

Operation Wounded Warrior Brings Comfort to Troops

By Vic "Doc" Moss, ALR Director and 1st Vice Commander, Post 8 Nevada



Operation Wounded Warrior was the first long motorcycle road trip I've taken since my return from Japan four years ago. Unlike the trip in Japan which was strictly for pleasure, this trip had a mission; delivering health and comfort items to wounded servicemen and women recuperating from battle at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) at Ft. Sam Houston in San Antonio, TX.

The injured troops at BAMC are the worst of the worst medical cases needing the absolute best care available. BAMC is a Level-1 amputee and trauma center, and is the premier burn unit in the United States, not just in the military. The wounded warriors who have the misfortune to end up at BAMC spend on average, 30 months in recovery and rehabilitation, learning how to live with the injuries they've sustained. There is nobody more deserving of our help than these warriors whose lives have been forever changed.

Our trip started as we headed out on motorcycles and a pickup truck full of goods that we had collected in Las Vegas. On the way, we stopped in Kingman, AZ to meet up with some Legion Riders who had collected 17 boxes of books and magazines. Several of their members joined us for a partial ride as we headed to our first overnight in Florence, AZ where we connected with the main body of OWW.



As we rolled across the country, we picked up riders along the way, and by the time we arrived in San Antonio, we had riders from Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and two riders who came from Illinois just to join the effort.

The Legion Riders from Las Cruces, NM were a great help to our mission. Besides joining us on the ride, the arranged police escorts in Las Cruces and in El Paso, TX as well as hosting an end-of-run party on the return trip.

Post 593 in Converse, TX became our hosts while in the San Antonio area. The graciousness of the people at the Post cannot be overstated. Members of the Post, Auxiliary, SAL and ALR took great care of us, providing dinner and breakfast for us, as well as a place to stay for those of us who decided not to get a motel room. They offered to take us to their homes so we could take showers to get the road grime off of us. They opened their hearts to our cause. They even taught us a new game, called Butt-Darts (don't ask); a game that may one day become the national ALR pastime (or maybe not).

The items we took to BAMC help sustain their lives in small, but important ways. The free bar of soap they get is \$1.00 that they don't have to spend for that bar of soap elsewhere. The free lap blankets that help amputees keep their stumps warm also help them afford to buy their baby a new crib because they don't have to buy a blanket for themselves. The audio books allow blind soldiers to stimulate their minds. The lady's makeup we took may help a scarred woman feel just a bit more beautiful again when she looks in the mirror.

Editor's Note: This article has been edited due to space restraints. The entire article can be read at our Post Website, www.post593.org

Military & Veteran's Benefits, News and Proposals



By Ross Clinton, Editor
Assoc. Member, VCSOA of Texas

Oct. 1 Effective Date for Air Force Uniform Changes

Washington D.C. - There will be noticeable changes with the Air Force uniform Oct. 1, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley said.

Three changes include doing away with enlisted shoulder board ranks and introducing a new physical training uniform and an insignia.

The Air Force introduced shoulder board rank, originally called shoulder mark insignia, for senior NCOs in 1982. At the time, the Air Force said that was a way to bring added recognition to the top three enlisted ranks. Senior NCOs may now only wear shoulder boards on the blue sweater.

Chief McKinley said many senior enlisted leaders agree NCOs should wear chevrons.

"We are excited for our enlisted force to return to our heritage of wearing our stripes on our sleeves," the chief said. "Now every Airman should be proud to wear their rank on their sleeve."

The insignia change takes place Jan. 1. The U.S. insignia in a circle will be mandatory wear that day on the blue jacket enlisted members wear. The change reverts back to the traditional insignia -- with the circle -- Airmen wore from 1918 through the early 1990s.

Army Launches Our Survivors Webpage

The recently launched its new [Our Survivors webpage](#), which is dedicated to the survivors of Soldiers who have died. The webpage offers resources for families to help them through the difficult time after their Soldier's death.

There is also a helpful FAQ section that can answer many questions families may have in the aftermath of the death of a loved one. The Army Families First Casualty Call Center (FFCCC) is a one-stop resolution center established to assist surviving family members of deceased Soldiers with questions regarding benefits, outreach, advocacy, and support. The FFCCC team is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (866) 272-5841.

Legislation Increases Dependents' Education Benefits

Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Rep. Steve Buyer (R-Ind.) recently introduced the [Disabled Warriors' Family Education Act of 2006](#). This bill will allow spouses and dependent children to access their Survivors' and Dependents' Education Assistance, under chapter 35 of title 38, United States Code, prior to the severely injured servicemember being discharged from active duty. Once the servicemember receives a VA rating stating that their injuries are permanent and total in nature the servicemember's spouse and college-aged dependent children may begin their education during the servicemember's convalescence period, which in some cases may be two years.

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