Coordinator

If you would like to ride the Missing Man Formation on the Southern Route, contact Della "Pocket" Morris at donmorris@earthlink.net and ask if there are any openings.

First priority – FNGs (first year on the "Run")

Second priority – Been on the "Run" but have never ridden MMF

Third priority – Ridden MMF before (you will be put on a waiting list)

RFTW MERCHANDISE

Website ordering ended April 15 this year as Ted Riedel had to load the merchandise trailers for movement to California. Sales will reopen on Monday, May 17 in Rancho Cucamonga. Both trailers will be in Rancho Cucamonga and one trailer will be on each route as in the past. In DC at least one trailer will be open most of Saturday, but both will be closed on Sunday for final inventory. Don't wait until the last minute. Ordering early gives you an opportunity to get all your patches sewn on and know what you will be packing for the Run.

FUEL STOP REMINDER

Arnie Swift, Central Route Coordinator
RFTW 2010

One thing that is unique to RFTW and particularly stressful to FNGs is our fuel stops. The Central Route will be pumping one grade of fuel, high octane. 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 tank-bag, 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. I know some of you need to use Credit Cards; if at all possible get cash advances on your card so you can fuel with the pack. If charge cards are absolutely necessary, stay in line until a fueler directs you to the credit pumps, there will be pumps left open for you to use, but you will fuel on your own and then stage.

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.

RANCHO ACTIVITIES

From Jim "The Mayor" Frost
2010 CA State Coordinator

For those of you not tied up in leadership meetings on Tuesday, May 18, here are some activities you might want to participate in.

0900-0915-0930 hrs: Staging, Riders Meeting, and KSU for a run to Riverside National Cemetery, scheduled to leave the host hotel at 0930 hrs. We'll ride to the National Medal of Honor Memorial, KIA Memorial, and the National POW/MIA Memorial at Riverside National Cemetery. Included will be a ceremony honoring the memory of Col. Lewis Lee Millett, Korea Medal of Honor recipient who many of our riders met at Riverside last May.

1130 hrs: We will leave Riverside National Cemetery for the March Field Museum (formerly March AFB). They have an amazing military museum and aircraft collection. If you've ever been in harm's way while serving, one of these aircraft has probably had the opportunity to save your tail while you were in the field (no bias from this former SSgt!).

1630 hrs: Blessing of the Bikes at the Hilton Garden Inn (RFTW host hotel) parking lot.

1730-1930 hrs: A hosted dinner for registered participants on the grounds of the Hilton Garden Inn. There will be a program starting at 1815 hrs. Dinner is expected to be served until 1900 hrs. **Cost for all non-registered folks will be \$10.** If you're going on the Run but haven't registered before coming to dinner on Tuesday, we appreciate your contribution to help offset the expenses. We're having something very special this year: dinner will close with a mini-concert by country western artist Amy Scruggs. She also will be singing the National Anthem for us on Wednesday morning.

Get used to wearing the black wristband indicating that you're part of RFTW—it's good for lots of food and fuel all the way across our country.

Registration will take place at the Courtyard by Marriott, just east of the Hilton Garden Inn.

For many of you, this will be the only time you will have to relax and socialize with riders of both Central and Southern Routes. Mil Thornton, the California Coordinator in 2007, can be thanked for coming up with the Tuesday dinner concept. It should be a great day for those of you arriving in Rancho Cucamonga early, and for those local riders who have historically waited until Wednesday morning to join the Run. Now you can join us for a great dinner Tuesday night, and still sleep in your own beds the night before the Run.

POW/MIA PHOTOS

POW/MIA Photos—There will be a number of Vietnam-era MIA family members traveling with us this year. At Rancho Cucamonga, and each stop after, they will have photos of a number of our MIAs to be distributed and to be carried to The Wall and left there during our end of Mission on Saturday May 29. Carrying the photos is voluntary and an honor—it's hoped that they will be displayed on the motorcycles (SECURELY), while underway or while parked. Please remember how important this issue is to the families, to our veterans, and to our currently serving military and their families. Never forget.

Contact Doug Lyvere, SgtMaj, USMC Ret.: Doug@Lyvere.com

ESCORTS NEEDED FOR GOLD STAR MOTHERS

Motorcycle Escort bikes—The lead bikes in Rolling Thunder are there to carry VIPs but primarily Gold Star Mothers and family members. We need bikes with open back seats to carry one of these honored family members. Both the rider AND the passenger MUST have a helmet—if you wish to be one of the volunteers, bring an extra helmet with you. If you don't want to volunteer but have an extra helmet, please notify me. Not everyone will have a Gold Star, but you will have an important cargo.

Equipment Requirements:

1. You must provide a spare helmet for your passenger.
 2. Your motorcycle must have a back rest and passenger pegs.
 3. Your motorcycle must be in a reasonable state of repair.
- (There will be a document and basic vehicle inspection by MSF safety inspectors before the ride)

Documentation Requirements:

1. You must have a Valid motorcycle license.
2. You must show proof of insurance.

Contact Doug Lyvere, SgtMaj, USMC Ret.: Doug@Lyvere.com

GROUP PHOTO IN D.C.

The RFTW group photo will be taken on Saturday May 29 at 1 p.m. on the Lincoln Memorial steps. Please begin assembling there at 12:30 p.m. Use the following form if you want to order copies.

2010 Group Photos by "KZ" Ric White

(One size only: 12"x 18")

\$15 each plus \$5 for S&H = \$20

(Up to 3 photos per shipping tube; for more than 3,
add an extra \$5 for shipping.)

Name or Initials of group: RUN FOR THE WALL Date: _____

How many 12x18's: _____ Total cost: \$ _____

Please mail to:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State & Zip _____

Email or phone (In case of problems) _____

Method of payment: CASH (in person), Personal check, or U.S. Postal Money Order

Payable to: Ric White and mail to: P.O. Box 180789, Dallas, TX 75218

703-445-8538 or pikzr@aol.com



PLEASE ALLOW 4 TO 6 WEEKS FOR
DELIVERY

God Bless America



EVENING PARADE AT MARINE BARRACKS

Evening Parade, Marine Barracks, 8th and I Streets, Friday, May 28, 7:45 p.m. (1945)—Marine Band, Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, Marine Silent Drill Team. Specific times still being finalized, but we have 150 tickets for the event. There will be a flyer and info at all registration locations starting with Rancho Cucamonga along with a sign-up sheet. Tickets will be distributed at the Host Hotel in DC (Arlington) at 6 p.m. (1800). Staging in DC is planned for 6:45 p.m. (1845) across from the Host Hotel. Information will be available for those wishing to go on their own to the performance. Parking is limited and I highly encourage taxi/car pooling, but I am looking for parking in the vicinity of Marine Barracks. Google Evening Parade, Marine Barracks for further info. You are welcome to email me with any additional questions.

Contact Doug Lyvere, SgtMaj, USMC Ret.: Doug@Lyvere.com

WHAT TO PACK FOR THE RUN

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

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

By Colin Campbell

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

The rules are outlined as follows:

❖ Signals



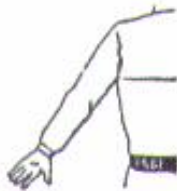
Right turn



Left turn

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

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



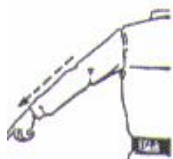
**STOP or
Slow down**



Speed UP

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

Speed up: Pump left fist up and down



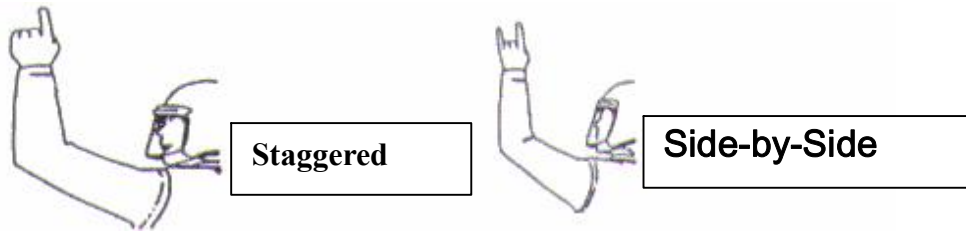
**Hazard in the
Road**



**Close the Ranks
open and close fist**

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

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



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

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

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

- ❖ **Distance Interval** – 2 seconds; visual marker for distance interval is one empty center stripe between cycles at 50 to 60 mph and two empty center stripes between cycles above 60. When in a *side-by-side* formation, the left side rider is responsible for maintaining the correct interval. The right side rider is responsible for aligning himself with the left side rider. Rider's shoulders should be directly across from each other in the proper configuration. Every rider is responsible for maintaining the correct interval in a *staggered formation*.
- ❖ **Deceleration:** Unless a complete stop or an emergency stop is anticipated, riders should decelerate by rolling off the throttle and down shifting rather than braking. The appearance of brake lights in the formation increases the incidence of dangerous “rubber banding”. Rubber banding (excessive acceleration and deceleration) increases accidents, wear and tear on equipment and increases rider fatigue. Increasing and decreasing speed should be accomplished utilizing small, incremental throttle roll-on and roll-off. Maintaining interval and position requires VERY slight throttle adjustments on an almost constant basis. Rapid acceleration and deceleration is very undesirable and should be avoided.
- ❖ **Riding the Zipper:** The centerline and the fog line are lovingly called the *zipper*. It's simple: do not have any part of your cycle or body beyond the zipper. If you do, road guards will hate you and 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.
- ❖ **Dive-bombing:** Pulling in too close after passing a vehicle is called “dive bombing.” This is a “no-no.” Trucks that are passed by the column should be given at least *one truck length* before riders pull back into their lane. Pulling in too quickly causes the truck driver to hit his brakes and makes them angry with us rather than being our fans. **No dive-bombing.** The same situation is true when the column moves into the left lane to pass slower moving traffic. At times there may be vehicles traveling in the left lane preventing the entire column from gaining access to the left lane as a unit. Do not speed around one of these vehicles and dive-bomb in front of them just to maintain your position within the

column. Slow, pull in behind such a vehicle and rejoin the column after you have successfully passed the slower traffic in the right lane.

- ❖ **Passing signals back.** Please pass signals from the platoon leaders all the way back down the column. When you receive a signal, check your rearview mirror to make sure it was passed back.
- ❖ **CB Radio etiquette:** There will be a designated communication channel. Please do not talk on this channel unless you are performing an official function. All riders are welcome and encouraged to monitor the communication channel, but please maintain radio discipline.
- ❖ **Fueling:** During fuel stops on the Southern Route, fueling personnel wear an orange arm band and cap which indicates lines for premium grade fuel or a green arm band and cap which indicates the regular grade fuel line. On the Central Route, all fueling personnel will be wearing green vests and caps. File in side-by-side, two riders to a pump. Pay to the nearest dollar rounded up. Any excess monies collected will go toward future free fuel stops and fuel for chase vehicles.

Misc. Reminders:

- 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 H-D dealers).
- Morning meetings are mandatory.
- Take showers at night so you won't be late for the morning meetings.
- If you get sleepy while riding, give a heads-up to the riders around you and pull off where safe. You can catch up at the next stop. RIDE SAFE!!!

RUN Q&A

By Ron "Hammer" Young

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 2-3 mph increase per minute. This increase is given to the Assistant Route Coordinator who is leading the 1st Platoon, who will then slowly bring the pack to the assigned speed. The Platoon Leaders will follow suit, and are responsible for maintaining the proper distance. As you can see, there is no reason to ride faster than the speed limit - follow these guidelines and the platoons will bring you up to speed properly and reduce "rubber banding."

Q. When will itineraries be available?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. Riding with the pack requires good 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.

GET YOUR BIKE READY TO GO

By John “Shooter” McCabe

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

job starts the morning you all get to the parking lot at the truck stop. When you come into the lot there at Rancho Cucamonga, please go SLOW, and tell the Road Guards which route you will be taking so we can get you to the proper lines. Have your gas tank FULL. Re-check your luggage one last time—make sure it's tight and secured on your bike. There will be a bunch of riders, bikes, media, and normal traffic in that parking lot so be careful and keep your head up.

Editor's Note: Fingers sent this photo to show that his bike was packed and ready to go!



► OUR STORIES

PRE-RFTW BARBECUE



The 4th Annual Run for the Wall Barbecue was held at Raytheon in El Segundo April 10, 2010. It was well-attended and raised money to help support this year's RFTW.

Danny Lopresto did a great job as Master of Ceremonies. A local Jr. ROTC group presented the colors to open the event, and the national anthem was sung by the El Segundo High School choir. A bagpiper played "Scotland the Brave" and "Amazing Grace," and five Gold Star parents were recognized.

During the event, it was announced that VVA Chapter 756 donated \$1,000 to VVA Chapter 785 to help cover the cost of supplying their "Waterpoint" van with water, snacks, and other essentials for the riders on RFTW.

RFTW is grateful to Raytheon for sponsoring this barbecue for the past four years.

Rt: Honeymooner, Kate Halpin, Monsoon, and Pegleg show check for \$1,000 from VVA Chapter 756



During Rolling Thunder, Joe Wadlow will be at 19th and Constitution with this tribute bike.

THE WALL THAT MOVES TRIBUTE BIKE

Source: Pittsburgh Post-Gazette



The United States Marine Corps is renowned throughout the world for its esprit de corps especially among those who have experienced combat. Those of us who never served can neither fathom nor understand the bounds of brotherhood that only combat veterans know. Joe Wadlow is a Marine Vietnam War combat vet who wanted to pay homage to all those from his old unit who fell in the service of our country. All told, 206 Marines and Corpsmen assigned to Mike Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines paid the ultimate sacrifice while it was stationed in 'Nam from 1966-1971.

Joe wanted something that would express his

feelings about those men. He didn't want something that would just sit in some corner of his house, so he decided to have all of their names painted on his Ultra. He took his idea to Paradise Paints in Pittsburgh and after 230 hours of work, this beautiful creation rolled out into the sunshine. The names on the bike are painted just like the tablets at the Vietnam Memorial (The Wall) in

Washington, DC. Joe has dubbed the bike "The Wall That Moves," as it is a moving tribute to those on the Wall. It is more than a just his tribute to those men whose names are chiseled into the Wall; it is a reminder to all of us that freedom isn't free. Well done Joe, Well done!



► OTHER STORIES

AN OUTSIDER'S POINT OF VIEW

From: <http://retiredreservist.blogspot.com/>
November 26, 2008

Sometimes the observations of an outsider speak very eloquently about our soldier. This article was done by a French Soldier stationed with 101st soldiers in Afghanistan. He provides an interesting point of view I think is worth reading

"We have shared our daily life with two US units for quite a while—they are the first and fourth companies of a prestigious infantry battalion whose name I will withhold for the sake of military secrecy. To the common man it is a unit just like any other. But we lived with them and got to know them, and we henceforth know that we have the honor to live with one of the most renowned units of the US Army—one that the movies brought to the public as series showing "ordinary soldiers thrust into extraordinary events." Who are they, those soldiers from abroad, how is their daily life, and what support do they bring to the men of our OMLT every day? Few of them belong to the Easy Company, the one the TV series focuses on. This one nowadays is named Echo Company, and it has become the support company.

They have a terribly strong American accent—from our point of view the language they speak is not even English. How many times did I have to write down what I wanted to say rather than waste precious minutes trying various pronunciations of a seemingly common word? Whatever state they are from, no two accents are alike and they even admit that in some crisis situations they have difficulties understanding each other.

Heavily built, fed at the earliest age with Gatorade, proteins and creatine—they are all heads and shoulders taller than us and their muscles remind us of Rambo. Our frames are amusingly skinny to them - we are wimps, even the strongest of us—and because of that they often mistake us for Afghans.

Here we discover America as it is often depicted: their values are taken to their paroxysm, often amplified by promiscuity, lack of privacy, and the loneliness of this outpost in the middle of that Afghan valley. Honor, motherland—everything here reminds of that: the American flag floating in the wind above the outpost, just like the one on the post parcels. Even if recruits often originate from the hearth of American cities and gang territory, no one here has any goal other than to hold high and proud the star spangled banner. Each man knows he can count on the support of a whole people who provide them through the mail all that an American could miss in such a remote front-line location: books, chewing gums, razorblades, Gatorade, toothpaste, etc., in such way that every man is aware of how much the American people back him in his difficult mission. And that is a first shock to our preconceptions: the American soldier is no individualist. The team, the group, the combat team are the focus of all his attention.

And they are impressive warriors! We have not come across bad ones, as strange as it may seem to you when you know how critical French people can be. Even if some of them are a bit on the heavy side, all of them provide us every day with lessons in infantry know-how. Beyond the wearing of a combat kit that never seems to discomfort them (helmet strap, helmet, combat goggles, rifles, etc.), the long hours of watch at the outpost never seem to annoy them in the slightest. On the one square meter wooden tower above the perimeter wall they stand the five consecutive hours in full battle rattle and night vision goggles on top, their sight unmoving in the directions of likely danger. No distractions, no pauses—they are like statues nights and days. At night, all movements are performed in the dark—only a handful of subdued red lights indicate the occasional presence of a soldier on the move. Same with the vehicles whose lights are covered—everything happens in pitch dark, even filling the fuel tanks with the Japy pump.

And combat? If you have seen Rambo you have seen it all—always coming to the rescue when one of our teams gets in trouble, and always in the shortest delay. That is one of their tricks: they switch from T-shirt and sandals to combat ready in three minutes. Arriving in contact with the enemy, the way they fight is simple and disconcerting: they just charge! They disembark and assault in stride, they bomb first and ask questions later—which cuts any pussyfooting short.

We seldom hear any harsh word, and from 5 a.m. onwards the camp chores are performed in beautiful order and always with excellent spirit. A passing American helicopter stops near a stranded vehicle just to check that everything is alright; an American combat team will rush to support ours before even knowing how dangerous the mission is. From what we have been given to witness, the American soldier is a beautiful and worthy heir to those who liberated France and Europe.

To those who bestow us with the honor of sharing their combat outposts and who every day give proof of their military excellence, to those who pay the daily tribute of America's army's deployment on Afghan soil, ourselves hoping that we will always remain worthy of them and to always continue hearing them say that we are all the same "band of brothers."

SONS OF THE FALLEN

The following letter was recently received by RFTW President John King.

Subject: Sons of the Fallen and Bill Goldberg

Dear Mr. John "Ice Scout" King Jr. and the Run For the Wall Team,

My name is Joey Truscelli, former Marine, and I am emailing you to ask for your support for a very special project myself, Bill Goldberg, and actor Ryan Merriman have been working on for several months. This past summer we had the honor of working with and mentoring 25 boys who each lost their Fathers serving out country. I have a ranch in Colorado that they all came out to along with the Knights of Heroes organization.

We are on a mission to give these boys a voice and have created a special documentary titled "Sons of the Fallen" that we are tentatively going to present May 18 in over 500 theaters throughout the country. It is time America pays tribute to the families who have sacrificed so much.

We would like to ask for your support in helping us spread the word to your team of Run For The Wall members. We want to pack the theaters that night with as many Veterans and Supporters of Veterans all across America. We are meeting with the theater group again next Thursday and would love to tell them we have your support. These kids of our Heroes need a voice and we plan on giving them just that.

Here is a link to our website and a Fox News video of Bill and I talking about the kids. Also, Bill is going to be on Celebrity Apprentice playing for the One Good Turn Ranch where we have the camps in support of these kids. http://www.onegoodturn.tv/promo_sonsofthefallen.html

VETS TO PATROL VIETNAM MEMORIAL

By David Gambacorta, Philadelphia Daily News

Enough is enough.

With their beloved war memorial under near-constant attack in Society Hill, some local Vietnam veterans are preparing to once again answer the call of duty.

Beginning next week, the vets will patrol the grounds of the Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial in an attempt to ward off heartless punks who have made a hobby of vandalizing the hallowed space.

Terry Williamson, president of the Philadelphia Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, said that skateboarders and in-line skaters have seemingly stepped up their mistreatment of the memorial since the site's \$500,000 renovation last fall.

"It really breaks your heart," Williamson said during a recent interview with the Daily News.

"We thought the improvements that we made would have helped," he said, sighing, "but it appears it just made the memorial more attractive to young people who don't care what it means."

On March 7, police arrested three suburban youths who were spotted desecrating the memorial, Williamson said.

Months ago, workers replaced cracked brick pavers inside the memorial, at Front and Spruce streets, with stamped concrete.

The sacred center of the space, a granite wall that includes the names of 646 area soldiers who died in Vietnam, was restored.

New lights and a modern 24-hour surveillance system was also installed; live video of the memorial can be seen at www.pvvm.org.

Williamson hopes to raise another \$500,000 for a second phase of renovations, which would include opening up the Spruce Street side of the memorial with steps.

Jim Moran, the memorial's unofficial custodian, said that the new concrete is frequently scuffed and scarred by skaters, as are the refinished granite walls.

On March 20, a group of 10 skateboarders yanked out "skate guards" that had been installed on railings and walls, Moran said. They have not been caught.

Williamson said volunteer patrols would run through Memorial Day. Veterans interested in volunteering may call 215-576-1216.

MILITARY HISTORY

In early 1966 events in Vietnam escalated signaling that Hanoi was desperately in search of a victory. The Communists' increased willingness to stand and fight whatever the cost, plus evidences of a mounting buildup of forces then coming directly across the demilitarized zone separating North and South Viet Nam could only lead to increased conflict. On 16 MAR 66 in enemy-held Vietnam's Zone D only 35 miles northeast of Saigon , a 10,000-man allied sweep of the dense jungle area called Operation Silver City erupted in a major clash with the NVA. This became known as the battle of Landing Zone Zulu Zulu.

The dug in 2d Bn 503d Parachute Infantry, 173d Abn Bde (Sep) had cleared an area for helicopter resupply. Short of water for days, they thirstily watched the first water-laden chopper drop down from the sky. Suddenly an enemy automatic weapon chattered, knocking the chopper in flames to the earth. On the signal, the jungle around the paratroopers erupted in gunfire. The landing zone, called Zulu Zulu, was completely encircled by the 400 Communist troops, 90% of them North Vietnamese regulars of the Viet Cong's 271st main-force regiment. Thus began a seven-hour battle won by the Airborne with fewer casualties and more enemy dead than any major engagement of the Vietnam war. Time and again the outmanned and outgunned Viet Cong charged. Coolly and methodically, the well dug-in paratroopers cut them down. Australian artillery laid a lethal ring of steel around Zulu Zulu; dive-bombers plastered the attackers on an average of every six minutes for five hours running; "Mad Bomber" Huey helicopters rigged with plywood tubes pointing downward dropped 81-mm. mortar shells right on the heads of the enemy. The enemy troops finally gave up.

Operation Silver City resulted in 400+ NVA KIA, 19 U.S. KIA, and 200+ U.S. WIA. In AUG 67, President Lyndon Johnson awarded the 2d Battalion, 503rd Infantry, and attached units the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism at LZ Zulu-Zulu. This citation is the highest unit award made to any army organization. For a detailed description by those who participated in the battle and an After Action Report refer to www.ibiblio.org/173abn/2bat/Issue5.pdf. [Source: Time Magazine article 25 Mar 1966 & 2/503d Newsletter Sep 09 ++]

Thanks to the Monsoon Dispatch March 1, 2010 for this story.

WHY WE LOST THE VIETNAM WAR

Letter to: Mr. Bill Handel, Handel on the News

Subject: Vietnam War

Some time ago someone on your program asked why we lost the Vietnam War. The answer was, "Because they kicked our ass."

This comment is acceptable to the brain-washed American public, but I must inform you that informed people resent your statement immensely.

I have a Purple Heart, am a Veteran of three wars, and I was an Air Force Colonel on the staff of the Secretary of Defense during the Vietnam War.

I wish to inform you that in January of 1973 the North Vietnamese signed a surrender document, withdrew their troops, and returned their prisoners of war. I repeat "they surrendered." This was because, we, the military, kicked their ass. Hanoi was in shambles. About two years later, in 1975, the U.S. Congress notified the North Vietnamese that the U.S. would have no objection to their return to South Vietnam. With the assistance of Russia and China, the North Vietnamese returned to South Vietnam without any resistance by the U.S. military. This was by act of Congress that cut off all funds for the defense of South Vietnam. After over 50 thousand military personnel lost their lives and the war was won, Congress surrendered the country to the North Vietnamese.

The war dragged on for years because of inept civilian leadership in Washington. President Johnson and his Secretary of Defense Mc Namara micro-managed the Air Force. They made Hanoi a sanctuary and allowed no bombing in that area. On occasion they stopped all bombing, thinking such a good faith gesture would encourage the North Vietnamese to sign a peace treaty. Instead, they used this time to re-supply their troops.

I have talked to fellow pilots who were frustrated because they could see troop concentrations, truck convoys, or trains with military supplies, but they were not allowed to attack without prior approval by Washington. By the time approval came hours or days later, the targets were all dispersed. All bombing had to have advance approval from Washington.

After Richard Nixon became President, he authorized full use of air power. The Air Force started project Linebacker II (Google Linebacker II). After 11 days of bombing of targets in North Vietnam, the North Vietnamese signed the surrender document in Paris and the war was over.

Had Congress allowed the threat of the return of the B-52 bombers to remain, South Vietnam would have remained free.

By cutting all funds for the support of South Vietnam, Congress caused more deaths, imprisonment, and displacement of people than the President of Iraq. He was hung as a war criminal.

It is ironic that some of the same people that gave up Vietnam are still in Congress trying to give up the Iraq war!!!

It would be refreshing to hear someone address the public with the true facts about the Vietnamese War.

Colonel Fred Sparrevohn USAF Ret.

IT HAPPENS EVERY FRIDAY!

By Joseph L. Galloway, McClatchy Newspapers

Over the last 12 months, 1,042 Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, and Air Force personnel have given their lives in the terrible duty that is war. Thousands more have come home on stretchers, horribly wounded and facing months or years in military hospitals. This week, I'm turning my space over to a good friend and former roommate, Army Lt. Col. Robert Bateman, who recently completed a yearlong tour of duty in Iraq and is now back at the Pentagon. Here's Lt. Col. Bateman's account of a little-known ceremony that fills the halls of the Army corridor of the Pentagon with cheers, applause, and many tears every Friday morning. It first appeared on May 17, 2009 on the Weblog of media critic and pundit Eric Alterman at the Media Matters for America Website.

"It is 110 yards from the "E" ring to the "A" ring of the Pentagon. This section of the Pentagon is newly renovated; the floors shine, the hallway is broad, and the lighting is bright. At this instant the entire length of the corridor is packed with officers, a few sergeants, and some civilians, all crammed tightly three and four deep against the walls. There are thousands here. This hallway, more than any other, is the "Army" hallway. The G3 offices line one side, G2 the other, G8 is around the corner. All Army. Moderate conversations flow in a low buzz. Friends who may not have seen each other for a few weeks, or a few years, spot each other, cross the way, and renew. Everyone shifts to ensure an open path remains down the center. The air conditioning system was not designed for this press of bodies in this area. The temperature is rising already. Nobody cares.

"10:36 hours: The clapping starts at the E-Ring. That is the outermost of the five rings of the Pentagon and it is closest to the entrance to the building. This clapping is low, sustained, hearty. It is applause with a deep emotion behind it as it moves forward in a wave down the length of the hallway. A steady rolling wave of sound it is, moving at the pace of the soldier in the wheelchair who marks the forward edge with his presence. He is the first. He is missing the greater part of one leg, and some of his wounds are still suppurating. By his age I expect that he is a private, or perhaps a private first class. Captains, majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels meet his gaze and nod as they applaud, soldier to soldier. Three years ago when I described one of these events, those lining the hallways were somewhat different. The applause a little wilder, perhaps in private guilt for not having shared in the burden ... yet. Now almost everyone lining the hallway is, like the man in the wheelchair, also a combat veteran. This steadies the applause, but I think deepens the sentiment. We have all been there now.

"The soldier's chair is pushed by, I believe, a full colonel. Behind him, and stretching the length from Rings E to A, come more of his peers, each private, corporal, or sergeant assisted as need be by a field grade officer.

"11:00 hours: Twenty-four minutes of steady applause. My hands hurt, and I laugh to myself at how stupid that sounds in my own head. My hands hurt. Please! Shut up and clap. For twenty-four minutes, soldier after soldier has come down this hallway - 20, 25, 30. Fifty-three legs come with them, and perhaps only 52 hands or arms, but down this hall came 30 solid hearts. They pass down this corridor of officers and applause, and then meet for a private lunch, at which they are the guests of honor, hosted by the generals. Some are wheeled along. Some insist upon getting out of their chairs, to march as best they can with their chin held up, down this hallway, through this most unique audience. Some are catching handshakes and smiling like a politician at a Fourth of July parade. More than a couple of them seem amazed and are smiling shyly. There are families with them as well: the 18-year-old war-bride pushing her 19-year-old husband's wheelchair and not quite understanding why her husband is so affected by this, the boy she grew up with, now a man, who had never shed a tear, is crying; the older immigrant Latino parents who have, perhaps more than their wounded mid-20s son, an appreciation for the emotion given on their son's behalf.

"No man in that hallway, walking or clapping, is ashamed by the silent tears on more than a few cheeks. An Airborne Ranger wipes his eyes only to better see. A couple of the officers in this crowd have themselves been a part of this parade in the past. These are our men, broken in body they may be, but they are our brothers, and

we welcome them home. This parade has gone on, every single Friday, all year long, for more than four years. Did you know that?"

Thanks to Sandra McKinney for sending this:

VIETNAM VETERANS: A TOPIC THAT WAS UNSPEAKABLE

An Address by Reverend John H. Ferguson, delivered at the Veterans Day Assembly at Juanita High School, Kirkland, Washington, November 14, 1994

I want to begin by thanking you for giving me the privilege of speaking to you this morning. We have come together to honor the military service of American men and women, particularly those who participated in the war in Vietnam.

I'm one of those people. I served in the United States Marine Corps in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968. I was a member of the 15th marine Counterintelligence Team, operating just below the Demilitarized Zone. Our team was a part of small unit combat and intelligence operations, now known as the Phoenix Program.

If you want to honor someone, it's beneficial to first understand their experience. Many people believe they understand the experience of the men and women who served in Vietnam. Unfortunately, that understanding has often been derived from stereotypes.

It is true that about half of those who served in Vietnam experience some psychological and physiological residual of their war experience (e.g., sleep disorders or exaggerated startle reflex). It is also true that approximately one-third of those who served have some degree of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. A minority of those so afflicted are homeless. Only a small percentage of Vietnam veterans have ever been arrested or incarcerated for criminal acts. The truth is that despite some lingering psychological symptoms, the vast majority of Vietnam veterans have gotten on with their lives. They are productive, functional members of society. In many cases, they have become civic, educational and business leaders in their communities.

The popularized portrayal of Vietnam veterans as lost and disturbed souls, lingering on the edge of violence, is as inaccurate as any group stereotype. However, saying these things does not deny, or diminish, the intense, often painful reality of our experience. I would like you to understand that experience, so that you may comprehend the contribution we believe we have made. Let me attempt to explain.

The majority of men who served in Vietnam were only a few years older than most of you. The average age of combat troops in Vietnam went almost directly from high school into combat.

Nothing can prepare a human being for the reality of war. It isn't anything like war movies or television programs. War is a physically exhausting, terrifying business. It places human beings in situations for which they are intellectually, emotionally, and morally unprepared. Modern weapons do not simply kill people, they blow them to pieces. Guerrilla warfare has no front or rear lines. The enemy is often unseen and frequently indistinguishable from the civilian population. Unrestrained violence becomes the means for survival.

Teenagers placed in such an environment returned home old men, having lost their youth and innocence. They returned home with emotional and moral conflicts in need of resolution and closure. Unfortunately, that resolution and closure were unavailable for Vietnam veterans.

In recent years, it has been said that we "lost" the war in Vietnam. That seems to imply that those who fought it were ineffective warriors. Nothing could be further from the truth. Combat troops in Vietnam distinguished themselves with courage, tenacity and skill. On most occasions, they were victorious in battle. The war ended

because those who made policy decisions decided it was a political imperative to stop the fighting. That the conflict ended unresolved was not the fault or responsibility of those who fought.

We returned expecting our society would do what it had done for our fathers and uncles returning from World War II. We believed the nation would gratefully honor our service, bringing resolution and closure to the conflicts our wartime experiences had created.

That honoring, resolution, and closure didn't occur. For a variety of reasons, people simply did not want to talk through, think about, or be reminded of Vietnam. America wanted the war to be over, to put a decade of foreign and civil conflict away. Returning veterans felt confused, abandoned and, on occasion, betrayed.

Let me give you an example, with which I hope you'll be able to identify.

The Juanita Rebel football team had had a terrific season. I'd like to introduce you to another winning football team. That team is the 1962 Neshaminy High School Redskins of Langhorne, Pennsylvania. From the starting offensive eleven, the left guard went to West Point. From there he went to command an infantry platoon in Vietnam. The right end went to Annapolis and became a Marine officer. In his second tour in Vietnam, he was an infantry company commander. The tailback graduated from college, enlisted in the Marines and served in a Counterintelligence Team. Yes, that's me! (If it seems as if there were a lot of Marines in the group, it was partially due to the fact that several of the football coaches we admired and loved had been Marines in World War II and the Korean Conflict.)

The seven remaining players went on with their lives. Three of them went to college and on to careers in business. Two of them went into licensed trades. One of them entered a family business. The remaining player became a policeman.

What happened to the four of us who went to Vietnam? The left guard ended up calling in an air strike on his position, while being overrun by the Viet Cong. He lost most of his platoon. The right end was killed during a battalion sweep against the NVA. The tailback was wounded in a firefight. I went to Episcopal seminary to try to sort out the results of having been involved in interrogations of prisoners and assassination operations against Viet Cong leaders.

Seven of the starting eleven were untouched by the war. Their lives moved forward as expected. The lives of the three of us who served and survived were dramatically and unexpectedly changed.

In 1982, we gathered for our twentieth reunion. The team got together for a few moments to kid and brag, as old athletes are wont to do. When the conversation turned to our friend who died, and to the Vietnam experiences of the three of us who had survived, the seven others quickly left us alone. It was an amazing experience! It was thirteen years since we had been in Vietnam. Yet, Vietnam still remained a topic that was unspeakable.

Near the end of the last century, Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem entitled "Tommy." It describes the experience of a British soldier home from the colonial wars. Let me share a portion of it, because it eloquently describes the experience and feelings of many Vietnam veterans:

You talk o' better food for us an' schools, an' fires, an' all, but prove it to our face.
For it's Tommy this an' Tommy that, an' "Chuck him out, the brute!"
But it's "savior of 'is country" when the guns begin to shoot;
An' it's Tommy this an' Tommy that, an' anything you please;
An' Tommy ain't a bloomin fool -- you bet that Tommy sees!

We were not fools, we did see that our society was not going to give us the honor, resolution, and closure that we needed. So as individuals, and as groups, we created our own honoring, resolution and closure. We built a

memorial to our fallen comrades in Washington, D.C. We staged welcome-home parades. We created rap groups, counseling centers and support systems.

Finally and belatedly, the nation roused to honor our service. It was no more than we deserved. We had kept faith with the values our parents, pastors, teachers, and coaches taught us. The nation called, and we went forth into that far away place to face the realities of war, with a profound sense of patriotism. We served with honor, pride and courage. We put our lives on the line in service to our country. We said yes, while others were saying, "Hell no, we won't go!"

Thank you for honoring us, and all the men and women who have answered their country's call. It feels good to be acknowledged and valued.

Let me leave you with an idea. If you truly desire to honor Vietnam veterans, don't stop with this assembly. Seek out those who served (perhaps your father, mother, uncle, aunt, teacher, or neighbor). Thank them for their service. Ask them to share their feelings and memories. That will bring them real honor, because in so doing you are telling them you understand and value their experiences and contribution.

Again, from my heart, I thank you for the privilege of speaking to you this morning.

INTRUDER MEMORIAL

The sacrifice of the last A-6 *Intruder* aircrew lost during the Vietnam War is now commemorated in a lasting memorial on the flight deck of the USS MIDWAY Museum in San Diego, California.

On the night of 10 January 1973, LT Michael T. "Mondo" McCormick and LT(jg) R. Alan "Arlo" Clark of VA-115 launched from the deck of USS MIDWAY (CVA-41), and were lost amid heavy AAA and SAM activity northwest of the heavily defended city of Vinh. Both crewmen were carried as MIA and later declared Killed in Action. Their remains were eventually recovered and identified, and in January of 2009 were laid to rest with full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery. In attendance were their family members and many comrades from Attack Squadron 115.

Now, six years later, their heroism and sacrifice have been memorialized on the flight deck that they launched from nearly 37 years ago. The A-6A Intruder on board the USS MIDWAY Museum in San Diego now carries the names of "Mondo" and "Arlo" on the starboard cockpit, along with a legend that denotes the details of their last mission. The aircraft is painted in VA-115 markings from the Vietnam era, and now has the side number "511" to commemorate their flight.

Once again, family members and comrades will gather to remember Mondo and Arlo at a dedication ceremony scheduled on the MIDWAY flight deck for 9 a.m. on Friday, April 23, 2010. The observance will include tours of the Intruder Ready Room, where exhibits honor the memory of all those who built, maintained, and flew the venerable A-6. All members of the Intruder Community are invited to attend

VVA Chapter 785 Member Hoa Pham was interviewed by FOX News, CNN and the Orange County Register when he attended the opening of "Images of War's End" held at the Camp Pendleton Ranch House. Hoa was a refugee in one of the tent camps after the Fall of Saigon. (Thanks to Monsoon Dispatch)

PENDLETON ONCE HOME FOR 50,000 WAR REFUGEES

By Vic Jolly, OC Register, April 9, 2010

CAMP PENDLETON, CA, April 9, 2010 — The stark black and white images evoked deep emotions and vivid memories of the days when he helped put up tents, built latrines, hauled clothes and diapers and learned to cook rice.

The photographs transported Lewis Beatty back to 1975, to the first real contact with Vietnamese civilians the U.S. Marine had. The two tours of Vietnam during the war that left thousands dead on both sides is not something he likes to remember.

An exhibit of photos and paintings at Camp Pendleton brings back memories for Hoa Pham of Torrance, who was a 22-year-old Vietnamese refugee at the Marine base in 1975 after the fall of Saigon.

But this was different. This had tears streaming down the face of the 72-year-old Marine who retired after 23 years in the service. This was a dramatic reminder of the toll war takes on people.

The Camp Pendleton Historical Society, in conjunction with Oceanside's the "Big Read 2010," on Thursday opened "Images at War's End," an exhibit at the Ranch House on base featuring pictures of the thousands of refugees who found temporary shelter and got their first taste of American cooking here in 1975.

The exhibit that moved Beatty includes pictures of the first two weddings of Vietnamese refugees who lived in eight tent cities at the base, when Pendleton got about a 24-hour notice to transform itself into one of four U.S. military installations to house Southeast Asian refugees.

The gallery includes pictures of the first Protestant baptismal ceremony at the Camp San Mateo water training tank from May 28, 1975, the day 28 were baptized by a refugee pastor. A toddler and a grandmother playing hide and seek. Women doing laundry and children at play. Singer Rosemary Clooney entertaining. Then First Lady Betty Ford stopping by to visit with former Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky.

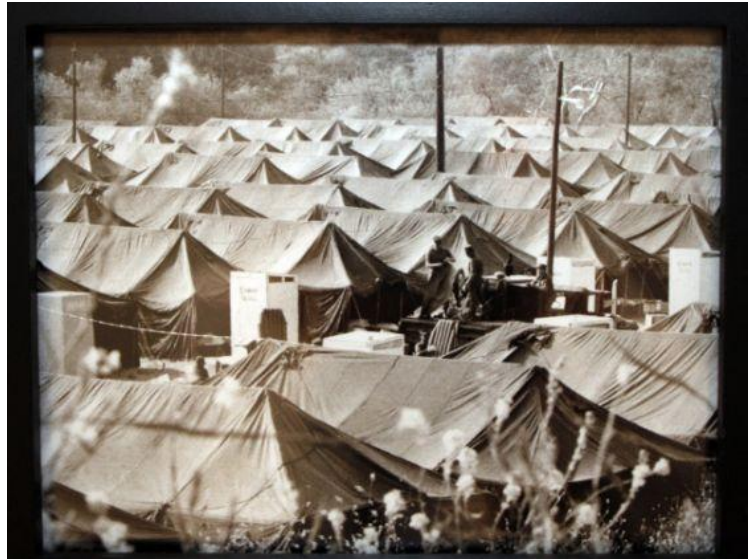
The images, shot by Marine photographers, have surfaced in the past, but not as a full collection open to the general public.

The gallery, which also displays refugee camp paintings by then Col. Charles Waterhouse, is a poignant window into where the largest Vietnamese population outside of Vietnam got its start in America.

Pendleton was the first base in the United States to provide accommodations for Vietnamese evacuees during the U.S. military's 1975 relocation effort, Operation New Arrivals. More than 50,000 Southeast Asian refugees – a majority of them Vietnamese – came to the base as part of the largest humanitarian airlift in history. From the base, refugees resettled across the United States, including the biggest chunk of the immigrant population in Little Saigon in Westminster.

Phan Dang of Vista, then 27, arrived here May 21 through a circuitous route, she and her two siblings and mother shuttled to American bases just days before the fall of Saigon and ending up at the former El Toro Marine Corps Air Station before arriving by bus to Pendleton at 2 a.m. Dang's brother, a South Vietnamese soldier, went missing weeks before her family's departure and is presumed dead. She used to work for the U.S. Department of Defense in Bien Hoa, so her family was evacuated April 24, 1975. Her family arrived at Pendleton with their life's belongings stuffed in two sacks that used to hold rice -- some photos, towels and sheets packed by her mom, a pair of scissors. After a month at the camp, her family was sponsored by Beatty's commanding officer and so they got to know Beatty as well.

On Thursday, Dang and her sister, My – who was only 12 when she got to Pendleton – embraced the Marine, with whom they have kept in touch.



“We felt happy that we were here,” Dang recalled of her family's time at the base.

"I can picture the camp," she said, standing next to a painting at the Ranch House portraying camp site # 8, where her family found temporary shelter in one of the tents but little privacy because they slept alongside about half a dozen strangers on cots. “All I wanted to do was keep my family warm.”

My got her first taste of hamburgers on base and recalled speaking no English when she and her brother enrolled in school, where they quickly picked up the new language.

For Beatty, who lives in Oceanside, the gallery takes him to his days working at the tent city, where he and his wife also sponsored two sisters. During the Vietnam War “we saw things that no person should ever see,” he said. Then, after a long pause to collect himself, he added, “Here it was joy. In their kids, I could see my kids. The hard times those people had to go through to assimilate into our society.:

The refugees coming to America didn't affect the way Beatty perceived the war that claimed 58,000 Americans and 300,000 South Vietnamese lives.

“That was my job,” he said. “I really didn't look at whether it was right or wrong. But when (the refugees) came here you looked at the little kids' suffering because of what the grown-ups had done. It really gets to your psyche. You change your attitude about people in general.”

The Pendleton exhibit will run through September.

► VA NEWS

LOUISVILLE KY VAMC RENAMED FOR ROBLEY REX

On April 10, 2010 the Louisville Veterans Hospital became known as the Robley Rex Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

RFTW knew Rex well. A volunteer at the hospital, every year he was there waiting for us when we arrived at the Medical Center. Our veterans gave him a RFTW vest, which he wore proudly, and took pictures of him every year seated on a motorcycle. He seemed to enjoy every minute of his visits with us, his smile never leaving his face.

Rex was an institution in Louisville, especially at the VA Medical Center where he volunteered and dedicated his life to helping fellow veterans. He was given numerous awards for his years of volunteer service.

He served in the United States army from 1919 to 1922. But helping at the VA was his passion. In 1986, Rex began volunteering, lending support to fellow veterans at the Louisville Veteran's Administration Medical Center. Rex logged more than 14,000 hours of volunteer time while at the Center. He continued to volunteer there three days a week, even at age 105. For his 107th birthday, Rex was presented the Kentucky Governor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service. He was also honored in 2005 by the national Veterans of Foreign Wars as National Volunteer of the Year.



“He taught everybody about what it means to be oriented toward service toward helping your fellow human being and also toward honoring your country,” said Congressman John Yarmuth, (D)-3rd District. “He was really an extraordinary individual, and as the result of this effort to name this facility after him, he will be remembered forever,” said Mitch McConnell, (R) Kentucky.

Rex died last year on April 28, just four days short of his 108th birthday.

IMPORTANT NEWS FOR WOMEN VETERANS

Dear Friends of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation!

I've always promised you I would not abuse your gift to us of your email address. This message is very important to you and I hope you'll take special note of it.

In our annual newsletter last year we alerted you to a massive research study recently funded by the Veterans Administration. We're cooperating with this study offering ideas for the tools and providing access to our Sister Search database. That was one of the very special purposes of the database.

This announcement informs you of the contacts you can make to ensure you could be included in the study. Please share this information as widely as you can. The attached flyer could be copied and used as a handout at meetings or social events. Please be an advocate for this very important study. We owe it to ourselves, and to our young sisters serving in Iraq and Afghanistan to develop this body of knowledge.

Who could be in the study? Military Vietnam era veterans who served either "in-country," "near-country" (ie: Japan, Philippines, Guam), or anywhere else. Please note, this means that if you were assigned in Germany or the US but never served in-country during Vietnam, there is a chance to be included. There's no assurance, but there's a chance.

Please read this carefully and consider contacting the VA.

Thank you all!

Cindy Gurney, COL, USA (Ret)
Executive Director, Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation
1735 Connecticut Ave. NW, 3rd FL
Washington, DC 20009
Toll Free (866) 822-8963
vwmfdc@gmail.com
www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org

Please join us in Washington on May 31, Memorial Day, for Storytelling: In Their Own Words, at the Vietnam Women's Memorial. Activities will start around 9 a.m. and continue throughout the day. Ceremonies at the Wall begin at 1 p.m.

VA Announcement of Research Involving Vietnam War Era Women Veterans

On November 18, 2009, the Secretary of Veterans' Affairs Eric Shinseki announced that The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is launching a comprehensive study of women Veterans who served in the military during the Vietnam War to explore the effects of their military service upon their mental and physical health.

VA realizes that women Veterans require specialized programs, and this study will help the VA provide high-quality care for women Veterans of the Vietnam era. The study, which begins later this year (2010) and lasts more than four years, will contact approximately 10,000 women in a mailed survey, telephone interview and a review of their medical records.

As women Vietnam Veterans approach their mid-sixties, it is important to understand the impact of wartime deployment on health and mental outcomes nearly 40 years later. The study will assess the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental and physical health conditions for women Vietnam Veterans, and explore the relationship between PTSD and other conditions.

The VA will study women Vietnam Veterans who may have had direct exposure to traumatic events, and for the first time, study those who served in facilities near Vietnam and in the United States. These women may have had similar, but less direct exposures. Both women Veterans who receive their health care from VA and those who receive health care from other providers will be contacted to determine the prevalence of a variety of health conditions.

About 250,000 women Veterans served in the military during the Vietnam War and about 7,000 were in or near Vietnam. Those who were in Vietnam, those who served elsewhere in Southeast Asia and those who served in the United States are potential study participants.

The study represents to date the most comprehensive examination of women Veterans, and will be used to shape future research on women Veterans in future wars. Such an understanding will lay the groundwork for planning and providing appropriate services for today's younger women Veterans, as well as for the aging Veteran.

For more information on the study you may go to the following website <https://www.csp.research.va.gov/csp579.cfm>. For information on how to participate in the study, please call 1-888-831-3325.

MILITARY STOLEN VALOR Update 16

A Palm Springs man was sentenced to a year of probation 15 MAR and ordered to undergo mental health counseling for impersonating a Marine and wearing medals he never earned. Steven Douglas Burton violated a federal statute that prohibits the unauthorized display of military medals. The 39-year-old defendant pleaded guilty to the federal misdemeanor charge 14 DEC as part of a plea deal with the U.S. Attorney's Office. U.S. District Judge Virginia Phillips also ordered Burton to pay a \$250 fine and barred him from owning any military uniforms, insignia or award. Burton told Phillips when he entered his plea that he was seeing a doctor and receiving treatment, though he did not specify for what. He also said he was taking antidepressants. According to the U.S. Attorney's Office, Burton showed up for his 20-year class reunion at Alhambra High School in Martinez, Calif., in OCT 08 wearing a Marine Corps dress uniform studded with medals, including the Navy Cross, the second-highest combat commendation behind the Medal of Honor. Burton wore a lieutenant colonel's insignia and told people he had spent a career in the service, according to the FBI.

One of Burton's classmates, a Navy commander, was suspicious and snapped a photograph of Burton, which shows him wearing 14 medals, including a Navy Cross, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Legion of Merit badge and Combat Action ribbon. The commander made an official inquiry regarding Burton's service and discovered he had never been in the Corps or any other branch of the Armed Forces, according to the FBI. In the ensuing investigation, federal agents learned the defendant had an Internet blog on which he "bragged" about overseas tours of duty that involved combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. The first documented case of Burton wearing a military uniform with decorations was during a 2007 Halloween party in Cathedral City, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office. A few months later, he posted a photo of himself online showing him standing on a beach on Coronado Island wearing a Marine Corps uniform, complete with medals and stripes indicating the rank of master gunnery sergeant. "The defendant chose the rank of ... gunnery sergeant because it is a well-respected rank within the USMC," court documents state. The documents indicate Burton purchased most of his decorations on eBay and at military surplus stores, including one outside the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, Calif. [Source: MarineCorpsTimes The Desert Sun article 16 Mar 2010 ++]

PRESIDENT SIGNS VETERANS ACT

President Barack Obama recently signed the Veterans' Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2009.

The new law will enable the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to reimburse Veterans enrolled in VA health care for the remaining cost of emergency treatment if the Veteran has outside insurance that only covers part of the cost. Previously, VA could reimburse veterans or pay outside hospitals directly only if a Veteran had no outside health insurance.

GULF WAR PRESUMPTIVE DISEASES

VA Secretary Eric Shinseki announced 18 MAR he is taking steps to make it easier for veterans to obtain disability compensation for certain diseases associated with service during the first Gulf War, as well as those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan on or after Sept. 19, 2001. VA will publish a proposed regulation in the Federal Register to establish new service-connection presumptions for nine specific infectious diseases. Specifically:

- Brucellosis
- Campylobacter jejuni
- Coxiella burnetii (Q fever)
- Malaria,
- Mycobacterium tuberculosis
- Nontyphoid Salmonella
- Shigella
- Visceral leishmaniasis
- West Nile virus.

Without a rule change for presumptive conditions, veterans are required to provide medical evidence to establish an actual connection between a specific disease and military service in Southwest Asia or Afghanistan. With the proposed rule, a veteran would only have to show service in Southwest Asia or Afghanistan, and a current diagnosis of one of the nine diseases. A final regulation will be published after a 60-day public comment period. For more information about disability compensation or health problems associated with military service during the first Gulf War and OEF/OIF, go to www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/gulfwar/ or www.va.gov. [Source: Washington Weekly 19 Mar 2010 ++]

TRICARE AND NAF HEALTH PLANS

The House Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton, D-Mo., introduced legislation on March 29 which explicitly states that TRICARE and Non-Appropriated Fund (NAF) health plans meet all of the health care requirements for individual health insurance. This technical correction will ensure TRICARE beneficiaries don't suffer any inadvertent penalties under the language of national health care reform legislation passed by the House on March 21.

While beneficiaries of these programs will already meet the minimum requirements for individual health insurance and will not be required to purchase additional coverage, H.R. 4887, The TRICARE Affirmation Act, would provide clarification by changing the tax code to state it in law. The bill was approved in the House by a vote of 403 to 0.

At the bill's introduction, Rep. Skelton said, "It is a commonly known fact that I oppose the health care reform bill as it exists currently and will vote against it tomorrow. But, my duty as the Chairman of the Armed Services Committee compels me to ensure that the health care of our brave service men and women, our military retirees, and all of their family members is protected if the bill does indeed pass.

"In the health care bill currently under consideration in Congress, TRICARE and the Non-Appropriated Fund health plans, the programs that provide health care for these individuals, will meet the minimum requirements for individual health insurance coverage, and no TRICARE or NAF health plan beneficiary will be required to purchase additional coverage beyond what they already have.

"However, to reassure our military service members and their families and make it perfectly clear that they will not be negatively affected by this legislation, my bill, H.R. 4887, explicitly states in law that these health plans meet the minimum requirements for individual health insurance.

"Our brave men and women in uniform provide us with first-class protection, and it is our obligation to provide them—and their families—with first-class health care in return. Every day, our troops risk their lives to stand up for us on the battlefield, and I now ask my colleagues—no matter what your position may be on health care reform itself—to join me in standing up for our service members and their families."

In addition to the legislation, Skelton, along with Reps. Bob Filner, Chairman, Committee on Veterans Affairs; George Miller, Chairman, Committee on Education and Labor; Sander Levin, Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means; and Henry Waxman, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce sent a letter to the Committee on Rules advising that they reviewed the health care reform bills to assess the impact of the bills on the health care provided by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The letter stated, "Our reviews of H.R. 3590 and H.R. 4872 lead us to believe that the intent of the bills was never to undermine or change the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs operation of their health care programs or interfere with the care that our service members receive under TRICARE. However, we commit to look into this issue further to ensure that no unintended consequences may arise and to take any legislative action that may be necessary."

LEGISLATION OF INTEREST TO VETERANS

HOUSE BILLS:

H.R.33 : ***Disability Benefit Fairness Act of 2009*** to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the 5-month waiting period for entitlement to disability benefits and to eliminate reconsideration as an intervening step between initial benefit entitlement decisions and subsequent hearings on the record on such decisions.

Sponsor: Rep McIntyre, Mike [NC-7] (introduced 1/6/2009) Cosponsors (3)

Committees: House Ways and Means

Latest Major Action: 1/6/2009 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

H.R.236 : ***Social Security Protection Act*** to amend the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 to protect Social Security beneficiaries against any reduction in benefits.

Sponsor: Rep Brown-Waite, Ginny [FL-5] (introduced 1/7/2009) Cosponsors (1)

Committees: House Rules; House Budget

Latest Major Action: 1/7/2009 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the Committee on Rules, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

H.R.247 : ***Protect Our Veterans Memorials Act of 2009*** to amend section 1369 of title 18, United States Code, to extend Federal jurisdiction over destruction of veterans' memorials on State or local government property.
Sponsor: Rep Green, Gene [TX-29] (introduced 1/7/2009) Cosponsors (None)
Committees: House Judiciary
Latest Major Action: 2/9/2009 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security.

H.R.333 : ***Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act*** to amend title 10, United States Code, to permit retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability rated less than 50 percent to receive concurrent payment of both retired pay and veterans' disability compensation, to eliminate the phase-in period for concurrent receipt, to extend eligibility for concurrent receipt to chapter 61 disability retirees with less than 20 years of service, and for other purposes.
Sponsor: Rep Marshall, Jim [GA-8] (introduced 1/8/2009) Cosponsors (130)
Committees: House Armed Services; House Veterans' Affairs
Latest Major Action: 2/6/2009 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

To support this bill and/or contact your legislators send a message via
[http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=12406456&queueid=\[capwiz:queue_id\]](http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=12406456&queueid=[capwiz:queue_id]) and
<http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=12888756>

H.R.671 : ***In Memory Medal for Forgotten Veterans Act*** to direct the Secretary of Defense to issue a medal to certain veterans who died after their service in the Vietnam War as a direct result of that service.
Sponsor: Rep Filner, Bob [CA-51] (introduced 1/26/2009) Cosponsors (3)
Committees: House Armed Services
Latest Major Action: 2/6/2009 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

H.R.1335 : ***VA Catastrophically Disabled Copay.*** To amend title 38, United States Code, to prohibit the Secretary of Veterans Affairs from collecting certain copayments from veterans who are catastrophically disabled.
Sponsor: Rep Halvorson, Deborah L. [IL-11] (introduced 3/5/2009) Cosponsors (40)
Committees: House Veterans' Affairs
Latest Major Action: 7/9/2009 House committee/subcommittee actions. Status: Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee (Amended) by Voice Vote.

H.R.1716 : ***Property Tax Relief Act of 2009*** to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow the deduction for real property taxes on the principal residences to all individuals whether or not they itemize other deductions.
Sponsor: Rep Hill, Baron P. [IN-9] (introduced 3/25/2009) Cosponsors (12)
Committees: House Ways and Means
Latest Major Action: 3/25/2009 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

H.R.2254 : ***The Agent Orange Equity Act*** to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam.
Sponsor: Rep Filner, Bob [CA-51] (introduced 5/5/2009) Cosponsors (253)
Committees: House Veterans' Affairs
Latest Major Action: 5/8/2009 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.

To support this bill and/or contact your legislators send a message via
[http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=13301656&queueid=\[capwiz:queue_id\]](http://capwiz.com/usdr/issues/alert/?alertid=13301656&queueid=[capwiz:queue_id])

H.R.2546 : ***Right to Display Service Flag.*** To ensure that the right of an individual to display the Service flag on residential property not be abridged.

Sponsor: Rep Boccieri, John A. [OH-16] (introduced 5/21/2009) Cosponsors (45)

Committees: House Financial Services

Latest Major Action: 5/21/2009 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on Financial Services.

H.R.2598 : ***Bataan/Corregidor/Luzon Gold Medal.*** To grant a congressional gold medal to American military personnel who fought in defense of Bataan/Corregidor/Luzon between December 7, 1941 and May 6, 1942.

Sponsor: Rep Heinrich, Martin [NM-1] (introduced 5/21/2009) Cosponsors (50)

Committees: House Financial Services; House Administration

Latest Major Action: 5/21/2009 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

H.R.2926 : ***VA Special Care for Vietnam-era & Persian Gulf War Vets Exposed to Herbicides.*** To amend title 38, United States Code, to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide, without expiration, hospital care, medical services, and nursing home care for certain Vietnam-era veterans exposed to herbicide and veterans of the Persian Gulf War.

Sponsor: Rep Nye, Glenn C., III [VA-2] (introduced 6/17/2009) Cosponsors (5)

Latest Major Action: 7/9/2009 House committee/subcommittee actions. Status: Forwarded by Subcommittee to Full Committee (Amended) by Voice Vote.

H.R.4551 : ***Keep Our Promise to America's Military Retirees Act*** to restore health care coverage to retired members of the uniformed services, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: Rep Van Hollen, Chris [MD-8] (introduced 1/27/2010) Cosponsors (32)

Committees: House Armed Services; House Oversight and Government Reform

Latest Major Action: 2/25/2010 Referred to House subcommittee. Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

IN THE SENATE:

S.296 : ***Fair Tax Act of 2009.*** A bill to promote freedom, fairness, and economic opportunity by repealing the income tax and other taxes, abolishing the Internal Revenue Service, and enacting a national sales tax to be administered primarily by the States.

Sponsor: Sen Chambliss, Saxby [GA] (introduced 1/22/2009) Cosponsors (4)

Committees: Senate Finance

Latest Major Action: 1/22/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.

S.1939 : ***Vet Presumptive Exposure in Vietnam.*** A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: Sen Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [NY] (introduced 10/27/2009) Cosponsors (16)

Committees: Senate Veterans' Affairs

Latest Major Action: 10/27/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

S.642 : ***Health Care for Members of the Armed Forces Exposed to Chemical Hazards Act of 2009.*** A bill to require the Secretary of Defense to establish registries of members and former members of the Armed Forces

exposed in the line of duty to occupational and environmental health chemical hazards, to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide health care to veterans exposed to such hazards, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: Sen Bayh, Evan [IN] (introduced 3/19/2009) Cosponsors (7)

Committees: Senate Armed Services

Latest Major Action: 3/19/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

S.772 : *Honor Act of 2009.* A bill to enhance benefits for survivors of certain former members of the Armed Forces with a history of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury, to enhance availability and access to mental health counseling for members of the Armed Forces and veterans, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: Sen Bond, Christopher S. [MO] (introduced 4/1/2009) Cosponsors (12)

Committees: Senate Veterans' Affairs

Latest Major Action: 4/1/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

S.1939 : *Vet Presumptive Exposure in Vietnam.* A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to clarify presumptions relating to the exposure of certain veterans who served in the vicinity of the Republic of Vietnam, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: Sen Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [NY] (introduced 10/27/2009) Cosponsors (16)

Committees: Senate Veterans' Affairs

Latest Major Action: 10/27/2009 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

S.3118 : *Veterans Pensions Protection Act.* A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide that monetary benefits paid to veterans by States and municipalities shall be excluded from consideration as income for purposes of pension benefits paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

Sponsor: Sen Kerry, John F. [MA] (introduced 3/16/2010) Cosponsors (None) Related Bill: H.R.3485

Committees: Senate Veterans' Affairs

Latest Major Action: 3/16/2010 Referred to Senate committee. Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

REMINDER . . .

When you retire, you will qualify for a higher social security payment because of your military service. If you had active duty service any time from 1940 through 2001 (the program was done away with in January 2002), you qualify for up to \$1200 per year of earnings credit credited at time of application.

You must ask for this benefit to receive it when you retire. Take your DD-214 to the Social Security Office.

<http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/military.htm>

► BRINGING THEM HOME

REMAINS OF FOUR VIETNAM SERVICEMEN BROUGHT HOME

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced April 8, 2010 that the remains of four U.S. servicemen, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

A group burial for U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Kenneth L. Stancil, Chattanooga, Tenn.; Chief Warrant Officer Jesse D. Phelps, Boise, Idaho; Spc. Thomas Rice, Jr., Spartanburg, S.C.; and Spc. Donald C. Grella,

Laurel, Neb., as well as Rice's individual remains burial will be tomorrow at Arlington National Cemetery. Stancil, Phelps and Grella were buried individually last year.

The four men were aboard a UH-1D Huey helicopter which failed to return from a mission over Gia Lai Province, South Vietnam to pick up special forces soldiers on Dec. 28, 1965. The exact location of the crash site was not determined during the war, and search and rescue operations were suspended after failing to locate the men after four days.

From 1993-2005, joint U.S.-Socialist Republic of Vietnam teams led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command attempted unsuccessfully to locate the site. But in April 2006, a joint team interviewed two local villagers, one of whom said he had shot down a U.S. helicopter in 1965. The villagers escorted the team to the crash site where wreckage was found. In March 2009, another joint team excavated the area and recovered human remains and other artifacts including an identification tag from Grella.

JPAC's scientists employed traditional forensic techniques in making these identifications, including comparisons of dental records with the remains found at the site.

POW FROM KOREAN WAR RETURNED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced April 8, 2010 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Korean War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

U.S. Army Cpl. Stanley P. Arendt, a corporal in the U.S. Army, was killed in 1950 while a 22-year-old prisoner of war. His remains lay undiscovered in North Korea until 2004, and his identity was finally confirmed last year. Arendt was buried on March 29 in Palatine, Ill.

In early November 1950, Arendt was assigned to the 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division occupying a defensive position near the town of Unsan in the bend of the Kuryong River known as the "Camel's Head." Arendt's unit was involved in heavy fighting which devolved into hand-to-hand combat around their command post. Almost 400 men of the 8th Cavalry Regiment were reported missing in action or killed in action from the battle at Unsan.

In late November 1950, a U.S. soldier captured during the battle of Unsan reported during his debriefing that he and nine other American soldiers were moved to a house near the battlefield. The POWs were taken to an adjacent field and shot. Three of the 10 Americans survived, though one later died. He provided detailed information on the location of the incident and the identities of the other soldiers. Following the armistice in 1953 and the release of POWs, the other surviving soldier confirmed the details provided in 1950.

In May 2004, a joint U.S.-North Korean team excavated a mass grave near the "Camel's Head" after receiving a report that an elderly North Korean national had witnessed the death of seven or eight U.S. soldiers near that location and provided the team with a general description of the burial site.

The excavation team recovered human remains and other personal artifacts, ultimately leading to the identification of seven soldiers from that site. Among the forensic techniques used in the identifications by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command was that of mitochondrial DNA, five samples of which matched the DNA of Arendt's brother.

JPAC ARRIVAL CEREMONY

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE, Hawaii -- The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command conducted an Arrival Ceremony at 9 a.m., Friday, April 2, in Hangar 35, to honor fallen U.S. personnel whose identities remain unknown.

There were two flag-draped transfer cases. The first transfer case is associated with losses from World War II recovered from the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. The second transfer case was recovered from the Lao People's Democratic Republic and is associated with Vietnam War losses.

Following the ceremony, the remains of these fallen Americans were transported to the JPAC Central Identification Laboratory, where the forensic identification process began. Once identifications are established, the names will be announced following the notification of next-of-kin.

VIETNAM MIA IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced on January 30, 2010 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, were identified and returned to his family for burial. In his home town of Fort Worth, Texas.

On May 6, 1968, Aldrich was a member of a search-and-clear mission in Binh Dinh Province in what was then South Vietnam. He was last seen with two other Americans engaged in a battle with enemy forces while manning a M-60 machine gun position. An air strike was called in, but one of the bombs inadvertently landed on Aldrich's position, killing the three soldiers. Members of his unit later recovered the remains of the two other men, but Aldrich could not be found.

In July 1992, a joint U.S.-Socialist Republic of Vietnam team traveled to the province to investigate the loss. They interviewed a local citizen who remembered a large ground battle in the area in May or June 1968. He took the team to a location where he indicated the remains were buried, but an excavation in 1994 found no evidence of a grave or remains.

Vietnamese officials unilaterally investigated the case in 2006 and interviewed two villagers who recalled finding a body of an American after the battle and burying it where it lay. A second joint investigation in 2007, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, recommended another excavation based on the information provided by the Vietnamese.

The excavation in March 2009 unearthed human remains and other non-biological evidence. The identification of the remains was confirmed by matching the remains with Aldrich's dental records.

REMAINS OF VIETNAM AIR FORCE PILOT RETURNED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office announced Jan. 12 that the remains of an Air Force pilot, missing in action from the Vietnam War, were identified and would be returned to his family for burial.

Goodman, of Salt Lake City, Utah, was honored at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, home of the U.S. Air Force Thunderbird demonstration team. At the time he was lost, Major Goodman was assigned to the Thunderbirds and was flying with the U.S. Navy on an exchange program. He served as Thunderbird No. 8, the team's advance pilot and narrator, from 1964-1965. While assigned to squadron, he was selected to serve as a liaison officer between the Air Force and the U.S. Navy.

On February 20, 1967, just days after completing a combat mission for which he earned the Silver Star for saving a downed aircrew, he and his weapons systems officer, Navy Lt. Gary L Thornton, were flying an F-4B Phantom fighter from the USS Enterprise during a bombing mission against a railroad siding in North Vietnam. At a point about eight miles south of the city Thanh Hoa, they were struck by enemy anti-aircraft fire and their plane exploded. Lt. Thornton was able to eject at just 25-foot altitude, but Goodman did not escape. Lt. Thornton survived and was held captive until his release in 1973.

Search and rescue attempts were curtailed because of heavy anti-aircraft and automatic weapons fire in the area of the crash.

Between October 1993 and March 2008, joint U.S.-Vietnamese teams led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command investigated the crash site twice and conducted two excavations, recovering human remains and pilot equipment. The aircraft debris recovered correlates with the type of aircraft the men were flying.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA, which matched two of his maternal relatives, in the identification of Goodman's remains.

Major Goodman is survived by three children, seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His wife and high school sweetheart, June Goodman, passed away November 10—just six days before the family was notified that Goodman's remains had been positively identified.

► EVENTS

April 29, 2010, 4 p.m.

VETERANS MEMORIAL DEDICATION

Saddleback College, Mission Viejo, CA

The RFTW family is invited to the dedication of a new and magnificent veteran's memorial that will be dedicated on April 29, 2010 at Saddleback College in the City of Mission Viejo, CA. This memorial is four years in the making and is the first of its kind to ever grace the presents of a public institution of higher learning. It is an extraordinary memorial because it also serves as an outside classroom that honors all who have served and sacrificed for our nation's freedom. We believe it is the first of its kind in the entire United States.

<http://www.saddleback.edu/foundation/vm/>

For additional information, contact Harry "Mustang" Parmer (RFTW 2006)
Chief of Police, Saddleback College, 28000 Marguerite Parkway
Mission Viejo, CA 92692 949.582.4585

August 20-22, 2010

18TH ANNUAL SALUTE TO AMERICAN VETERANS RALLY

Cripple Creek, Colorado

After three years in Winter Park, the Veterans Rally is returning to its original home in Cripple Creek, Colorado!

Flyovers, parade, poker run, POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony, vendors, free concerts

The Traveling Wall will be there

For more info: <http://www.theveteransrally.org/>

September 3-6, 2010
ANGEL FIRE REUNION

Host Hotel: Angel Fire Lodge 575-377-6401 Mention RFTW Reunion for Group Discount.

Planned Events:

1. Friday, 9/3/ 2010 - Meet and Greet and Riders Forum. Enchanted Circle Ride (if enough interest) Email Monte if you're interested.
2. Saturday, 9/4/ 2010 - Brick Laying (work day); Reunion Group Dinner,
3. Sunday, 9/5/ 2010 - Golf Tournament (Fundraiser for David Westphall Vietnam Veterans Foundation). Sunday Church Service.
4. Monday, 9/6/ 2010 – Farewell,

Saturday Lunch, during the work schedule is sponsored by Barbara Montoya, owner of Cloud Nine Beauty Indulgence. Barbara and Cloud Nine Beauty Indulgence also is the sponsor of the 2nd annual Hair Cutting Fundraiser for the David Westphall Veterans Foundation, which this year is scheduled for October 16, 2010.

There will also be a Bikes, Blues, & Brews biker event in Angel Fire that weekend.

Volunteers (preferably in uniform) will be needed to raise and lower the flag each day. Each Medal of Honor Brick will be escorted by one each uniformed Army, Marine, Navy, and Coast Guard. Leading the escort in uniform will be Retired Army LTC. Chuck Howe, President DWVF and RFTW President John King. Contact Monte if you are interested in participating in this honor detail.

Watch for additional details.

Monte (Bullrider) Apodaca
575-595-5166

Lharley8@aol.com
mapodaca@afgov.org

September 17-19, 2010
KERRVILLE, TX REUNION

Host Hotel: YO Ranch Resort Hotel
2033 Sidney Baker, Kerrville, TX 78028
Sgl/dbl rate: \$92, Family suite \$159, 1bd suite \$185, 2bd suite \$260
Call 877-967-3767; ask for RFTW rate. Rooms held until 7 a.m. August 16, 2010

Camping: Kerrville-Schreiner Park 830-257-5392 (close to hotel). Call for reservations.

Registration Cost: \$30 until August 23; \$45 after that. Send checks payable to Janice Wentworth, 113 Old South Drive, Crestview, FL 32536. Include your address, phone number, email address, and number of people attending. Paypal is available – call or email Janice (214-906-5357, stitchnbitch1@earthlink.net). Email receipt will be your dinner ticket/confirmation.

Friday: Rides planned
Saturday: Morning ride; Riders Meeting in afternoon; buffet dinner
Sunday: Breakfast

► SICK CALL

Tommy Lockett is in the VA hospital in Fayetteville, AR. He has been fighting a battle with Multiple Myeloma for some years now and was recently told by his doctor that he was in full remission. But earlier this week, they found a large tumor in his spine and lesions in several other places. It is inoperable but they tried radiation. There is a possibility he may not walk again.

Jackie McKinney, former RFTW New Mexico State Coordinator, was involved in a motorcycle accident April 9. He's had several surgeries to fix a compound fracture above his elbow, his dislocated shoulder, and a break right under his shoulder. He's now the proud owner of some rods, plates and screws in various parts of his body.

MGySgt Harry Mixer USMC (RET) is at home recovering after surgery for kidney cancer.

Sgt. Richard Carroll (Army Vietnam) is having problems with diabetes/circulation, but hanging in there like a good Army Ranger.

SgtMajor Mike Miller USMC, Ret. has colon cancer but is on his way to recovery.

Captain Lee Cobern USN, Ret. is in failing health but in good spirits. The Captain was a Navy Chief on the USS Lexington when it was torpedoed.

► TAPS

Bill Reece

Bill Reece, 67, of Kansas, passed away Wednesday, March 10, 2010 at St. Francis Health Center, Topeka. Bill and his wife Becki were the RFTW Kansas State Coordinators 1995 to 2000.

Bill entered the US Army in 1959, and retired at Fort Riley as a First Sergeant in 1979. He served in Vietnam from August 1967 through August 1968, including the 1968 TET Offensive and Counter-Offensive. During his service in Vietnam he was awarded the Soldier's Medal for heroism; the Bronze Star Medal; the Army Commendation Medal for Heroism; the Vietnam Service Medal with four Campaign Stars; the Vietnam Campaign Medal; the US Army Meritorious Unit Citation; and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm. Years later he received the Military Police Corps Regiment Order of the Marechausee.

After his retirement from the Army, Mr. Reece first served with the Junction City Police Department and then with the Riley County Police Department, retiring as a Sergeant in 1999.

► CLOSING THOUGHTS

CIVILIAN FRIENDS VS. VETERAN FRIENDS:

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Get upset if you're too busy to talk to them for a week.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Are glad to see you after years, and will happily carry on the same conversation you were having the last time you met.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have never seen you cry.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Have cried with you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Borrow your stuff for a few days then give it back.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Keep your stuff so long they forget it's yours.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Know a few things about you.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Could write a book with direct quotes from you.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will leave you behind if that's what the crowd is doing.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will kick the crowds' ass that left you behind.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Are for a while.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Are for life.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Have shared a few experiences.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Have shared a lifetime of experiences no citizen could ever dream of.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will take your drink away when they think you've had enough.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will look at you stumbling all over the place and say, "You better drink the rest of that before you spill it!!" Then carry you home safely and put you to bed.

CIVILIAN FRIENDS: Will talk crap to the person who talks crap about you.

VETERAN FRIENDS: Will knock the hell out OF THEM. for using your name in vain.

A veteran—whether active duty, retired, or national guard or reserve—is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount of "up to and including my life."

It's an honor to be in your Company. Thank you Veteran!

ALSO . . .

Words of a Soldier – Glenn Beck

<http://mfile.akamai.com/6713/wma/glennbeck.download.akamai.com/6713/preview/09/05/11-11-02-mem-day-56k.asx>

The Warrior Song—Outstanding!

<http://www.thewarriorsong.com/video.html>

You Are Not Forgotten



TO SUBSCRIBE TO A MAILED COPY OF THE NEWSLETTER:

APPLICATION FOR NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIPTION

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

NAME: _____ DATE: _____ 2010

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

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

Please mail this form with your check or money order (made payable to Run For The Wall) to Judy Lacey, 4249 Comstock Drive, Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406.

RUN FOR THE WALL



WE RIDE FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T

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