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May 27, 2008

16TH ANNUAL SALUTE TO AMERICAN VETERANS RALLY & FESTIVAL©

The 16th annual Salute to American Veterans Rally and Festival will be held August 15-17, and return to Winter Park and the Fraser Valley. The high mountain valley will come alive with the sounds of thunder as more than 40,000 motorcycles are expected.

Mission Statement:

For two decades, the organizers of the Salute to American Veterans Rally and the POW/MIA Recognition Ride have made it their mission to provide a venue in which patriotic citizens of the United States may take the opportunity to honor our true heroes: United States Veterans, active duty members of the Armed Forces, POW's and MIA's, and armed service men and women killed in action.

"There is nothing I have seen to compare with over 5,000 gleaming motorcycles proudly displaying our nations colors as they proceed down the highway. Certainly, there are many ways to honor those men and women who wear the cloth of our nation, but in a state which seems to cherish the free spirit of the west, I can think of no more fitting method."— Steven Maas, Rear Admiral USN

The Rally's relocation to Winter Park in 2007 was successful, smooth and a positive move by all accounts. "By moving the Veterans Event to the Fraser Valley, we have gained far more than we have sacrificed," said Jim Wear event organizer. "First, we have room to grow. Second, the riding opportunities are excellent. Third, the community of the Fraser Valley treats us like family. Fourth, our proximity to the Denver population base gives us virtually unlimited opportunities to expose more people to our mission, and finally, we are working along side people who actually get it. The locals understand that unlike many special events and bike rallies, the Salute to American Veterans has a true and honorable purpose. Sure, we party and celebrate our freedom, but more importantly we are paying tribute to the ones who gave it to us in the first place." Wear added, "It's nice to be appreciated for your honor and intentions rather than always being held to the bottom line return on investment."

The Wall:

In honor of the 21st anniversary of the POW/MIA Recognition Ride, The Salute to American Veterans Rally Committee is proud and honored to bring the American Veterans Traveling Tribute to Winter Park again this August. Better known as the [Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall](#) - the 400 foot long, 4/5 scale replica of the permanent Vietnam Memorial in Washington, DC will be erected just outside Fraser, Colorado. The Wall will be displayed at the Grand County multi-use ball fields just a few miles from Winter Park. Volunteers will be on hand with a computerized locating service to assist visitors in finding a specific name on the Memorial. In addition, visitors to the wall will be provided materials to "rub" the desired names on a commemorative paper as a keepsake free of charge. To view the Memorial online go to www.avtt.org.

The Ride:

The 21st annual POW/MIA Recognition Ride© is Colorado's largest procession of motorcycles. American veterans and those honoring our veterans roll on motorcycles from Granby into Winter Park as the finale to the Veterans parade, and are followed by a heartfelt ceremony of POW and dignitary speakers. Local Fraser Valley citizens can participate in this awesome display of patriotism by taking up positions along the parade ride route anywhere between Granby and Winter Park on Highway 40. Ride supporters are encouraged to waive American flags and salute the veterans as they make their way to Winter Park.

The Ceremony:

Directly following the arrival of the POW/MIA Recognition Ride, thousands of patriots will gather together in Hideaway Park for what has become the centerpiece of the annual Veterans Rally. The POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony pays tribute to members of the armed forces from all wars, with a special spotlight on American Prisoners of War, Missing in Action, and those KIA's who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. This one-hour ceremony brings joy, reflection and tears through a variety of presentations, guest speakers, and patriotic music that will inspire the spirit of America in all those who attend.

A few of the 2008 honored guest speakers have been announced and include:

- Command Sergeant Major Daniel R. Wood is the Command Senior Enlisted Leader for North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado.
- Dave Barr is a Vietnam Veteran, noted author and double amputee who rode his Harley-Davidson motorcycle across the frozen Northern Regions of Europe, Russia, and Siberia. Mr. Barr also took a separate 83,000 mile motorcycle journey around the world. Read more about Dave at www.davebarr.com.
- Rod Knutson is an American EX-POW who spent 7 1/2 years in captivity during the Vietnam War. Rod is from Thompson Falls, Montana, and will make his way to the Veterans Rally from Sturgis, South Dakota on his bike. He is a former fighter pilot and ships captain who spent 6 years as a United States Marine and 32 years as a Naval Officer.

Annual Rally features:

- American Veterans Traveling Tribute (Vietnam Memorial Wall)
- Veterans Ride of Honor
- Veterans Poker Run
- RE/MAX Hot Air Balloon Regatta
- CNN Warrior One Hummer on display
- Veterans Recognition Signature Wall
- Free concerts in the outdoor Beer Garden
- Huge vendor show
- Veterans Parade
- 21st Annual POW/MIA Recognition Ride
- POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony
- Aircraft fly-overs
- Blessing of the Bikes
- Sunday Worship Service
- Ride In Motorcycle Show
- 13th Annual Tattoo Competition
- Wild West Gunfight Re-enactments
- Motorcycle only main street parking
- Official Rally merchandise on sale

Here are some new, just announced features for the 2008 Rally:

The Green Beret Parachute Jump Team from North Carolina will be performing several times during the event. "Harmony In Motion", the United States Army's own singing group from Ft. Carson, Colorado will perform the National Anthem and other patriotic favorites at this year's Remembrance Ceremony. Big Hank Brake will return to this year's event along with a back up band courtesy of the Mike's Guardian Eagle Foundation. This group from Utah will be in force at the event to support and honor military families. Learn more at www.mikesguardianeaglefoundation.org

Tentative schedule of events:

Wednesday, August 13

Set up the American Veterans Traveling Tribute –outside Fraser

Thursday, August 14

Vendor set up

American Veterans Traveling Tribute open all day

Friday, August 17

American Veterans Traveling Tribute open all day

Veterans Poker Run

Vendor show opens

Official Rally Merchandise for sale

Saturday, August 18

American Veterans Traveling Tribute open all day

Official Rally Beer Garden open all day

Veterans Parade

POW/MIA Recognition Ride arrives

POW/MIA Remembrance Ceremony - Hideaway Park - 12:00 noon

Guest speakers, flyovers, Veterans memorial dedication

Live music all day

Wild West Gunfight Re-enactments

Sunday, August 19

American Veterans Traveling Tribute open all day

Tattoo Competition takes place – West Portal at Winter Park Resort

Sunrise Worship Service

Official Rally Beer Garden open all day

Live music all day

Ride-In Bike Show

Wild West Gunfight Re-enactments

Official Sponsors include:

Town of Winter Park

RE/MAX International

Winter Park/Fraser Valley Chamber of Commerce

Winter Park Resort

Beaver Village Condominiums

Grand County

Town of Fraser

Miller Genuine Draft

Coors Light

Thunder Press

Quick Throttle Magazine

Law Tigers

Mile High Harley-Davidson

High Country Harley-Davidson

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For more information please contact Pro Promotions at 719-487-8005 or visit
www.theveteransrally.org or www.pro-promotions.com