

NATIONAL ARMED FORCES FREEDOM RIDE

Arizona's 6th National Armed Forces Freedom Ride took place on Saturday May 16, 2015. This event is scheduled to commemorate Armed Forces Day and to pay respect to those who have served & are still serving in our military. This is a 'labor of love' for our friend Skeeter, who dedicates so much of her time and energy to its success.

The beneficiary is the Military Assistance Mission. Their mission is, "To provide financial and morale aid to our current Arizona active duty military, their families, and wounded warriors regardless of overseas deployment status."

Sign-in and opening ceremonies were at American Legion Post 2 in Tempe. Activities included the Presentation of the Flag by the Patriot Youth Corp Honor Guard, the National Anthem performed by Ronda Towns, and presentations by Mike Malcom of Buckeye Fire Dept with his bagpipes and Joe Miller and Aurora the eagle from Liberty Wildlife ~ the NAFFR mascot since 2011.

Last stop was hosted by event sponsor Chester's Harley-Davidson, [then] located at 922 S Country Club in Mesa. There were some 250 or so supporters who chose to skip the ride and simply gather at the final destination.

Eighty-five riders made the run, which mapped out at about 125 miles. It was a self-paced ride. After departing Post 2, additional stops were at American Legion Post 133 in Maricopa and American Legion

Post 9 in Florence before reaching Chester's.

The band 'Back Stage Crew' performed at Chester's. 'Housing Professional Veterans Assistance' and 'Discount Biker Supply' each had booths set up. There were 50 donated gifts to raffle off. The Cook Shack was serving lunch; manned by Auxiliary Post 2, Sherrie Grey, Connie Williams, and Penny Southfield Besock.

The ride winners were: High Score Winner Robert Moore earned \$200 & a Trophy. Low Score Winner Dottie Cochrell collected \$100 & a Trophy. The 'Better Luck Next Time' Winner received \$50 and preferred to remain anonymous. The shared money pot prize went to Desiree & Jim Shellenberger, from Green Knights Chapter 28.

Skeeter acknowledges and sends out thanks to all who helped make this day a success. Event Sponsors were Chester's Harley-Davidson, Chuck Franklin Law, 2 Gals events, and Positive Energy Drink. Volunteers throughout the day included the Devoted Dolls, American Legion Riders of Post 2, Military Assistance Mission, Erin Lynn, Chris Bennett, and Debbie Angelhair. Event supporters included Green Knights MC Chapter 28, Nicantoni's Pizza, Arizona Military Vehicle Collectors Club, Linda Dahl Patch Works, and Shooters World.

She also said, "I just want to say 'thank you' to everyone who participated with this event and know how much it means to support our Active Military

women and men & their families in times of financial needs. The funds raised stay here in Arizona for Military Assistance Mission. We are a nation-wide ride/event with 23 states strong that put together an event on Armed Forces Day the 3rd Saturday in May every year since 2010. Our Mission is to raise awareness for those who have served & those still fighting for our Freedoms, to recognize them not only every day, but to pay our respects for their bravery, unselfish courage & commitment on Armed Forces Day."

This year's NAFFR raised \$4000 for the Military Assistance Mission. According to their website, NAFFR Arizona has raised over \$30,000 for Our Military & their Families since 2010.

The 7th National Armed Forces Freedom Ride will take place on Armed Forces Day Saturday May 21, 2016. Learn more about the National Armed Forces Freedom Ride, by visiting the website azfreedomride.webs.com

Whether you attended the ride or just want to get a feel for the day, you can visit their online photo album <http://www.nationalarmedforcesfreedomridearizona.com/apps/photos/> to view some really great pictures.

Thank you Skeeter, for all you do on behalf of our Military and thank you also for your help with this report.

Betsy

