

Freedom Ride XVIII

BY: Skypilot

What a ride, every year the "Friends of The Forgotten" (which do a great job) get together and have a ride for America's POW~MIA. This year I was invited to be the guest speaker on "POW~MIA Affairs". It was about a 48 hour notice to get ready (of course when I talk about our POW~MIA I never write anything down, I tell what is on my heart at the time, which I believe "The Great Spirit" puts it there). Their person that was lined up had some kind of family emergency, that's how it came about.



We started at "SMALTZ'S Harley Davidson in Eagle, Pa (the whole ride was with Pennsylvania and Local town Motorcycle Police) proceeded to Norristown High School. I saw this guy standing at the entrance with one of those push counters, so right before we were ready to leave that staging area to Philly I ask the

guy "what's the count" he told me "almost right at 700 Bikes, not counting the dignitaries in automobiles". I thought what a great turn out, but found out later this was one of the smaller ones.

We pulled out of the high school lot toward Philly with the Bike Police Troopers in front covering some heavy lateen traffic on a normal day, but State and Local Police cars had roads blocked all the way into "Penn's Landing" in Philadelphia, with out one incident (it was like everyone got together prior to the ride and practiced).

When we arrived at Penn's Landing the ceremonies started with various speakers (which all were excellent) the one that speaker that stood out to me was one of the "new generation Iraq" Gold Star Mothers, who had just lost her son a few weeks before. She read the



"Meaning of what each Fold of the Nations Colors meant", this had to be hard for her just loosing her young Marine, but she only hesitated one time.

We had two POW there one Marine SMAJ from Vietnam and an Army Sgt held in a Japanese intermit camp that got bombed by allied aircraft that mistook the camp for



a fortified Japanese Artillery base.



Earlier at Norristown High School I took this Army Sergeant's family over to a US Senator from Pa. and introduced myself as "SFC Bruce "Skypilot" Donaldson US Army Ranger Retired and State POW~MIA Affairs Representative for the Vietnam Vets M/C, and I had this family and this WWII veteran who was wounded during the bombing and never received his Purple Heart". Then and there the Senator took the Sergeant and his family sat down with them and wrote down all the information required. Well later on when we were sitting at the speakers stand he told me "Thank you, the Senator had told him he'd receive from his local Congressman within the next month his Purple Heart" Talk about a healing of my heart, needless to say tears were shed.



The following month my Chapter holds our meetings at our local VFW and people were coming up thanking me for sticking up for our POW~MIA in Philadelphia. Come to find out they were at the club watching it on National Fox Network (which covered the whole event from start to finish).

Well until next month "KEEP ON TRIKEING" , be safe on the highways and my the "GREAT SPIRIT" ride at your side. As always I ask that you pray for our POW~MIA, their families who wait and all our TROOPS deployed for a quick and safe return. God Bless The USA!

Skypilot



This is for the 79th Field Artillery Echo Company Warror Unit at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. Go warriors YOU ROCK!

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