

The Eagle Times

Colorado FreeWheelers

November, 2004

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, November 18, 2004

Fay Myers Motorcycle World

7:00 pm

<http://www.msnusers.com/RHNWebPages/cfwhomepage.msnw>

Military Veterans, the Forgotten Souls

When I opened up the Rocky Mountain News this morning, Wednesday, November 10th, I got a dose of the real world. Here was a member of Charlie Company taking a break for a smoke from the fighting in Fallujah, Iraq. He is a member of the 1st Marine Division, 8th Regiment. No name was with the picture, but it spoke a loud message to all of us here at home in the states. They say a picture is worth a thousand words, but this picture was a complete book. I'm not sure if it is an "Old Guy" thing, or I have really just started to mellow out and think more about what is going on around me in the world. I have found myself the last few months when I go out on rides, saying a prayer for folks like the fellow from Charlie

Company. How very fortunate I am that on a Sunday morning I can get out of a warm bed, ride to the Village Inn to meet my friends for breakfast, and then ride my motorcycle for three or four hundred miles and enjoy the countryside. While I am enjoying myself, this fellow from Charlie Company can only dream of such events. If I knew how to reach him, he would be receiving a carton of smokes, a trunk full of my prayers, and a long letter with my thanks for what he is doing to protect us all. When, and if, this fellow is able to return to the United States he will be called a veteran of the Iraq War.

This has been the long way around, but brings me to the point of this article for our little newsletter. Each year, around Veteran's Day I make a trip to Fort Logan National Cemetery to pay my respects to friends who were not the ones to make it back, or have died from old age, or other reasons, but are laid to rest there. The last few years I have noticed that these veterans have become what I call the "Forgotten Souls" of our country. Veteran's Day seems to hold little meaning for most Americans these days. It used to be

that a couple of weeks before Veteran's Day, Fort Logan was a bee hive of activity, with thousands of flowers and lots of folks paying their respects to those who died while protecting this great land of ours.

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Time to Vote, Again!

Well Freewheelers, it's that time of year again. After all the brain damage we have gone through on the elections the last few months, the TV and radio ads, constant phone calls, people knocking at our doors, etc., we have to vote one more time.

At our November meeting we will be picking our officers for next year to run the Colorado Freewheelers. We have some good people to pick from, so bring your names and picks to the meeting. There are a number of spots, so everyone can get involved.

I know the nominations I have in mind, how about you? Make your voice heard, come to the meeting, and let your vote count.

Thumper

Photo by Luis Sinco/LA Times - from The Rocky Mountain News, 11/10/04.



A member of Charlie Company pauses for a smoke during fighting, which moved from house to house.

Forgotten Souls, *continued*

This year, as last year, I was hard pressed to find many flowers, and very few, if any people remembering what these Forgotten Souls did for their country. I watched the Veteran's Day Parade TV footage on the news, and there were maybe two hundred people who turned out to watch our veterans march with great pride. The TV coverage on all the channels was maybe all of thirty seconds. Years ago, it was the day's most important news. How times have changed.

On Saturday morning, November 6th, my faith in remembering the Forgotten Souls was restored in full payment. I can truly say that I became very humble this Saturday, and that it will be a day I will cherish for a long time to come. For a few years now one of our members, Bill "Wing Commander" Gillespie has been doing a veterans breakfast at Harvey Park Baptist Church to honor our military veterans. It is his way of showing he remembers the Forgotten Souls. Bill had asked me the last couple of years if I would like to help, and for various reasons I always had conflicting dates. This however, would be the year I would hang with some other Colorado FreeWheelers members to pay tribute to our veterans by cooking them breakfast and showing that we remember.

I picked up Bob "Knight Rider" Norton at 6:15 a.m. and we were headed off to the church for the morning activities, and to help cook breakfast for some thirty or forty veterans. We knew it was going to be a great morning, as Bob and I were witness to one of the most beautiful sun rises we had seen in many years. It was as though we had both been recharged for the day. When we got to the church at 6:30 a.m. Bill had already fired up all the cooking gear, and two of our other members Becky Gillespie & Brian Boberick were laying out all the food to be prepared. As we cooked the breakfast and swapped stories of the week, it was a great feeling knowing what we were doing

for the day. As I looked out through the kitchen, I spotted another Freewheeler, our club chaplain, Paul Reimer. He was there to speak at the veterans breakfast. At 8:00 a.m. the breakfast had come together, and it was time to eat the morning meal. Pastor Kevin Lowe of Harvey Park Baptist blessed the food and outlined what the morning was about. There was plenty of chow for all, and the veterans seemed to have a glow about them.

At the close of breakfast came what I will always remember of this morning. Bill had all the veterans, one by one give their names, what branch of service they served in, and what they did. As each stood, you could see the sense of pride they had all taken in duty to their country, The men beamed as they told their stories. Paul Reimer gave a nice talk on the grave site of the "Unknown Soldier" in Arlington National Cemetery, and statistics of past wars including Forgotten Souls that never made it back. After Paul's talk, a group of young elementary kids from the Elk Creek school in Bailey took to the stage to sing a number of old fashioned Red, White & Blue songs to bring honor to the veterans at the breakfast. The look on the faces of these veterans watching the young children sing to them, made the morning.

Well, that's how I remembered our "Forgotten Souls" this year. I cannot thank Bill Gillespie enough for allowing me play some small part in the day's program. It will be a great memory for years to come. Next year, when it gets close to Veteran's Day, I ask you to step back and take some time to remember our veterans, the "Forgotten Souls" who have protected this great land of ours. To all the veterans in our club, I say a BIG THANK YOU for what you have done for this country, and my family. May God Bless you, one and all.

Pat "Thumper" McCombs

Editor's Note: Echo that!

19th Annual Toy Run to Children's Hospital

An event dear to the hearts of the Freewheelers is the annual ride for the kid's at Children's sponsored by Rocky Mountain Harley Davidson.

For those new to the club, and for the benefit of those who don't remember as well as we once did, a reminder of one of the largest charity events in the country by motorcyclists.

This year will mark the 19th year for the Run to Children's Hospital. Back in 1986 some good friends to the Colorado Freewheelers, Lon & Sandy Uncapher came to our club pitching a December run they were putting together. The goal was to collect toys and cash to help the children who had to be at Children's Hospital for various reasons.

It was a big undertaking for the Uncaphers. Lon loved to dress like Santa for the kids, and they both shared a big dream. Lon and Sandy's dream was more than fulfilled over the years. The first year that a few of the FreeWheelers rode in this event there were less than forty people - total. Last year there were somewhere around 8,500 bikes in the parking lot, with some 10,000 folks at the event.

This year's Toy Run is **Sunday, December 5th, 2004**. The ride, as always leaves at 10:00 a.m. sharp. All bikes will be staged at the Aspen Grove Shopping Center, 7301 South Sante Fe Drive in Littleton. Registration will start at 8:30 a.m. They ask that no bikes get there before 8:30 a.m. (*Right! we know how that works out*). The Thumper will have his bike in line by no later than 7:15 a.m.

If you have never done this ride, the only cost is a new unwrapped toy. The FreeWheelers have always had a great turnout for this event, and I hope this year is the same. Hope to see you all there.

Thumper

Winter Riding

It's been a full year for the club and me too. I made quite a number of FreeWheeler rides this year. I rode several endurance rallies, and completed my 18th Three Flags Classic tour from Mexico to Canada. I guess it's about time to put the bikes up for the winter. I'll need to take the batteries out and put them in a warm place, pour some Sta-Bil in the gas tanks, and put the bike covers on, right? **WRONG!** Just because the ride schedule runs out, it doesn't mean the weather conditions aren't going to be favorable for a ride. The only time I take the battery out of one of my bikes is to put a new one in.

A friend of mine who is sadly no longer with us, Ken "Daddy Rabbit" Kenaston, used to say that winter riding is some of most enjoyable you will experience, as long as you're prepared for it. Electric clothing is nice, but not really necessary. Just dress in layers and when it's really cold, make sure you don't have any skin exposed to the wind. There's something about cold weather riding. I don't know what it is, but I really enjoy it. Maybe it makes me feel tough or something.

When I think about last fall and winter, there were more weekends when I did ride than ones I didn't. Here's an easy way to do some riding this winter. It's called the Winter Ride Schedule, and it's quite simple – every Sunday the FreeWheelers meet for breakfast at 9am at the Village Inn on Broadway at C470. Then, weather permitting, we begin a ride at 10am.

We have had good participation in the ride schedule this year. If we all keep riding just a little bit over the winter, by the time spring rolls around we'll be able to start the 2005 club schedule without missing a beat. I'm quite sure next year's schedule will be just as appealing as this one was.

And if you say you're getting too old for this year-round riding stuff, I also heard someone say, "You don't quit riding because you get old, you get old because you quit riding." So, keep an eye on the weather reports and make plans to get out and ride some this winter.

Wing Commander

Christmas is Coming

The annual Christmas party and Awards Banquet is fast approaching. Here are the details:

Date: Saturday, December 11th, 2004
Place: Boulevard Grille
1500 w. Littleton Blvd. (*Woodlawn Shopping Center*)
Renew Vows: 5:00 pm. (*See invitation below*)
Drinks & Visiting: 6-7 pm.
Dinner & Awards: 7 pm.

Menu

Pasta primavera - \$11.00
Honey-Dijon Fried Chicken - \$12.25
Filet of Salmon - \$17.25
Sirloin Steak (12oz) - \$18.25
Margarita Shrimp - \$18.25
Boulevard's Best (*steak & shrimp*) - \$27.00

Please make your choices & payment by the November meeting.
Chuck & Chris: 720-495-2897

To All Our Colorado Freewheelers Friends

We ask for your presence for the renewal of our wedding vows on Saturday, December 11th, 2004 at 5:00p.m.

The ceremony will be held at the Boulevard Grill prior to our Christmas dinner.

**Please come help us celebrate this very happy event.
*We look forward to your company!***

Chuck & Chris Janssen



Rider of the Year 2004 Reminder

A short reminder to all riders and passengers who are going to make a run at the 2004 Rider of the Year Award. All your data and information must be turned in to Pat McCombs at the November meeting.

This will give me time to tally the points, and get the winners name ready for the awards committee. We are on a tight time frame this year, so

please have all your stuff ready for the meeting.

There are a number of members who could win this award this year, and I hope they all take the time to turn in their points. Who will be the 21st Rider of the year? You will all know at the Christmas Party.

Thumper



I don't know, Thumper. That's an awful lot of yellow.