

# American Legion District 12 Charity Fun Run

For those unable to attend, Saturday December 5 was the Inaugural District 12 Charity Fun Run. Our destination was the Coolidge, AZ residence of Oscar Rodriguez; to observe the Military Honor Wall he had constructed and was displaying in the front yard of his home.

The event was organized by Chapter 91 President and District 12 Lead Road Captain Ernie "Ironbutt" Ponicki. Chandler Harley-Davidson, thru Chapter 117 Rider and Chandler HD Promotions Manager TC Conrad, provided District riders with a launch point and before-ride refreshments. (Special thanks go out to Ironbutt for stepping up and taking charge of the D12 Road Captain Cadre and organizing this ride and to TC for arranging the generosity of Chandler HD.)

Twenty-seven riders showed up at Chandler HD after which we rode in three groups; lead by District 12 Road Captains "Ironbutt" Ponicki, John "Hammer" Weedo, and Bill Pless. (A big thanks to RCs Pless and Weedo for stepping up to be a part of the D12 RC staff.)

We arrived at Oscar's cul de sac to find the street closed to all traffic but ALR bikes, a fire engine with the ladder extended proudly displaying the American flag, and a neighborhood full of neighbors and friends as well as local officials, American Legion Representatives, and a contingent of Marines in dress blues.

I'm told that one of Oscar's Bucket List items was to have his street filled with motorcycles of American Legion Riders, so we accomplished that as well.

After parking, we were able to view the "Honor Wall" and meet Oscar. The Honor Wall is truly impressive and Oscar an exceptionally kind, humble, and very appreciative man. Photos are on the D12 Face Book Page; contributed by Oscar Rodriguez & Family, Ernie "Ironbutt" Ponicki, Tim Derk, Susie Benton, Brad Stillman, Tom Weaver. (Ed: Our online readers can click this story title to visit the D12 page & photo gallery.)

Riders from Chapters 27 and 39 arrived just as the donation ceremony was about to begin. This boosted the District 12 Riders present to over 40 riders representing nine (Chapters 26, 27, 35, 39, 41, 44, 58, 91, and 138) of the fourteen District 12 Chapters. That is impressive! Post 17 in Hawaii was also represented.

The ceremony included a number of speakers and donations from private sources in addition to District 12. This was truly moving ceremony. It meant a great deal to Oscar and hopefully, it means as much to us as Veterans and Riders to see his dreams fulfilled.

District 12 riders were able to donate \$780 from event entry fees. Additional contributions from Chapter 91 in the amount of \$500 and Chapter 27 in the amount of \$200 brought the total to \$1,480. These monies were presented directly to Oscar to help him move his Military Honor Wall from his residence to City property at the Coolidge Artisan Village, on the Northeast corner of Arizona Blvd and Pima Ave. The new address will be 351 N. Arizona Blvd Coolidge AZ 85218. The City of Coolidge donated the undeveloped property so the Memorial could be relocated, reconstructed, and be more visible to all.

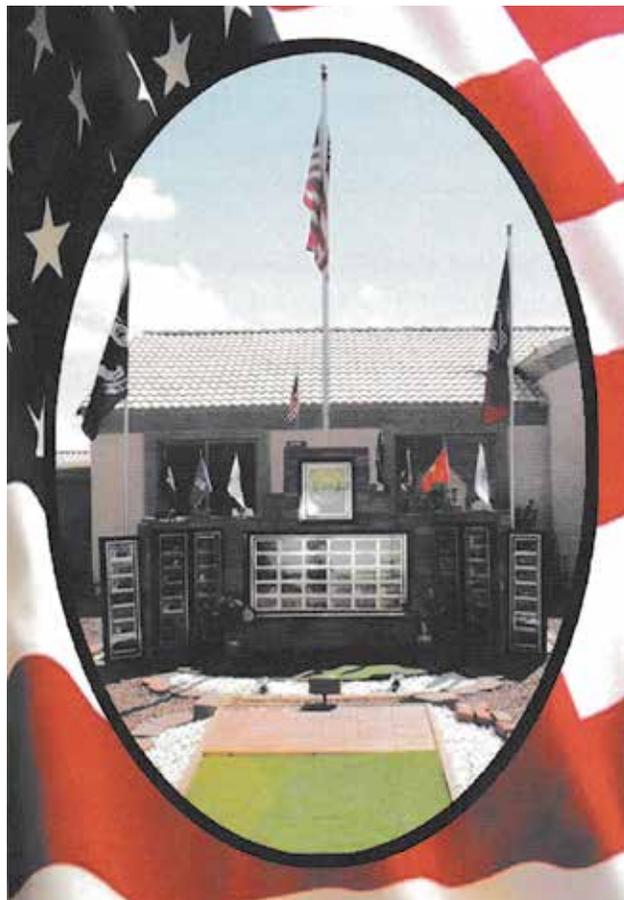
Oscar's Wall will be disassembled in January and moved to the new site. Completion of the new site preparation and relocation of the Memorial is anticipated by March 2016. There will be a Dedication Ceremony for this Memorial on Saturday, March 19, 2016.

The Memorial is incredible. It honors all veterans, living or deceased, from all branches of the service. It includes flags, plaques, monuments, and individual engraved brick pavers with

the names, rank, and years during which the veteran served. An individual "paver" costs just \$15. There is no profit made from this endeavor. You can purchase one posthumously for your relatives. The order form included in this page [below] allows folks to request a paver by mail ~ without having to ride to Coolidge; so they can be purchased by either locals or out-of-towners.

From my heart, I thank each and every one of you that attended and participated in this event. This is what makes the ALR the great organization it is. Thank you also to Ernie 'Ironbutt' Ponicki [President, Post 91 ALR] and Bob "Rifle" Jaworski [Secretary, ALR 58, Ftn Hills] for their additional information for this report.

Ken "Chaos" Couture  
AZALR District 12 Rep  
AZALR Chapter 58 Road Captain  
AZALR Chapter 58 Past President



**Oscar E. Rodriguez**

**213 W. Palm Ct.**

**Coolidge, AZ 85128**

**520-424-2893 or 602-206-2397**

**SkySoldier1965@Cox.Net**

**www.facebook.com/SkySoldier1965**

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LINE 1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Rank and Full Name

LINE 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Branch of Service, For what years

LINE 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit and Overseas Service i.e. WWII Korea, Vietnam etc.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_ Paid: amount \_\_\_\_\_

**Sgt. Oscar E. Rodriguez**  
**U.S. Army**  
**173rd Airborne**