

# RUN FOR THE WALL

## Quarterly Newsletter

*“We Ride For Those Who Can’t”*

October 2015

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## THE EDITOR’S NOTES

About a year ago I talked about the new Veterans Court that had been started up in Lake Havasu City. Veterans Courts were at that time very new, and few people were even aware that such a thing existed. Our Veterans Court has been running for almost two years now, and I am well-entrenched in the Veterans Resource Team that helps find resources for veterans going through Veterans Court system. Representatives from all of our local veterans organizations are on the team, as well as several dozen service agencies, including our local Interagency, the VA, the Vet Center, the Veterans Resource Center, and many more agencies that are instrumental in providing the help that veterans need so that they can once again become good members of society. Our veterans today have a tougher time adjusting to the civilian world than ever before. Most leave the service with PTSD or Traumatic Brain Injuries, and most have difficulty finding employment when they return. The Veterans Resource Teams assist the Veterans Courts by searching for help for veterans. Many of our agencies provide classes for veterans to help them find employment, deal with landlord-tenant problems, learn how to interview for jobs, and so on. This partnership between the Veterans Court and the community has been an amazing success in my



community, and the Lake Havasu Veterans Court is being looked at as the model to emulate. Our Resource Team has been getting about 80 percent of the homeless veterans who go through the court system off the streets and into housing.

Yesterday I attended the first meeting of the Veterans Resource Team for the new Regional Veterans Court being started up next month in Kingman, Ariz., to offer my assistance to help them get started.

Does your area have a Veterans Treatment Court? If so, I hope you will volunteer for their Resource Team. If not, I hope you will talk to your city about starting one. The Treatment Courts are unbelievably successful. The recidivism rate for regular courts is around 80 percent; in diversion courts, the rate is between 20 and 30 percent. But in Veterans Treatment Courts, the recidivism rate is about 10 percent. And, in Lake Havasu, after two years, our recidivism rate is ZERO. So it's working—and it's helping our new veterans adjust to civilian life and our older veterans who run afoul of the law to become better and more productive citizens. Havasu's Treatment Court is working so well that some of the graduates return to join our Veterans Resource Team so they can help other veterans. Nor that's a real success story.

Judy "Velcro" Lacey

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

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Well, here we are well down the path to the 2016 Run! The Route Coordinators have been hard at work arranging their teams to create safe, healing, and mission-aligned Runs along the three Routes.

The RFTW Board of Directors has been meeting regularly (both in person and via monthly conference calls) to assist the Route Coordinators as needed, and to conduct the affairs of the corporation. We on the BoD often receive questions or comments on things that that we should change about the different Routes to make them safer, better, etc. Sometimes these issues are event-driven and sometimes they are process-driven. To give you all a little insight, I am going to share some of how RFTW works.



As many of you know, RFTW, Inc., the corporation, is a 501(c)3 non profit. As such, it is governed by its bylaws relative to conducting its business affairs in alignment with its mission statement. However, the bylaws do not specifically cover the operations of the annual Run For The Wall event. This is covered by the Standard Operating Procedures. This is a control document that outlines the framework of much of how the annual event will be conducted. I say "much" because there has to be some degree of leeway for the cultures of the different Routes, and for the Route Coordinators to actually manage their respective routes. To assist in the efforts there are also guidelines for some of the Leadership Team positions such as State Coordinators, Road Guards, etc. When the BoD reviews the After Action Reports (AARs) post-Run each year, we look for discrepancies between the SOPs, the Guidelines, and the events described in the AARs. If

the SOPs or Guidelines are not covering a situation described in an AAR that they could reasonably be expected to effect, we take action to revise the appropriate document. If the AAR describes a situation that was driven by events "in the moment," we use the AAR as a "Teaching Tool" to share with the next Route Coordinators so they can plan for contingencies if the same or a similar event occurs again.

The BoD takes the AARs very seriously. These are our windows to things that we can't be there to see. As such, they are an important part of concluding the business of each year's events and are a line item on the agenda for both our face-to-face meetings and our conference calls.

In closing, we are always interested in hearing the thoughts, ideas, and concerns of the participants each year. All of the BoD members are listed on the web page with our contact info. If you have something to say, we would like to hear it. Just remember that Communication is between a Sender and a Receiver, and the roles constantly reverse as dialog continues. Reach out to us, but make sure we can contact you in return. You may have emailed a fine idea but we need more of your thoughts to get the full picture. Make sure we can reach you—include a valid email address and/or phone number!!

Thanks and Ride Safe!  
Greg "Pied Piper" Smith  
President 2015-2016 RFTW, Inc.

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## ► RFTW 2016

### 2016 CENTRAL ROUTE COORDINATOR

#### Dave "Papa Smurf" Klemme

Hello. My name is Dave ~~P~~apa Smurf" Klemme. It is my honor and privilege to have been selected as the Central Route Coordinator for Run For The Wall XXVIII in 2016.



I served in the United States Marine Corps from 1967 to 1992. During my enlisted days, I served as a UH-1E ~~H~~uey" Crew Chief/Door Gunner. I have three close friends and squadron mates who launched out of Marble Mountain (near Da Nang) together on March 21, 1970, and never returned. To this day, they remain among the missing, and every year I make this Run in their memory. They are why our mission is so near, and dear, to my heart.

I started Run For The Wall as an FNG (Fun New Guy) in 2004, and have been a ~~C~~entral Route Guy" ever since. If I had it to do over again, I would probably have alternated between the Central and Southern Routes, with a turn on Midway when they started up, as well. But having been with Central Route for so long now, I can't imagine *not* being with them every May. Last year was my 11<sup>th</sup> Run. For the first six, I was content to be a pack rider, but I began to realize just how much benefit I had received from this experience without having given anything back. In 2011, I joined the Staging Team, and did that job for two years. In 2013, Don ~~E-Z~~" Burns asked me to be his Assistant Platoon Leader, and when Don was selected to be the Assistant Route Coordinator in 2014, I was asked to take over his Platoon Leader

position. When Don assumed his role as the 2015 Route Coordinator, he again reached out to me to be his assistant.

I am looking forward with great anticipation to leading the Central Route in 2016. I have a truly remarkable group of people working in support, and it's these folks who make Run For The Wall so successful every year. From our state coordinators to our ambassadors, fuel team, staging team, registration folks, chaplains, hydration team, chase vehicles, and platoon leadership teams, these are the finest people I've ever been associated with. If I've left anybody out, I apologize. Everyone who steps forward in support of this Run is my personal hero.

I hope you will ride with the Central Route on Run For The Wall XXVIII in 2016, but whichever route you choose, it will be a life-changing experience for you. God bless you, and WELCOME HOME!

Dave –Papa Smurf” Klemme  
*“Freedom Isn't Free”*

## **2016 COMBAT HERO BIKE BUILD—SHAUN MEADOWS**

By John Barker

The previous Combat Hero for our 2016 Combat Hero Bike Build, Joey Jones, had to step down for personal reasons, and the Committee has chosen Shaun Meadows to receive next year's Bike Build.

We have raffle tickets and T-shirts to sell and are looking for help in doing so. Anyone who wants to help just needs to contact Ray TooTall at [atraysequip@aol.com](mailto:atraysequip@aol.com), Sgt.Maj Doug Lyvere at [doug@lyvere.com](mailto:doug@lyvere.com), or John Hardcharger at [hardchargerrftw@gmail.com](mailto:hardchargerrftw@gmail.com).

We need folks to talk to the different VFWs in their area and try to get them to do a fundraiser or a poker run to raise funds. We will provide the info and packet for them to complete the mission. All funds received go to the Build. All other expenses come out of our pocket. The Builds that we have done so far have brought the thrill of riding to veterans who couldn't ride before. RFTW has teamed up with Eagles Up, another 501(c)3 non-profit, so all donations are tax deductible.

## **SHAUN MEADOWS U.S. AIRFORCE VETERAN**

My name is Shaun Meadows. I am 35 years old. I was born in Culpepper, VA in 1980. At the age of 15, I moved to Winder, GA. where I graduated high school from Winder Barrow High School in 1998. After high school, I started work for Inter-rail Transport working with GM Motors. After the attack on our country on 9/11, I felt it was my duty to step up and do my part as an American; I wanted to take the fight to those who attacked us. I knew that I didn't want to be one of the people behind the scenes who support the ones in the fight. I wanted to be in the fight; I was compelled to be one of the guys on the front lines pushing myself to my fullest capacity while defending my country. In May 2002, I began my endeavor by



enlisting in the Air Force, and becoming a part of their elite force as a Combat Controller.

I went through Air Force basic training at Lackland AFB, TX. Immediately following I started a 2-year pipeline for combat control where I received extensive training in demolitions, survival, air traffic control, airborne operations, scuba, close air support and more. I was stationed at Hurlburt Field FL. and McChord



AFB WA. Where my training was on going and improved. I was deployed to Iraq in 2007 and Afghanistan in 2007 and 2008. While deployed in Afghanistan in 2008 I was injured by an IED on 31st Jul and became a bi-lateral above knee amputee. I was flown to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, where I did my recovery and rehab. I was able to started walking at 2 ½ months post-injury and then I started running 6 months post-injury. I stayed at WRAMC for one year and then went back to my unit at McChord WA. I retired from the Air Force 5 Jan 2011.



I moved to TN. and married to Nicole Meadows and we have a 10-year-old son, Trevor Meadows. I am employed and am trying to improve my life and assist other veterans in their adjustment to life after the service to their country.

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## ► OUR STORIES

### GRAND LAKE FUNDRAISER FOR RFTW

By Les “Easy” Williams

During the week of September 14-19, 2015 the village of Grand Lake, Colorado celebrated its fourth annual —“Constitution Week” celebration. The week-long activities included nationally known Constitutional scholars, Constitutional trivia contests, great mountain views ending in a wonderful weekend of activities of fishing, hiking, shopping, a parade, and watching the amazing Aspen trees turn to gold.

This year, as in previous years, Colorado RFTW riders came to Grand Lake in record numbers to enjoy the week-long celebration. Everyone who came pitched in to help set up activities and assist with three showings of the movie, “Honoring a Commitment” the story of PFC Lawrence S. Gordon, missing in action for 70 years from the Normandy Campaign. The movie was shown to over 500 people who opened their hearts and wallets to donate to the Combat Heroes Bike Build to



the tune of nearly \$1,300. Our RFTW group participated in the Saturday parade, riding alongside of American Legion riders from Grand County and the Front Range of Colorado. If you would like a great fall trip next year, the celebration will be September 12-17. Mark your calendars now—it’s a great celebration in some of the most beautiful mountains Colorado has to offer.

## ► OTHER STORIES

### The Army’s Spectacular Hidden Treasure Room

Remember that ending scene of Indiana Jones where the Ark of the Covenant is boxed up and wheeled through an endless government warehouse?

That place actually exists. It is located 30 minutes outside Washington, D.C., at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. The building itself is very nondescript, behind a series of highly alarmed doors and long, cement, camera-laden hallways is the highly sophisticated, climate-controlled treasure room where the Army keeps its most precious artifacts.

The cavernous warehouse is typically shrouded in total darkness. Motion lights illuminate only the areas in which someone is walking

Behind these giant doors lie the Army’s historic collection of weaponry. (Photo 1)

The room consists of dozens of collapsable “hallways” filled with the richest American firearm collection on the planet. (Photo 5)



but



1



2



3

The collection is stacked with priceless items. The entire collection can be moved at the press of a button to create new endless hallways of historic firearms. (Photos 2, 3, and 5)



4



5



6



Another portion of the warehouse consists of endless rows of gigantic airtight lockers (Photo 4). This is called “3D storage.” Every meaningful artifact that has been worn on a military battlefield is stored here (Photos 6 and 7), including Gen. Ulysses Grant’s Civil War cap. There are famous generals’ uniforms and Revolutionary War powder satchels, flags, canteens, and cannons.

But the crown jewel of the collection is the 16,000 pieces of fine art the Army owns (Photo 9). The art is kept on giant rolling metal frames.

The massive collection consists of donated and commissioned pieces. Much of the art was painted by soldiers who experienced their subjects in real life.

During World War I, the Army began commissioning artists to deploy into the war zone and paint the scenes they observed. This practice has continued to this day. Much of the museum's collection consists of these commissioned wartime pieces. The collection also keeps hold of valuable donated military art and historical pieces dating back to the Mexican American War. The art tells the story of America's wars through a soldier's unique perspective. Every aspect of war is captured in the collection.



The collection also includes original Army propaganda art including beautiful Norman Rockwell originals that the Army commissioned in the 1940s. Virtually every American conflict is represented from a first-hand soldier's perspective.

The collection also has a controversial side that has never been displayed—including watercolors painted by Hitler himself. Unique art and artifacts that were seized from the Nazis after World War II are stored here.

But not a single piece in this massive collection is open to the public. Why is it kept under lock and key in a blackened warehouse?



Simple answer: Because there is no museum to house it. The Army Historical Foundation is in charge of raising the funds for the museum. However, there are major fundraising hurdles to jump before the museum can be built. The foundation's president recently told the Washington Post that it has raised \$76 million of the \$175 million required for the museum and predicts the museum could open in 2018. The plan is to build the museum at Fort Belvoir.

*Artist's rendering of proposed museum of Army artifacts*

For more photos of the warehouse, see <http://www.buzzfeed.com/bennyjohnson/inside-the-armys-spectacular-hidden-treasure-room#.hljW8b7eW>

For more info on the museum, see <https://armyhistory.org/>

## **THE STORY OF THE VIETNAM WALL**

Arnie Swift made this video of a National Parks docent telling the story of the Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C. It's 24 minutes long, but worth watching every minute because there's a lot of very interesting information you may not have known.

For instance, did you know that there was absolutely no federal money spent to build The Wall? It was built with donations alone. Also, there were eight judges who had to look at more than 1,400 designs to choose the winning design—and all eight judges, without consulting with each other, chose the same design” Maya Lin’s.. They went through more than 1,400 designs and all 8 judges, unknown to each other, chose the same design by Maya Lin.

Did you also know that the names of eight women KIA in Vietnam are on the Wall? They were all nurses.

Thanks, Arnie, for sharing this with us.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GMqCUyyE3ig>

## **LIFE IN THE NAVY**

A Navy vet reminisces about what it's like being in the Navy:

1. Buy a steel dumpster, paint it gray inside and out, and live in it for six months.
2. Run all the pipes and wires in your house exposed on the walls.
3. Repaint your entire house every month.
4. Renovate your bathroom. Build a wall across the middle of the bathtub and move the shower head down to chest level. When you take showers, make sure you turn off the water while you soap down.
5. Put lube oil in your humidifier and set it on high.
6. Once a week, blow compressed air up your chimney, making sure the wind carries the soot onto your neighbor's house. Ignore his complaints.
7. Once a month, take all major appliances apart and then reassemble them.
8. Raise the thresholds and lower the headers of your front and back door so that you either trip or bang your head every time you pass through them.
9. Disassemble and inspect your lawnmower every week.
10. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, turn your water heater temperature up to 200 degrees. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, turn the water heater off. On Saturdays and Sundays tell your family they use too much water during the week, so no bathing will be allowed.
11. Raise your bed to within 6" of the ceiling, so you can't turn over without getting out and then getting back in.
12. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your spouse whip open the curtain about 3 hours after you fall asleep, shine a flashlight in your eyes, and say "Sorry, wrong rack."
13. Make your family qualify to operate each appliance in your house - dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc.

14. Have your neighbor come over each day at 0500 (that's 5am), blow a whistle so loud Helen Keller could hear it, and shout "Now, reveille, reveille, all hands heave out and trice up. Sweepers, man your brooms. Let's have a clean sweep down fore and aft. Empty all sh\*t cans over the side. Now Reveille."
  15. Have your mother-in-law write down everything she's going to do the following day, then have her make you stand in your back yard at 0600 while she reads it to you.
  16. Submit a request chit to your father-in-law requesting permission to leave your house before 1500.
  17. Empty all the garbage bins in your house and sweep the driveway three times a day, whether it needs it or not.
  18. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every 5th item before delivering it to you.
  19. Watch no TV except for movies played in the middle of the night. Have your family vote on which movie to watch, then show a different one.
  20. When your children are in bed, run into their room with a megaphone shouting that your home is under attack and ordering them to their battle stations. (Now, general quarters, general quarters, all hands man your battle stations.)
  21. Make your family menu a week ahead of time without consulting the pantry or refrigerator.
  22. Post a menu on the kitchen door informing your family that they are having steak for dinner. Then make them wait in line for an hour. When they finally get to the kitchen, tell them you are out of steak, but they can have dried ham or hot dogs. Repeat daily until they ignore the menu and just ask for hot dogs.
  23. Bake a cake. Prop up one side of the pan so the cake bakes unevenly. Spread icing real thick to level it off.
  24. Get up every night around midnight and have a peanut butter and jelly sandwich on stale bread. (midrats)
  25. Set your alarm clock to go off at random during the night. At the alarm, jump up and dress as fast as you can, making sure to button your top shirt button and tuck your pants into your socks. Run out into the backyard and uncoil the garden hose.
  26. Every week or so, throw your cat or dog in the pool and shout "Man overboard port side!" Rate your family members on how fast they respond.
  27. Put the headphones from your stereo on your head, but don't plug them in. Hang a paper cup around your neck on a string. Stand in front of the stove, and speak into the paper cup "Stove manned and ready." After an hour or so, speak into the cup again "Stove secured." Roll up the headphones and paper cup and stow them in a shoebox.
  28. Place a podium at the end of your driveway. Have your family stand watches at the podium, rotating at 4 hour intervals. This is best done when the weather is worst. January is a good time.
  29. When there is a thunderstorm in your area, get a wobbly rocking chair, sit in it and rock as hard as you can until you become nauseous. Make sure to have a supply of stale crackers in your shirt pocket.
  30. For former engineers: bring your lawn mower into the living room, and run it all day long.
  31. Make coffee using eighteen scoops of cheap coffee grounds per pot, and allow the pot to simmer for 5 hours before drinking.
  32. Have someone under the age of ten give you a haircut with sheep shears.
  33. Sew the back pockets of your jeans on the front.
  34. Lock yourself and your family in the house for six weeks. Tell them that at the end of the 6th week you are going to take them to Disney World for "liberty." At the end of the 6th week, inform them the trip to Disney World has been canceled because they need to get ready for an inspection, and it will be another week before they can leave the house.
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## ► VA NEWS

### MIND-BODY TREATMENT FOR PTSD

Veterans are finding relief for post-traumatic stress disorder and other ailments with a program a Tucson VA clinic offers that utilizes a nontraditional mind-body approach. The 10-week, physician-directed program is led by Dr. Stephen Panebianco and Rebecca Adiutori Magnotto, a nurse, at the Veteran Affairs Northwest Tucson Clinic, 2945 W. Ina Road. The clinic is the only one in the nation that offers the program, Panebianco said.

“It was described to me as a nonmedical way of dealing with pain,” said Army veteran Dale Carmichael, who sought help for chronic pain. “I wasn’t skeptical, but I was apprehensive and cautious about it.” The integrative program is designed to increase a veteran’s capacity for internal physiological control and as their ability to cope with stress.

“The goal is to get these vets to be empowered and self-reliant,” Panebianco said. Participants are taught simple meditation and breathing techniques. They also learn about how the nervous system works, how to dial down their flight-or-fight response, muscle relaxation techniques, mindful eating habits and numerous other practical, mind-body exercises. It’s as simple as ringing a bell and asking the participants to close their eyes while following the sound, or it could be taking a walk around the facility to observe the beauty of nature. An exercise can also be as simple as handing out a raisin and asking participants to describe the flavor. The exercises are intended to teach veterans to savor the moment and appreciate the world around them, Panebianco said.

Some veterans who’ve completed the treatment say they have seen a positive change in their life following the conclusion of the program. “I handle conflicts in a more calm and assertive way without being offensive,” said Army veteran Bradley Lang, who has tinnitus — a constant ringing in the ears — after 17 years of firing artillery cannons. The tinnitus worsened over the years, eventually leading to issues of insomnia. “I don’t try to ignore the noise anymore,” Lang said. “I just accept it.”

Belinda LaPierre, an Air Force veteran, sees the program as a change in the right direction from previous psychiatric treatment. “It was an assembly line. You get in, get your meds, and get out,” she said. She used to be prescribed high doses of drugs for PTSD and other ailments. After treatment at the clinic, she said, the dosages are lower for prescriptions, and she needs to take them less often. “It’s an opportunity to be a part of your own recovery,” LaPierre said. “This is something that should be offered to VA’s everywhere.”

The program also offers veterans a support group long after the 10-week session is over. “You’re in a room with 10, 15 other veterans, and it’s amazing how much you can relate to one another,” said Jim Montano, an Army veteran who recently completed the program. “You learn a lot from one another, and these are people that I’ll continue to keep in contact with.”

Panebianco and Adiutori-Magnotto are writing a training manual, hoping it will help expand the program.  
[Source: Arizona Daily Star | Kethia Kong | July 12, 2015 ++]

### CAMP LEJEUNE STUDY RELEASED

If you, or someone you know, served or worked at Camp Lejeune in 1987 or earlier, this news is important. The Marine Corps League recently sent out this notice:

On September 16, 2015, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR) journal article "Evaluation of contaminated drinking water and male breast cancer at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina: A case control study" was published (<http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/lejeune/MaleBreastCancerStudy.html>).

The purpose of this study was to determine if Marines who were exposed in the past to contaminated drinking water at Camp Lejeune were more likely to have male breast cancer. This study is one of several health initiatives that ATSDR is expected to complete in the next several years. For more information about these studies, visit <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/sites/lejeune/> or call ATSDR at (800) 232-4636.

Since 1991, the Marine Corps has supported the health initiatives conducted by various scientific agencies. We are also working diligently to identify and notify individuals who, in the past, may have been exposed to the chemicals in drinking water at Camp Lejeune. For more information about these efforts or to update your contact information, please see: <http://www.marines.mil/clwater/> or contact the Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Call Center at (877) 261-9782 or e-mail [clwater@usmc.mil](mailto:clwater@usmc.mil). Please share this information with anyone that may have been at Camp Lejeune in 1987 or prior and encourage them to register with us.

To contact the Department of Veterans Affairs to learn more about health care benefits, please visit <http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/camp-lejeune/> or call (877) 222-8387 (Healthcare) or (800) 827-1000 (Benefits). Family members can visit <https://www.clfamilymembers.fsc.va.gov> or call (866) 372-1144.

Sincerely,  
The Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water Program

The Marine Corps encourages all those who lived or worked at Camp Lejeune in 1987 or before to register to receive notifications regarding Camp Lejeune Historic Drinking Water. You can register at this link: <https://clnr.hqi.usmc.mil/clwater/home.aspx?aspxerrorpath=/clwater/index.aspx>

## **POST-9/11 GI BILL**

This is the link to an excellent presentation about issues surrounding today's veterans and the Post 9/11 GI Bill. Please forward it to veterans you know who will soon be leaving the service, or have already left the service and aren't aware of the many benefits of the new GI Bill.

<http://wskg.org/education/from-boots-to-books-student-veterans-and-the-new-gi-bill/?c=education>

## **NEW AGENT ORANGE STUDY**

A study published on September 3 in JAMA Oncology is the first study to uncover an association between exposure to Agent Orange and multiple myeloma among Vietnam veterans. The study also showed that US

Air Force personnel who conducted aerial spray missions of the Agent Orange herbicide during the Vietnam War were twice as likely to have a disorder that can lead to this type of blood cancer.

Previous research showing an association between similar herbicides and multiple myeloma examined agricultural workers in the United States and Canada.

Multiple myeloma is a relatively rare blood cancer that can damage the kidneys and other organs, weaken bones and cause high calcium levels in the blood, the National Cancer Institute says. Agent Orange has been linked to other cancers and diseases, including Type 2 diabetes.

The study examined blood samples collected and stored in 2002 from 479 Ranch Hand veterans and compared them to blood samples from 479 veterans who served in Southeast Asia during the same time period but weren't involved in the aerial spray missions.

Researchers found a 2.4-fold increased risk for a condition called monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance, a precursor disease for multiple myeloma, in the Ranch Hand veterans compared to the other veterans.

Of 479 Ranch Hand veterans, 34 of them, or 7.1 percent, had the precursor for the cancer, compared to 15 of 479, or 3.1 percent, in the other veterans.

The majority of people with the multiple myeloma precursor do not develop the cancer, but previous research has shown multiple myeloma is consistently preceded by that blood disorder, said Dr. Ola Landgren, a hematologic oncologist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York and the study's lead author.

Agent Orange contains a contaminant called TCDD, which the Environmental Protection Agency classifies as a probable human carcinogen.

The study found the veterans who'd been exposed to Agent Orange and had developed the precursor had significantly higher levels of TCDD in their blood, making the results of the study ~~more~~ "more meaningful," Dr. Nikhil C. Munshi, a physician with the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, wrote in an editorial accompanying the study. The risk increases as the concentration of TCDD in the blood increases.

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## ► OTHER NEWS

### FULL HONORS FOR MOH VETERAN AFTER 94 YEARS

With dozens of American flags snapping in the breeze, a ~~long~~ "long overdue" ceremony was held July 9th in San Diego to honor a Civil War-era soldier described as a ~~previously~~ "previously unsung hero." The remains of Army Sgt. Charles Schroeter, a German immigrant who fought in the Civil War and received the Medal of Honor during the Indian Wars, were transferred to the Miramar National Cemetery.

Since 1921, the urn with Schroeter's ashes had languished in an unmarked grave with other soldiers at Greenwood Cemetery in San Diego, with no recognition that he had received his adopted country's highest

medal for combat bravery. After a ceremony replete with an Army band, horse-drawn hearse, speeches and other honors, Schroeter became the first Medal of Honor recipient to be buried at the Miramar cemetery, which was dedicated in 2010.

For more than three decades, Schroeter served in the Army and later the Marine Corps. He was awarded the Medal of Honor for a battle against Apaches in 1869 in Arizona. Born in 1833 or 1837 — records disagree — Schroeter immigrated to the U.S. in 1860. In 1863 he joined the 1st Volunteer Missouri Cavalry, which battled Confederate forces in Arkansas.

—It's hard to imagine a more difficult time to serve our country than when Sgt. Schroeter served," Army Brig. Gen. Joseph Martin told the several hundred people in attendance at the ceremony. —It was a time when troops rode for miles on horseback or marched on foot ... a world where disease and the environment were just as deadly, or more so, than the enemy due to the medical treatments of the day and harsh living conditions."

As if addressing Schroeter, Martin said, —@ behalf of a grateful nation, may you find this new place of rest to be the home of honor you rightly deserve."



*A horse-drawn hearse carries the remains of Medal of Honor recipient Sgt. Charles Schroeter through Miramar National Cemetery in San Diego, where his ashes were interred with full military honors on July 9, 2015.*

After retiring from the military, Schroeter lived in Buffalo, N.Y., and then in San Diego. A lifelong bachelor, he had no relatives to claim his ashes after a funeral ceremony by his fellow Masons. The urn was left with other unclaimed urns at Greenwood Memorial Park. —Sgt. Schroeter's remains might have been lost to history — and to us — had it not been for the Congressional Medal of Honor Society," said Dennis Schoville, president and chief executive of the Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation. The privately run society tries to establish the burial place of Medal of Honor recipients to ensure that they were properly honored. The burial locations of several hundred of the nation's 3,500-plus recipients of the Medal of Honor are unknown. Schroeter was traced to Buffalo and San Diego; property and other records were cross-referenced with military records. Through the efforts of researchers at several like-minded organizations, the Department of Veterans Affairs agreed to provide a reburial ceremony at Miramar.

Active-duty soldiers from Fort Irwin in San Bernardino County and sailors from San Diego were in attendance. So were two Medal of Honor recipients from the Vietnam War: John Baca, who served in the Army, and Jay Vargas, a Marine. Civil War re-enactors attended, as did members of the Patriot Guard Riders, a private group whose motorcycle-riding members, many of them combat veterans, often attend military funerals. At the end of the 35-minute ceremony, by happenstance, three F/A-18s from nearby Marine Corps Air Station Miramar screamed overhead on takeoff, as if to supply a respectful sendoff.

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## ► REUNIONS

### Angel Fire

Sept. 4-6, 2015

By Arnie Swift

RFTW tried out a whole new system this year to see if it goes more smoothly. The area where the bricks were laid this time is down by the path that goes around to the front of the Chapel. We also placed eight Medal of Honor bricks again this year—including the only woman to ever be awarded the Medal of Honor. She got it around the turn of the 20th century, but it was rescinded and in the late 20th century it was reinstated by President Carter.

The opening ceremony was down at the flag poles and they also gave out plaques to Bill 'Rocket' Rager and Barbara Montoya for the years of work in planning the Reunions. They also placed a brick of the first New Mexico soldier killed in Vietnam at the start of the walkway. Next up before the bricks started, an Army Blackhawk helicopter arrived with National Guard brass. Pretty impressive to see come in and land, but I have to be honest here, it is not a Huey and never will be. Of course if they offered to let me go up in it for a ride I would not say no. Before the actual brick laying began I was approached by Ken Ward and asked if I would read off the names on the bricks. I said without a doubt, yes sir I will.

Here is how it works. First the brick is delivered to the speaker. They exchange the brick and in a lot of cases render a salute to each other. Then the speaker takes the brick and reads off the name on it trying his or her best to pronounce the names correctly. Each brick has name, branch of service, and years served. Some bricks have one star down by the branch of service meaning they are unaccounted for. Some have two stars and that means they died in action. Hopefully there is a member of the soldier or a friend that came to lay that brick. If that is the case, the brick is passed to that person and the speaker again renders a salute and thanks them. If there is no family or friend then normally someone from Run for the Wall does the honors. Again the brick is passed to the carrier, and render of salute or the sign for thank you is often given and then the carrier and the brick proceed to the location where it is to be placed and is handed to the person there, where another salute is rendered and the person is thanked. From there it is handed to the handler and it is gently and reverently placed in the ground to eventually be surrounded by fresh sand.

Just before lunch the main laying stops and a special ceremony for National Guard personnel is done and then there is a break for lunch. I again was honored to hand out probably 30 to 50 bricks. Really at times it can be very emotional, especially if the person you are handing it to is a young child or a relative of someone who died in service to their country. Lunch again was another great meal, BBQ brisket, some other meet that looked like brats or something, baked beans, all sorts of peppers, homemade cookies, tea or water. I had the brisket and it was GOOD!. Then I took a walk down to the visitor center for another look and to check out the photo I gave the Memorial and to make sure they got my name right. It was fixed. Then it was time to head up for the placing of the Medal of Honor bricks and Dan was part of the Honor Guard. It really is an honor to carry a Medal of Honor brick. The commendation is read as to how the person got the medal and some of the stories that I have heard over the last six years just really tug on one's heart. Several years ago I was asked to be part of the Honor Guard along with MOH recipient Leroy Petry. That was about as good as it gets.

After the Medal of Honor bricks are finished, we are back at finishing of the rest of the bricks. I have already made sure that Dan will be taking photos and have also asked Jenny Ward to use my camera so I can send to Margaret Robertson photos of me laying the brick. Margaret, I think I did you proud. Margaret's husband Kenneth G. Robertson was 'Chappy' to me. He was my first Chaplain to work for and the only one that I ever spent living in the same Quonset hut with. You learn a few things about people and it allows you to get to know each other a little better.

I believe after 19 years of the Run and 10 years of the Reunion I have served as fully as I can. No regrets, no things left undone. Seven bricks laid for family and friends. Tons of rock and material and bricks moved. The opportunity to have done several of the Chapel services and somewhere along the way having made a difference in someone's life. I have been blessed with a beautiful chair that I still have not sat in, a photo I took in 2014 on the Run mounted and framed in the Gift Shop at Angel Fire. More patches and pins and t-shirts to fill a trunk load. But most of all, a family of friends and brothers and sisters that are second to none, even the weird and strange ones. I thank God that He has allowed me to see sights that not everyone gets to see, to meet people and to be ministered to by some amazing people. So why the journey? I may never know what all I was here for, but I feel I was obedient in coming here. That my friends is the most important thing. I leave here tomorrow with a complete peace about the trip.

## **KERRVILLE, TX**

**September 24-27, 2015**

By Sam and Cowboy Mead

September 25th - 26th were the dates for the TX Reunion for all RFTW riders. The evening of Thursday the 24th was an EBBBQ (early bird bbq) at Cowboy and Sam's house attended by about 50 riders.

Friday at 10 a.m. was the raising of the POW flag at the YO resort/hotel. Registration opened at 10 a.m. also on Saturday. Sapper(Claude Norman) and Raven (Cheryl Norman) volunteered to lead a ride through part of the Hill Country, to include a stop for PIE. Friday evening at 6 p.m. approximately 80 riders went to VFW Post 1480 for a dinner of ribs, beans, and slaw.

At 8 a.m. on Saturday, about 45 riders met for breakfast at VFW post 1480. At 9:30 it was KSU for the posted Hill Country ride hosted by Sapper. The first stop was a visit to the local VA hospital to visit the patients. His ride again traveled through the Hill Country on windy twisty country roads, with a lunch stop at Hillbilliez and a PIE stop in Sisterdale. Prior to arriving back in Kerrville, we stopped and a ceremony was held at James Keihl park outside of Comfort. James was one of 11 KIA when Joseph Gump Hudson's unit was ambushed in 2003. Gump spoke on that day and the aftermath.

At 6 p.m. the doors to the banquet room were opened and about 125 riders and guest took their seats. The VVA/VFW color guard posted the colors and Chaplain Fred Master Chief Pentz VFW Post 1480 gave the prayer. In attendance were five members of LT (then) Dennis Pike's family. This included his wife Lou Ann, daughter Shannon, and husband Jamie along with granddaughter Allie and grandson Haden. Also in attendance were two members of Capt Ronald Forrester's family, his daughter Karoni, and granddaughter Lillie. We had seven active duty personnel ranging from current members of the National Guard to a B1 pilot. Other honored guest were a Navy and a Marine recruiter.



During and following the dinner, many of the riders were roasted for one thing or another that happened on the Run. What happens on the Run gets remembered after the Run.

Lil Bit and John Goose Doyle presented Gunny with a beautiful Mission Statement banner and Stoney with the Charlie Mike banner that flew over the weekend. Cheryl, Sam, Hobbit, Pattio, MJ, and Karen handled the 50/50 drawing as well as numerous raffle items.

Jelly Bean was our auctioneer and a good amount of money was raised for one of our families and Spiller elementary school. Dennis Casper (Blinkers) Joynt presented 4 quilts of valor. Janice –Sticthnbitch” Wentworth was presented with an awesome James Avery charm bracelet for all her years of heading the TX Reunion. Our previous year’s Route Coordinator Jim –Stoney” Stone was not only roasted but honored with numerous gifts, including the POW/MIA flag that flew over the YO all weekend for his leadership on the 2015 Run.

Tentative dates for 2016 TX Reunion are Sept 23-25. We are moving the dates earlier in the month to accommodate a larger number of supporters.

To all riders that made this reunion a success THANK YOU.

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## ► PENDING LEGISLATION

*To follow these bills, go to*

<http://beta.congress.gov/search?q=%7B%22source%22%3A%22legislation%22%7D#>

### HOUSE BILLS:

#### **H.R.333: Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act**

Amends federal military retired pay provisions to: (1) permit veterans with a service-connected disability of less than 50% to concurrently receive both retired pay and disability compensation; (2) eliminate provisions requiring a phase-in between January 1, 2004, and December 31, 2013, of concurrent receipt of retired pay and disability compensation; (3) eliminate a phase-in of concurrent receipt of retired pay and disability compensation for disabled veterans determined to be individually unemployable; and (4) require a limited reduction in retired pay for qualified disability retirees with less than 20 years of retirement-creditable service.

#### **H.R.675: Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2015**

This bill passed in the House on July 28, 2015 and goes to the Senate next for consideration. This bill directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to increase, as of November 30, 2015, the rates of veterans' disability compensation, additional compensation for dependents, wartime disability compensation, the clothing allowance for certain disabled veterans, and dependency and indemnity compensation for surviving spouses and children. Each such increase shall be the same percentage as the benefits increase provided under title II (Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance) (OASDI) of the Social Security Act, as of December 1, 2015.

#### **H.R.1594: Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act**

This bill was assigned to a congressional committee on March 24, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole.

Repeals certain provisions which require the offset of amounts paid in dependency and indemnity compensation from Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities for the surviving spouses of former military personnel who are entitled to military retired pay or who would be entitled to retired pay except for being under 60 years of age.

Prohibits requiring repayment of certain amounts previously paid to SBP recipients in the form of a retired pay refund.

Repeals the optional authority of (and instead requires) the Secretary of the military department concerned to pay an annuity to a member's dependent children when there is no eligible surviving spouse.

Directs the Secretary concerned to restore annuity eligibility to a surviving spouse who earlier agreed to transfer such eligibility to a surviving child or children of a member.

### **H.R.2539: Surviving Spouses' Benefit Improvement Act of 2015**

This bill was assigned to a congressional committee on May 21, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole.

Surviving Spouses' Benefit Improvement Act of 2015 Monthly rates are increased for veterans' dependency and indemnity compensation payable to surviving spouses through the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

Benefits under any other law (other than duplication of benefits) shall not be reduced or offset because the surviving spouse is eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation.

Six months after enactment of this Act, VA shall pay to an individual who is eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation predicated on the death of a veteran before January 1, 1993, monthly dependency and indemnity compensation that is the greater of the amount in effect either before or after enactment of this Act.

### **SENATE BILLS:**

#### **S.241: Military Family Relief Act of 2015**

This bill was assigned to a congressional committee on May 21, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole.

Benefits under any other law (other than duplication of benefits) shall not be reduced or offset because the surviving spouse is eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation.

Six months after enactment of this Act, VA shall pay to an individual who is eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation predicated on the death of a veteran before January 1, 1993, monthly dependency and indemnity compensation that is the greater of the amount in effect either before or after enactment of this Act.

#### **S.681: Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act of 2015.**

This bill was assigned to a congressional committee on March 9, 2015, which will consider it before possibly sending it on to the House or Senate as a whole.

Includes as part of the Republic of Vietnam its territorial seas for purposes of the presumption of service connection for diseases associated with exposure by veterans to certain herbicide agents while in Vietnam.

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## ► **BRINGING THEM HOME**

### **RECOVERED FROM VIETNAM:**

#### **Dale Richardson**

The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced Aug 21 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman missing from the Vietnam War were identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors. **Army Maj. Dale W. Richardson**, 28, of Mount Sterling, Ill., was buried Aug. 29 in Mountain View, Ark. Richardson was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, and was the passenger aboard an UH-1H Iroquois (Huey) helicopter that was en route to Fire Support Base Katum, South Vietnam, when it was diverted due to bad weather. After flying into Cambodian airspace, the aircraft came under heavy enemy ground fire, causing the pilot to make an emergency landing in Kampong Cham Province, Cambodia. The Huey's four crewmen and its four passengers survived the landing. One crewman was able to evade being captured by enemy forces and later returned to friendly lines. The other three crewmen and one passenger were captured. Two of the captured crewmen were released by the Vietnamese in 1973, and the remains of the other two captured men were returned to U.S. control in the 1980s and identified. Richardson died at the site of the crash during a fire fight with enemy forces. His remains were not recovered after the fire fight.

From 1992 through 2008, joint U.S. / Kingdom of Cambodia (K.O.C.) teams investigated the site without success. On Feb. 18, 2009, a joint team interviewed witnesses in the Memot District of Cambodia who claimed to have information on the loss. The witnesses identified a possible burial site for the unaccounted for servicemen. The team excavated the burial site but was unsuccessful locating the remains.

From Jan. 16, 2010 to March 11, 2011, joint U.S. / K.O.C. teams excavated the area, but were unsuccessful recovering the crewman's remains. In February 2012, another joint U.S. / K.O.C. team re-interviewed two of the witnesses. The witnesses identified a secondary burial site near the previously excavated site. The team excavated the secondary burial site and recovered human remains and military gear from a single grave.

In the identification of Richardson, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) analyzed circumstantial evidence and used forensic identification tools, to include mitochondrial DNA, which matched his sister.

### **RECOVERED FROM KOREA:**

#### **Nehemiah E. Butler**

The DPAA announced Aug 6 that the remains of a serviceman missing from the Korean War were identified. **Army Cpl. Nehemiah E. Butler**, 19, of Pocomoke City, Md., was buried Aug. 10 in Arlington National Cemetery.

In late December 1950, Butler and elements of Company C, 19th Infantry Regiment (IR), 24th Infantry Division (ID), were deployed near Seoul, South Korea, when their unit was attacked by enemy forces. During the attempt to delay the enemy forces from advancing, Butler was separated from his unit while moving towards a more defensible position. Butler was reported missing Jan. 1, 1951.

On July 19, 1951, a Republic of South Korea military officer told U.S. Army Graves Registration Services (AGRS) personnel about the remains of a U.S. serviceman who died and was buried near the village of Chik-Tong-ni. The AGRS team located the remains. Due to lack of documentation, the remains were declared unidentified. The remains were interred as unknown at the U.N. Military Cemetery in Tanggok, and were later disinterred and transferred to the Central Identification Unit (CIU) in Kokura, Japan. In 1955, the remains were transferred to the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP), commonly known as the "Punchbowl."

In 2009, the Department of Defense (DoD) re-examined records and concluded that with advances in technology, the possibility of identification of some of these unknowns buried in the Punch Bowl now existed.

In the identification of Butler's remains, scientists from the DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence, dental and chest radiographs comparison, and mitochondrial DNA analysis, which matched his sister.

Today, more than 7,800 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously turned over by North Korean officials or recovered from North Korea by American recovery teams.

### **Joseph M. Snock Jr.**

The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced on June 29 that the remains of a serviceman missing from the Korean War were identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

**Army Sgt. Joseph M. Snock Jr.**, 21, of Apollo, Penn., was buried July 6 in Arlington National Cemetery. In late November 1950, Snock was assigned to the Heavy Mortar Company, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division, 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), while fighting enemy forces east of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. On Nov. 29, 1950, Snock and elements of the 31st RCT, historically known as Task Force Faith, withdrew from their positions to consolidate with the rest of the 31st RCT south of the P'ungnyuri Inlet at the reservoir. During heavy fighting the day after consolidation, Snock was reported missing in action.

In 1953, as part of Operation Big Switch, returning U.S. service members reported Snock had been captured and died from malnutrition and lack of medical care in December 1950. His remains were not among those returned by communist forces in 1954. Between 1990 and 1994, North Korea gave the U.S. 208 boxes of human remains believed to contain more than 400 U.S. servicemen who fought during the war. North Korean documents, turned over with some of the boxes, indicated that some of the remains were recovered from the vicinity where Snock was believed to have died.

### **John C. Keller, POW**

DPAA announced on July 10 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and have been returned to his family for burial with full military honors. **Army Sgt. 1st Class John C. Keller**, 26, of Bronx, N.Y., was returned to his family for burial. In November 1950, Keller was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division when his unit was deployed northwest of Unsan, North Korea. The unit began a fighting withdrawal south when Chinese forces attacked their position. After the battle, Keller was reported missing in action on Nov. 2, 1950; however, U.S. service members later reported that Keller had been captured by the Chinese. He reportedly died in 1951 as a result of malnutrition and medical neglect while in the prisoner of war camp known as Camp 5 near Pyoktong, North Korea.

In September 1954, during Operation Glory, Chinese and North Korean Communist forces and United Nations forces exchanged the remains of war dead, some of which were reportedly recovered from POW Camp 5. In December 1955, a military review board declared the remains unidentifiable and the remains were transferred to be buried as unknowns in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, in Hawaii, known as the "Punchbowl."

In 2012, due to advances in forensic science technology and extensive research, scientists from the Department of Defense determined that the possibility of identifying the remains now existed. The unknown remains were disinterred for analysis and possible identification.

### **RECOVERED FROM WWII:**

#### **Stephen Biezis**

The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced Aug 6 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing since World War II, were identified and returned to his family. U.S. **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Stephen V. Biezis**, 23, of Chicago, was buried Aug. 14 in Arlington National Cemetery. His co-pilot, 1st Lt. James F. Gatlin, 25, of Jacksonville, Fla., was buried Jan. 30, in Bushnell, Fla. On Dec. 23, 1944, Biezis and his crew of five were assigned to the 575th Bombardment Squadron, 391st Bombardment Group, 9th Air Force and were deployed to Germany. Biezis was the co-pilot of a B-26C Marauder that crashed after being struck by enemy fire while on a bombing mission against enemy forces near Ahrweiler, Germany. Biezis, Gatlin and three other crew members were reported killed in action. His remains were not recovered during the war.

One of the crew members parachuted from the aircraft but was captured and held as a prisoner of war by German forces. Following his release, he reported to U. S. officials that he had no knowledge of the fate of the remaining crewmen.

Following the war, the American Graves Registration Command (AGRC) conducted investigations on the loss of Biezis and his crew and successfully located the crash site, near Manderscheid and Bettenfeld. The remains of two crewmen were recovered.

On May 27, 1999, a U.S. team investigating World War II losses in Germany visited a crash site near Bettenfeld. Two German nationals had researched the crash site and showed the team artifacts that were found and turned over remains collected from the site. Those remains were identified as Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. Joe R. Sanchez, 20, of Los Nietos, Calif. He was accounted for in March 2011 and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Between 2011 and 2014, the Department of Defense teams traveled to Bettenfeld and conducted operations at the crash site.

To identify Biezis' remains, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used forensic identification tools to include mitochondrial DNA, which matched his sister and cousin.

#### **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Edward F. Barker**

DPAA announced on July 23 that a U.S. serviceman, missing from World War II, was identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors. **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Edward F. Barker**, 21, of Herkimer, N.Y., was buried Aug. 1 in his hometown. On Sept. 30, 1944, Barker was the pilot of a P-47D Thunderbolt that failed to return from a training mission in Papua New Guinea. The aircraft was last seen flying north-northwest of Finschhafen, and all search efforts failed to locate Barker and the aircraft. Barker was reported as missing when he failed to return after the mission. A military review board later amended his status to presumed dead.

In 1962, a U.S. military team discovered P-47D aircraft wreckage in the mountains of the Huan Peninsula in Morobe Province. The aircraft was correlated to Barker; however, the team found no evidence of the pilot. From Jan. 22-25, 2002, a Department of Defense (DoD) team located the crash site, but no remains of the pilot were discovered during the survey of the site. In late 2012, another DoD team began excavating the site. The team recovered human remains, aircraft wreckage, military gear and personal effects.

To identify Barker's remains, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools including mitochondrial DNA, which matched his niece and nephew.

#### **Army Pvt. Arthur H. Kelder, POW**

DPAA announced on July 13 that a U.S. serviceman, missing from World War II, was identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors. **Army Pvt. Arthur H. Kelder**, 26, of McHenry, Ill., was buried July 18, in Chicago. On Dec. 8, 1941, Kelder was assigned to the Philippine Department, U.S. Army Forces in the Far East, when Japanese forces invaded the Philippine Islands. Kelder and his unit cared for those wounded in intense fighting until May 6, 1942, when the U.S. fortress of Corregidor fell, and the Philippines fell under control of Japanese forces. Thousands of U.S. and Filipino service members were taken prisoner; including many who were forced to endure the Bataan Death March, en route to Japanese POW camps, including the POW camp at Cabanatuan on the island of Luzon, Philippines. Kelder was among those reported captured after the surrender of Corregidor and who were eventually moved to the Cabanatuan POW camp. More than 2,500 POWs perished in this camp during the remaining years of the war. On Nov. 19, 1942, 14 Americans, including Kelder, were reported to have died and been buried by their fellow prisoners in a common grave in a local camp cemetery in Cabanatuan.

Following the war, American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) personnel exhumed those buried at the Cabanatuan cemetery and relocated the remains to a temporary U.S. military cemetery near Manila. In late 1947, the AGRS again exhumed the remains at the Manila cemetery in an attempt to identify them. Due to the circumstances of the POW deaths and burials, the extensive commingling, and the limited identification technologies of the time, all of the remains could not be individually identified. The unidentified remains were reburied as unknowns in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, a permanent American Battle Monuments Commission cemetery in the Philippines.

In 2014, after the Kelder family had requested the disinterment of remains they believed to be Kelder, the Department of Defense determined that in order to apply its modern identification technologies to the Kelder case and enhance the possibility of identification, 10 graves in the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial associated with Kelder's loss would have to be exhumed. Kelder's DNA was identified in 3 of the 10 sets of remains disinterred.

### **Remains of Six Identified**

The DPAA announced Aug 6 that U.S. servicemen missing from World War II have been accounted for and their remains were returned to their families. **Army Air Forces 1st Lt. William P. Cook**, 27, of Alameda, Calif., **Flight Officer Arthur J. LeFavre**, 22, of Red Bank, N.J., **Staff Sgts. Maurice J. Fevold**, 21, of Chicago, **Frank G. Lane Jr.**, 21, of Cleveland, and **Ward C. Swalwell Jr.**, 21, of Chicago, and **Sgt. Eric M. Honeyman**, 21, of Alameda, Calif., have been accounted for and will be buried with full military honors. Cook was buried Oct. 18, 2014, in Oakland, Calif. Fevold was buried Oct. 20, 2014, in Ft. Dodge, Iowa, Lane was buried May 2, 2015, in Willoughby, Ohio. Honeyman was buried on June 22, in Trail, British Columbia, Canada. LeFavre was buried Aug. 18 in Arlington National Cemetery. The group representing the crew was buried on Aug. 18, in Arlington. Swalwell was buried on Aug. 20 in Arlington National Cemetery.

On Dec. 23, 1944 Cook, along with five other B-26G Marauder crewmembers, took off from Saint Quentin, France, on a mission to bomb an enemy-held bridge in Eller, Germany. The aircraft was shot down by enemy anti-aircraft fire near Seffern, Germany, near the Belgium border.

Following World War II, the Army Graves Registration Command (AGRC) conducted extensive field investigations and was unable to locate the aircraft and the crew. In May 1949, AGRC concluded the crew members were unrecoverable.

In 2006, a group of researchers from Airwar History Working Group Rhine-Moselle and History Flight - 99th Division MIA Project located the wreckage of a B-26G associated with the loss of this crew near Allmuthen, Belgium and notified the U.S. Army Mortuary Affairs Activity – Europe. In 2007, a Department of Defense (DoD) team investigated the site and recommended it for excavation.

In 2012 and 2013, another DoD team excavated the crash site and recovered human remains, aircraft wreckage, and personal effects.

*Of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II, more than 400,000 died. The number of Americans who remain missing from conflicts in this century are: World War II (73,515), Korean War (7,852), Cold War (126), Vietnam War (1,627), 1991 Gulf War (5), and Libya (1).*

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### **► SICK CALL**

*We wish our following RFTW family members good recoveries. Our prayers are with you.*

**David “Pegger” McDonald**

Pegger was hit by a car and a semi as he neared Ontario for the start of RFTW in May. He's had 10 surgeries and also skin grafts on his leg with a relatively new process using shark skin. After several infection scares, he was finally released in October and is back home in Lake Havasu City continuing with his therapy. Despite his serious injuries, he's as positive as ever and in good spirits. We're happy for your miraculous recovery, Pegger!

### **Gene Melick**

On September 19, 2015 one of our own, Gene Melick from Longmont, CO, was involved in a serious motorcycle accident and is in ICU at Longmont United Hospital in Longmont, CO. I have set up a PayPal donation link on the American Legion Riders Post 32 website under the donation page. Gene is a member of our ALR Post 32 and a Vet himself and dedicated rider and supporter of RFTW. He, his wife Jane and daughter Mary could use your good thoughts, prayers, and financial assistance in dealing with the escalating medical bills. I set up the donations to go directly to our ALR Post 32 checking account and have full accountability to his wife Jane and daughter Mary. So you can be assured the donations will reach the family. Thank you for your prayers and well wishes for his full recovery. Gene was taken off life support October 3 and is, so far, breathing on his own. However, neurological tests show no significant brain activity. It is going to take a miracle from God to keep him on this earth. —Trent "Vapors" Caster

### **Penny Mescher**

Please keep Penny in your prayers as she underwent surgery recently. We wish her a good recovery.

### **Harry "Mustang" Parmer**

Harry was taken to a medical center in San Diego after suffering a very rare spinal stroke that left him partially paralyzed. He was transferred to the La Jolla VA Spinal Cord Injury center, and since being released is in good spirits.

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## **► TAPS**

### **"Cisco"**



Longtime RFTW rider –Cisco" passed away Oct. 12 of a heart attack. He served in Vietnam as an EOD specialist, and rode for many years with RFTW. Many will remember him as the rider who moved around the pack to help whoever was in need. I remember him for his concern for the cagers in the pack. Cisco would keep the cages behind the motorcycles safe from traffic. If we fell behind, he would move his bike in front of 18-wheelers to slow them down so we could catch up with the pack. We'll miss you, Cisco. Thank you for your friendship.



### **Susan Collins**

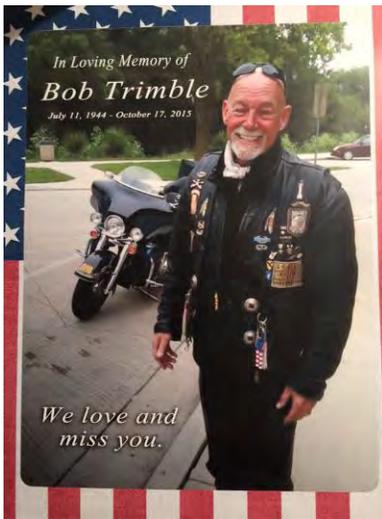
Susan Collins, Assistant Arizona State Coordinator for the Midway Route, was killed in a motorcycle accident on October 10. Services, with PGR escort, will be held October 27 in Kingman, AZ. Susan was dedicated to veterans and RFTW and will be greatly missed. *(Photo: Susan is 4<sup>th</sup> from left)*

### Berlina Mindora

Berlina passed away on October 27 after a battle with cancer. Berlina and her husband, Mike, rode with RFTW for many years as part of the Staging Crew and Fuel Crew, and for the past few words as Ambassadors. Berlina was loved by many for her cheerful and positive attitude, and will be sorely missed.



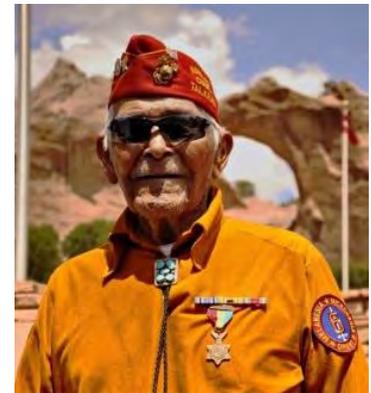
### Bob Trimble



Bob Trimble, Vietnam Vet and long-time rider and supporter of RFTW, was killed October 18 in a private plane crash 23 miles northwest of Palm Springs. Bob was the general manager of Accurate Aviation in Santa Barbara. He was awarded the Silver Star for heroism, five Bronze Stars for valor in combat, and two Purple Hearts during the Vietnam War. His name is on a shadow box next to his father's, Robert J. Trimble Jr., on the wall of the Santa Barbara Veterans Building. He was an avid pilot and aircraft lover, and the purpose of his trip had been to donate various aviation and military-related memorabilia to the Palm Springs Air Museum.

### Navajo Code Talker Bahe Ketchum

Bahe Ketchum, 96, of Tonalea, was among the second wave of roughly 400 Marines who joined the original 29 Navajo Code Talkers. Ketchum's death on June 8, 2015 was just more than a year after the passing of the last of the original Navajo Code Talkers, Chester Nez, who was 93. Ketchum served in the 6th Marine Division from 1944 to 1946 and fought in the battles of Guadalcanal, Okinawa, and Tsingtao, and he was awarded a Congressional Silver Medal for his service.



### Oldest Medal of Honor Recipient Dies



A World War II veteran and the nation's oldest living Medal of Honor recipient died October 17 in Cresskill, New Jersey. Nicholas Oresko, an Army master sergeant who was badly wounded as he single-handedly took out two enemy bunkers during the Battle of the Bulge in 1945, died Friday night at Englewood Hospital and Medical Center, hospital officials announced Saturday. He was 96. Oresko had been hospitalized after injuring himself in a fall at an assisted living

center in Cresskill. He died of complications from surgery for a broken right femur.

Oresko was the oldest living Medal of Honor recipient. A Bayonne native, Oresko received the Medal of Honor from President Harry Truman on Oct. 30, 1945. At 28, Oresko was the platoon leader when automatic fire pinned down his unit. Realizing a machine gun in a nearby bunker needed to be eliminated, Oresko moved out alone in the morning darkness, braving bullets that zipped about him, until he was close enough to throw a grenade into the German bunker. He rushed the bunker and used his M-1 rifle to kill the soldiers who survived the grenade blast.



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## ► CLOSING THOUGHTS

### AMAZING VIDEO OF B-29 CRASH

In 1945 a B-29 bomber crashed about 70 miles off the coast of Japan. It just so happened that a U.S. submarine was right there; in fact a sailor on board decided to film the bomber and caught the crash, and the rescue and transfer to another sub on film, in color. What were the chances of a plane crashing so close to a U.S. sub?!

The entire 12-man crew on the B-29 was rescued. But the sailor who filmed it apparently gave it to one of the rescued aviators, who forgot about the film. It sat in his closet for 65 years until he just recently came across it.

<http://link.brightcove.com/services/player/bcpid34762914001?bctid=672454611001>

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