



The High Ground

Fall 2009

...a place for all of us.

2009 Summer Events

The Highground Hero's Tribute Ride



Tom (2009) and Tom (1985)

Sokaogon Flag Raising



New Parking Lot.....
Thank you donors for
your help!!



Hardees sponsored a
fundraiser entitled



Burgers & Bash.

25th Annual Bicycle Tour



The Journey's End

Fourth of July



THANK YOU KEVIN WITT AND DONORS!

9th Annual Motorcycle Ride to Remember



THANK YOU ANDY RUETH, RIDERS
AND DONORS!

People do not pass through The Highground. People come home to The Highground.



Tom leaving The Highground

IN HIS OWN WORDS

It was an honor to be able to ride 1,527 miles around Wisconsin for our fallen heroes. Each stop was welcoming and had a great turnout. Memories made and new friends met will last a life time. I enjoyed meeting everyone along the way, color guards, Gold Star Families, veterans, police escorts and volunteers.

Each part of Wisconsin was beautiful, whether it was woodland, farmland or urban. One could not choose a favorite place. Each location held its own unique beauty.

The Volae Carbon Fiber Team recumbent performed flawlessly (with the exception of one flat tire).

The Highground Hero's Tribute Rider
Tom Kingsbury



Tom with his Support & Media Crew

Gold Star Families lower flag to honor those lost.

A JOB WELL DONE

There are only a few words that describe the dedication and generosity of Tom Kingsbury. Tom traveled over 1500 miles, made 30 stops, and raised over \$30,000 for the Persian Gulf Tribute Committee to be used for the tribute they will place at The Highground.

Thank you Tom for a job well done. The excitement created in the communities you visited will never be forgotten by any of us. Watching you come down the road to The Highground on Sunday, August 9 was a sight too hard to put into words. The time and dedication you put into this ride will never be forgotten by this committee, the Persian Gulf veterans and their families, or by the Gold Star families of the fallen soldiers.

We also know you had the help of a great family. Your support van was GREAT, and getting to know the people behind you was part of the great experience of this tour. We owe a lot of thanks to them as well.

Also - Thank you to everyone that helped in the media van, the stop coordinators throughout the state, the Gold Star families, and other people and organizations that helped the stop coordinators at each location.

Because of Tom, and all of you – the Persian Gulf Tribute will become a reality.

Blessings and thanks to all who had any part in "The Highground Hero's Tribute Ride".

From The Persian Gulf Committee

Flyover by WI National Guard



Tom returns to The Highground after 1500+ miles



It Was Amazing!

By: Chris Wachtendonk, former Highground Staff

What an amazing experience last week was! I can't seem to move too far away from the incredible emotions that surrounded each of the ceremonies! What wonderful people we had the opportunity to meet. Thank you for bringing the very best of you to this tremendous effort. I'm guessing it will be a long time before the high of this ride begins to recede in the memory....

Always...peace, hope & blessings

Highground Hero's Tribute Ride 1500 Miles in 10 Days Raises Over \$30,000 for Persian Gulf Tribute

TOM'S RIDE

By: Paul Knoff

News Director, WCCN/WPKG Radio

It's hard to know what to expect going into an event like Tom Kingsbury's tour around Wisconsin. The sheer amount of miles (1,500+) is impressive, but then factor in the coordination required to have 30 stops along the way, and you have one amazing event.

I was the public relations representative the first two days, and was honored to MC the ceremonies. My co-rider in the lead van was Jennifer Gruba, a counselor with the Veterans Affairs Office in Madison. We had way too much fun to consider our jobs "work".

The local coordinators and Joyce, Kirk, Nancy and the gang at The Highground wonderfully organized all of the stops. Jennifer and I met some amazing people along the way. I was surprised how many of these communities had their own, special veterans memorials. But, though we were dozens of miles from Neillsville, people at each stop would tell us they'd been to The Highground and considered it a special, special place. One older veteran at our stop in New Richmond, a past commander of the VFW and American Legion posts, began to cry as he told me he felt The Highground was "sacred ground".

I appreciate having been invited to help out, and would do it again in a heartbeat.

3 DAYS ON THE HERO'S TRIBUTE RIDE

By: Jennifer Gruba, MS

Marriage and Family Therapist, Madison Vet Center

I had the privilege of being a part of the Highground Hero's Tribute Ride July 31st through August 2nd as part of the team in the lead van. I got to meet so many amazing people along the way and am humbled by Tom Kingsbury's courage and selfless nature. It was an honor to help raise funds for a Persian Gulf tribute, which is near and dear to my heart, being an OIF veteran myself.

Part of my duties in the team was to be a VA/Vet Center representative and talk with individuals/families who may have concerns or just feel the need to talk along the way. I have a great deal of pride and admiration for the men and women serving our country and those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for the great country we live in. It is, after all, a "free country" because of those individuals.

Thanks to all for allowing me to be a part of the team and feel so welcome in your Highground family.

Highground Hero's Tribute Ride.... Days 3 and 4

By: Ted Fetting, former Board Member

After my first day of the Hero's Tribute Ride, it became quite obvious that there was a measure of symbiosis between the Gold Star family members and Tom Kingsbury. Tom was honoring and remembering them and their heroic loved ones, however painful and they in turn, were a great source of strength, encouragement and resolve for Tom. Time and again this lone biker would seem to practically limp into the next stop and ceremony, looking bedraggled and almost exhausted with little energy to continue on. But then when he was introduced to these dignified, low-key and strong Gold Star members who, even with their pain of memory, turned out at these events to honor their own and other's losses, Tom was seemingly re-energized and back on the road with a clear vision and even greater resolve.

Finally, at each stop I tried to give the genesis of the Gold Star and why it still means so much to so many 80 years after the organization was formed by the 25 mothers who had each lost someone in war.

This Highground Hero Tribute Ride certainly bore out this belief and Kirk Rodman, Tom Miller, Tom Kingsbury, the road support group and The Highground staff and volunteers all had a part in this special remembrance and are all the better for it.

FREAKING AWESOME...Day 6

By: Beth E. Martin, Board Chairperson

Tom started in Oshkosh with a 5 hour trip to Wisconsin Rapids. "I was tired and riding into the wind" said Tom. He arrived 1/2 hour after the ceremony and with shaky legs but a strong voice managed to address a good-sized crowd gathered for Lunch By The River. Running behind, Tom got back on his bicycle knowing he would be hard pressed to make it to Weston/Wausau by 3:30 p.m.

Tom arrived around 4:30 p.m. and spoke to the people who had stayed to support him. It was only 20 minutes and he was pedaling north facing long, rolling hills. Tyrone Patterson and myself were concerned Tom might not get to the hotel before dark. Dale Oatman, the coordinator in Antigo asked Tyrone and me to come for the ceremony because all the VIPs had agreed to attend. We agreed. We were on our way to supper when Carol, Tom's sister and support driver, called to say they were within 10 miles of Antigo. Dale Oatman quickly made arrangements for the city police to meet Tom at the city limits and escort him to the American Legion for supper.

We could hardly believe it! The exhausted, wind-whipped rider seen at Weston came flying into Antigo with his support van blasting "Born in the USA" loud enough for anyone within a football field to hear. Tyrone Patterson, the VA representative, looked in the rear view mirror to see Tom coming up fast and going around our van. As Tom flew by, there was only one shared thought in our van:

FREAKING AWESOME!

Keep the Donations Coming!!

Fourth of July 2009

Independence Day Ceremony at The Highground



Folks gathered on the plaza to the ringing of the Liberty Bell signaling the start of the ceremony to celebrate our nation's birthday. Colors were presented by the Neillsville and Loyal Color Guards. Rich Sanders, President of VietNow National Headquarters, talked about the bravery of men and women in uniform and the sacrifices that were made to insure our freedom.

Independence Day is a day to honor our veterans and their courage and remember those we have lost. The ceremony concluded with the reading of names of those who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Flag Raising

They came to honor their veterans.. More than thirty members of the Sokaogon Chippewa tribe from Mole Lake Reservation in northern Wisconsin helped to raise their tribal flag at the National Native American tribute recently...Colors were presented and tribal songs were chanted by drummers as children in native dress danced around the tribute.

The symbolism of their flag was shared by an elder. It was also learned that a member of their tribe was the model for the statuary of the soldier on this tribute. Tony Randall explained how he made the eagle feather staff using immature eagle feathers. These feathers represent the people in the community, past and future. Four white feathers represent the directions of the wind, while other parts stand for strength and teaching.



We now have 62 tribal flags for our flag pole...please consider sharing your tribal flag with us as a way to honor our Native American veterans.

1st Time Fireworks at The Highground

On Sunday, July 5th The Highground brought a pretty terrific display of fireworks to a crowd of approximately 350. As the sky lit up over the Fragments statuary, one could hear "ooh...ah...awesome!." A beautiful night pictorial of each Tribute was given to The Highground by Terri Domaszek. (Come see it in the Timberframe.)

We would like to thank Kevin Witt of Neillsville for his generous donation of the fireworks and for shooting off the wonderful display. Without Kevin's efforts, these fireworks could not have happened.

If you would like to see fireworks again at The Highground, let us know. Volunteers and contributors are the heart of The Highground.

Memorial Day

This is the speech given by sculptor Michael Martino on Memorial Day, 2009 at the dedication of the Fountain of Tears Statuary.

SOME OLD VET

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL of The Highground staff for their time and effort in making the Fountain of Tears a reality. It is a pleasure to work with you all.

The design of this sculpture was not my idea. I came into the picture after the vision and the fountain were already in place. The inspiration for "the Fountain of Tears" came from a veteran who wishes to remain anonymous. So I'll just call him "some old vet".

Using the discipline, integrity and volunteer spirit that he developed in the service, this anonymous veteran continues to make life better for others, just like a lot of you here today. Like you, the job gets done, the need is met. When people ask who? It's some old vet.

The Highground is the vision of another veteran, Tom Miller, who saw the need for a place where people can remember, honor and heal. And like Tom and a lot of you, the old veteran's heart is in the right place. I sculptured the clay and mold was set, but this fountain came from the **heart** of some old vet.

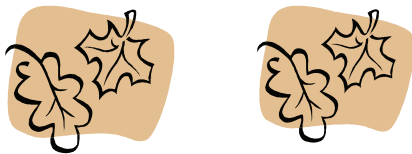
So, some old vet has touched our lives.
Like those who gave up theirs too young.
Even the ones we never met.
All those who **didn't** become "some old vet".

THE HIGHGROUND FORUM

Memorial Day at The Highground

I really cannot express how much of an honor this was for me. In 2000 I did my father's funeral. He was a Battle of the Bulge vet and never talked about it. Now that I have served in two wars I have a sense of what he was going through. I honor him more than ever and grieve the fact that we had never talked much. I am looking forward to being with him in glory. Then we will be able to talk. Until then I want to do all that I can to honor him here by doing things like this. God bless.

Chuck Perry
Veterans Assistance Program



Letter from a KIAs Family

Yes they did make it on Sunday, and I heard nothing but wonderful things about The Highground, when they got back. They thought the whole place was very beautiful. And they were all four very, very glad they went. I guess it was a 3 1/2 hour trip and they said it was well worth it. Our family would like to thank all of you at the Highground for what you have done, to make the Highground such a beautiful place of remembrance of our fallen.

Shawn K. Vanderstelt
Peshtigo, WI

To: Highground-Neillsville, WI

Enclosed is my check. I know much work is being done on the grounds. I don't know if the statue of the Nurse and Men need repair! Our son PFC Dennis Tuinstra is on one of the chimes. June 2, 1969. Thanks to all that volunteer and donate to keep Highground in remembrance of our Vietnam veterans.

Betty Tuinstra,
Nekoosa, WI
August 7, 2009

A Day to Remember

Everybody remembers their own birthday or their wedding day. We also know what we were doing on those days that something special, exciting or tragic happened, such as the day John F. Kennedy was shot, or if you're old enough...December 7th 1941.

This was one of those days. It started normally with the morning walk and a stop at the restaurant for our coffee group meeting. After the meeting Fred (Kieser) and I left to go to a meeting at The Highground. Kirk (Rodman) had talked to us about an idea that he was trying to get off the ground. A meeting was being held at The Highground to further explain his idea on volunteer porch greeters.

The meeting started around 10:30 and lasted about an hour. Then Fred and I went out to the parking area to discuss Kirk's idea. While sitting at one of the picnic tables, Kirk came over and joined in on the conversation. During the discussion that followed, Kirk mentioned that he had just heard over the radio about a plane hitting one of the twin towers in New York. That part was not so threatening but he also heard that there was a rumor circulating that a plane had hit the Pentagon. That sent us all home to discover on the news what actually was happening that day, and rest is history; 9-11 was "born" and the world as I knew it changed.

Getting back to Kirk's idea, both Fred and I thought that the idea of volunteer porch greeters was a good one and we became members.

I have been fortunate to have met a lot of wonderful people during this tour of duty and have come to appreciate even more what our service individuals have done for our country.

Ken VanDam, Retired

Fall

Dear Sirs:

My wife and I visited THE HIGHGROUND Memorial a number of years ago. When we were there, a large bell on a trailer was parked at the memorial. It was a Sunday Morning, a beautiful day to visit such a Memorial. It was an emotional experience for me. Honoring the Nurses, Code Talkers and all the rest. I know of no other site that honors all who served their country. Now I see you have added more. I salute you. When we got ready to leave, I walked over to the bell grabbed the lanyard and pulled. The bell sounded, I think all over Neillsville. Not sure why I rang it but it was my tribute, and it turned out quite emotional for me. Won't forget the beauty of that moment. In passing, I did serve in the Occupation of the Pacific Japan, and Korea, Army Medical Corp. Beautiful Memorial on the Hi Ground.

Paul Zeisler, Waukesha

The Highground...a place for all of us.

THE OBLIGATION

All of us are obligated to something, a sense of duty, financial commitments. The artist doing the Fragments tribute said the tribute belongs to all of us. How do we take care of it? Today we live in a climate that commemorates and celebrates the Veteran. What happens when time erases that passion for their cause? Who do we have to pass the baton to? "A place for all of us." What is our role to insure that The Highground is here for future generations?

Daily we see the visitors as they tour the park and become aware of the need to honor the human courage and sacrifices of our veterans. We hope they sense the need to honor the veterans and their families for the cost of things, the human cost. Last week a visitor wrote in the log book about his visit, "Very Profound". It sums up many of our

thoughts. We need to look to the future to insure that our mission stays fresh and alive. We need to reach out and find people to step forward. We need to instill in the people a feeling of wanting to lift and tote the cause that we now carry.

For that day way down the road when there are no more tributes to raise, the bills will still come in to pay for the basics; the lights, water, etc. Now is the time when the nation is honoring our veterans. Work on the endowment so our children can see the cost of things. The Highground...a place for all of us, will then remain viable and alive to teach and heal.

Kirk Rodman
Volunteer General Manager

GIFT SHOP GAB

Fall weather is coming and we are ready with a large assortment of long and short sleeve tees in sizes S-3XL with prices starting at \$ 12.95. Choose from patriotic designs, eagles, doves or the Highground tree logo in an array of colors... Youth sizes are also available in an eagle and tree design for \$10.95 and \$11.95.

Long sleeve polo shirts embroidered with The Highground logo in Navy and Red in sizes S-XL for \$27.95 will be welcome on those chilly fall days. Our all weather Baywatch hooded jackets in Red and Forest Green in S-2XL priced at \$66.95 and \$68.95 are perfect for the fall season.

Kara's Creations now offers a 25" 3 dimensional pewter and brightly colored wind chime for \$39.95. The Eagle,

Sunflower, Iris and Celestial all play a beautiful melody that is sure to enchant the listener...a perfect gift for a "special occasion".

The "little people" in your life will enjoy our elephant or giraffe hand painted wooden puzzles priced at \$4.95 and our mini mylar kites in butterfly, fairy and airplane designs for \$2.95.

New pins, caps, patches and other accessories are being added to our inventory all the time..For more information visit our website or to place an order call 715-743-4224 or email us highgrnd@tds.net. Shipping is available on all items...

Nancy Rodman
Volunteer Gift Shop Manager

For More Information

Volunteer General Manager	Kirk Rodman
Volunteer Gift Shop Manager	Nancy Rodman
Donation Coordinator	Kay Anason
Planning Assistant	Joyce Witt
Gift Shop	Betty Marksteiner
Gift Shop	Millie Grap
Gift Shop	Joan Stafen
Gift Shop	Kaila Wampole
Maintenance	Mike Purgett

The Highground

W7031 Ridge Rd. PO Box 457 Neillsville, WI 54456
Phone: 715-743-4224 Fax: 715-743-4228
Email: highgrnd@tds.net Web: www.thehighground.org

On US Hwy 10, 4 miles west of Neillsville, WI and 30 miles east of Osseo from the junction of I-94 and US Hwy 10.

Our Promise



In 2003, The Highground made a pledge soon after the Iraq war started that we would not let those from Wisconsin who died in this war go in silence. At all events at the Highground we read the names and ring the Liberty Bell for all that have died from Wisconsin in Iraq and Afghanistan.



<p><u>WE REMEMBER THE WISCONSIN MEN AND WOMEN KILLED IN IRAQ</u></p> <p>Kirk Allen Straseskie Matthew E. Schram Dan H. Gabrielson Paul J. Sturino Rachel K. Bosveld Warren S. Hansen Jeremy L. Wolfe Eugene A. Uhl III Christopher J. Splinter Nicole M. Frye Bert Edward Hoyer John F. "Hans" Kurth Sean M. Schneider Jessie L. Thiry Michelle M. Witmer Michael A. McGlothlin Ryan M. Jerabek Charles Kiser Stephen Martin Adrian Soltau Andrew Halverson Daniel R. Wyatt Shane K. O'Donnell Robert P. Warns II</p>		<p>Todd R. Cornell Brian R. Prening Isaiah R. Hunt Benjamin C. Edinger Ryan J. Cantafio Brent T. Vroman Richard D. Warner Todd Olson Travis M. Wichlicz Donald W. Eacho Andrew L. Bossert Mark A. Maida Joshua Michael Scott Eric J. Poelman John J. Mattek, Jr. Charles Kaufman John Tollefson Ben Jansky Chad J. Simon Trevor J. Diesing Michael Wendling Andrew Wallace Matthew R. Kading Benjamin A. Smith Anthony Alexander "Alex" Gaunky Andy A. Stevens Adam J. VanAlstine Eric A. Palmisano</p>	<p>Nathan J. Vacho Eric D. Clark Grant Allen Dampier Jamie Jaenke Stephen Castner Ryan Jopek Shaun A. Novak Kenneth Cross Luke J. Zimmerman Rhett W. Schiller Jesse D. Tillery Kevin M. Kryst Evan A. Bixler Joshua M. Schmitz Matthew T. Grimm Andrew G. Matus Jon B. St. John II Harry H. Timberman Robert J. Basham Nicholas Riehl Jesse B. Albrecht Tyler J. Kritz Patrick L. Wade Matthew R. Zindars Derek A. Dobogai Rachael L. Hugo Anthony R. Wasielewski Louis A. Griese</p>	<p>Tracy Alger James McDonald Jason F. Lemke Timothy R. Hanson Matthew I. Pionk Keith E. Lloyd Christopher S. Frost Richard J. Nelson Dean D. Opicka Steven J. Christofferson Brian Naseman</p>
		<p><u>WE REMEMBER THE WISCONSIN MEN AND WOMEN KILLED IN AFGHANISTAN</u></p> <p>Robert J. Cook Kyle M. Hemauer Ryan J. Nass Nicholas R. Anderson Patrick L. Lybert Adam Servais Merideth Howard Nick A. Dewhirst Daniel Thompson Steven T. Drees</p>		

LET THEM NOT GO IN SILENCE



The Fountain of Tears is Flowing Today

Honoring

Steven T. Drees, Peshtigo

KIA Afghanistan

June 28, 2009

Stones

Legacy, Korean, Meditation

As we come to a close in our 2009 Stone Placement Ceremonies, The Highground thanks each family and organization that placed a stone here. Whether it be a Legacy Stone on the plaza, Meditation stone in the Meditation Garden shelter or a Korean Stone at the Korean Tribute, all stones are honored and being enjoyed by many who come to The Highground daily. There have been many stories told, many tears shed and many, many more hearts touched through our Stone Ceremonies. We welcome everyone to come visit the stories behind the stones through our Registry Books located upstairs in the Timberframe. We remind families who placed stones here that you can still bring in materials for the Registry Books to share your story of person/group behind the stone.

With only a couple of stone placements left in 2009, please consider your stone purchase for 2010 and get your reservation in early. We ran out of room for our September placements and October looks to be filling up also. We don't want you left out of the time you would like to choose for your placement. Purchasing your 2010 stone today will give you the donation advantage for 2009.

Stones make a wonderful tribute and great Christmas gift. The Highground can provide you with a beautiful certificate to present your loved one on your special holiday. Then plan a family reunion to place the stone together. Make it even more memorable with your own touch to the ceremony.

Having attended a legacy stone placement this past weekend, I would like to say thanks to all. This was my first visit to Highground and cannot adequately express in words how moved I was by the sacredness of the park and the feeling of oneness with all those present to honor their veteran. The ceremony is perfect, the place is perfect, thank you so much for creating a place where we can remember, reflect and honor those who have served. I will return and continue to make donations to this great place. ----Terry and Joanne Jones (Present to Honor Thomas Davies)



Legacy Stone Placement
August 22, 2009

I just want to say what a wonderful and meaningful ceremony this was. A comment was made by one of our daughters saying how it made her rethink about how important these men are and how wonderful our freedom is. Thanks to all who make this beautiful Veterans Park and Legacy Stones possible. God's Blessings to all.
----Caroline Helm



Legacy Stone Placement

To All the Volunteers who gave of your time to make July 18th 2009 a very special and memorable day! Thank you for all that you do. It is very much appreciated.
Lots of Love
Jim & Ardy Olson



Korean Stone Placement
June 13, 2009



2010 Placement Dates

<u>Legacy Stone Placements</u>	
April 17 at 1 pm	May 15 at 1 pm
June 12 at 9:30 am	July 17 at 9:30 am
August 28 at 9:30 am	September 11 at 1 pm
October 2 at 9:30 am and 2 pm	

<u>Korean Stone Placement</u>
June 12 at 1:00 pm
<u>Meditation Stone Placement</u>
September 11 at 9:30 am

Events Happening Around The Highground & Beyond

September 12---WWII Chair Dedication & Meditation Stone Placement 9:30am
Legacy Stone Placement 1:00pm & 3:30pm

September 15--Diversity Day 9:00am - 3:00pm
Grades: 3rd through 8th

October 3--Chili Cook off
--Car show
--Legacy Stone Placement 9:30am & 2:00pm

October 6-7--Clark County 5th grade Education Days

November 11--Veteran's Day Celebration 3:00pm
Bring your color guards

The Highground Wish List

- 6 ft tables: Need 3 more @ \$56! Thanks for 9!
- Korean Tribute Bollards: Need 2 @ \$414 each.
- 8 ft & 12 ft fiberglass ladders: Thanks
- Trailhead signs: 2 @ \$360 each.
- Picnic tables with plaques: 3 @ \$250 each. Thanks for 15!
- Metal benches for Native American Tribute: 2 @ \$1292
- Replacement batteries for electric wheelchair: Thanks.
- Railroad ties for West Trail: 24 @ \$10 each.
- Gravel for West Trail upgrade: 6 loads @ \$138 each.
- Printing newsletter in color: 4 shares @ \$100 each.
- 7200 Newsletter subscriptions needed: \$25 each.
- Spring fertilizer, Grass Seed, Flowers: Thanks.
- Vacuum cleaner: Thanks.
- Sod for Meditation Garden: 75 rolls @ \$3.00 each.
- Heavy Duty plastic leaf rakes: 6 @ \$15 each. Thanks
- Plumber to retro fit bunker hook-up.
- 5 new convertible trail benches: \$175 each. Thanks
- Additional sign for forest tour: \$125.
- Spirea Bushes to replace damaged ones: 25 @ \$21 each.
- Audio Tour equipment: 25 @ \$200 each. Thanks
- Green Mountain Boxwood: 15 @ \$18 each.
- Mileage funds for Taps Player: \$150
- Weed trimmer: 1 @ \$170
- Fiberglass Scoop Shovels: 8 @ \$20 each
- Upper & Lower Parking Lot Paving: \$25,000/\$100 per share
- WWII area shrubs: 6 @ \$40 each
- 5' Snow blade for mule with lift: \$1250
- 32" Snowblower: \$1600
- Books for PTSD counseling group tours: \$600 a month
- Cement planters for plaza: 1 @ \$800. Thanks for 2.
- Projection screen for presentations: \$150
- Bullet-shaped pavers to outline Fountain of Tears: \$115
- Upholstery repair volunteer to fix wheelchair pads

Saturday, October 10, 2009
2 - 6 p.m.
Bugg's Place
925 N Concord
South St. Paul, MN 55075
Any questions call John Lynch 651-459-1310

*Food, Live Music "Classic Rockers",
Silent Auction, Pull Tabs and More*

We are requesting donations for the benefit, such as:

CASH - make checks to VVA Chapter 639

Jackets	Mugs
Gift Certificates	Hats
Sweatshirts	T-shirts

Anything else you are willing to donate
We also request your presence at the benefit

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE
ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE HIGHGROUND
VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

Friends of The Highground

The Highground is a grass-roots, non-profit, 501 (c)3 organization that does not receive any ongoing federal or state funding. We have a very small operating budget and only exist because of the hearts and hands of hundreds of volunteers and contributors who continue to give generously of their time, talents, and personal/financial resources. Please accept my donation of \$ _____.
I would like the gift to be used for:

_____ And/or
Newsletter subscription, \$25

Please send me information about:

- _____ Upcoming Highground events
- _____ A Legacy Stone on the walkway
- _____ A Meditation Stone in the Garden
- _____ A Korean Tribute Stone on the rice paddies
- _____ Volunteer opportunities
- _____ Visionaries and Immortals Endowment fund

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

The Highground, W7031 Ridge Rd,
Neillsville, WI 54456 Fall 2009

Porch Greeters Needed! Only 4 hours a month! Call for more information.

The Journeys End

The weather was mediocre but the feelings in the air were anything but, as we gathered to welcome home the 25th Annual Bicycle Tour and The Highground Hero's Tribute Rider, Tom Kingsbury.

"We're so grateful someone is doing this to honor our deceased"...from a Gold Star Mother and other Gold Star Families there to welcome and honor the bikers. Being here at The Highground helps them to feel empathy and stay connected in so many ways. "To honor our son and keep his memory alive" from another Gold Star Mother.

As I wandered, I noticed a couple touring the Korean Tribute and waited to chat with them until later on the plaza and asked why they were here. "To support Tom Kingsbury." They had met him last weekend while on their cycles, became acquainted, rode with him, struck up a friendship and joined him again this weekend. They recanted that he (Tom) was spending many miles alone on his tour with only his support van for company... that's why they joined him. Much later I saw the three of them together, their warm farewells...two vets connecting in a new way.

I decided to go where the real action was – the wayside where all the routes were gathering to ride onto The Highground together. I immediately felt a totally different atmosphere...the high spirits of camaraderie, togetherness, feelings of a job well done, people high on life and connected, congratulating each other. From those riding for the 24th year to 1st timers, the reasons for participating had many similarities. "It's fun, it's challenging, it's a family reunion."

Tom Kingsbury said he hoped he had raised the \$30,000, hoped everyone had fun, a challenge or a few thrills. He says he had it all!

I spent a few minutes with a beautiful lady biker (one of The Highground's very special volunteers) carrying roses to be placed on her husband's and a friend's Legacy Stones. Her way to honor them was riding the bike tour for the 20th time. She said "we have fun and our job is easy compared to the fallen (heroes) that we're riding to honor."

By: Lauralee Carlson, Volunteer

Ride to Remember August 14-15, 2009



*Honoring
Persian Gulf
Heroes*

9th Annual Ride to Remember "Honoring Persian Gulf Heroes"

By: Bob Berglund

The Ride to Remember is really very simple. A gathering on Friday night begins the weekend event. Here speakers remind us of what sacrifices the military have made and how important such a place as The Highground is to them. The names of the fallen in Afghanistan and Iraq are read along with the ringing of the Liberty Bell. On Saturday there are guided rides of one or two hours on Clark County roads. Be the weather sunny or wet, the rides have many participants. It's a great time to see rolling fields, abundant crops and Amish children out in their farmyards doing chores as well as the occasional horse and buggy on the road. When all this is done, a parade through Neillsville to The Highground takes place. The best part of this is arriving at The Highground and being met by color guards at attention and saluting the riders. Keeping a dry eye to see the road ahead is difficult. After a ceremony to honor the biker fundraisers themselves, a circle is formed where all can speak their inner thoughts. Lastly, volunteers provide a picnic for all the participants. We thank them for the food, but surprisingly it is those volunteers who thank us for our dedication to The Highground.

Let us know your thoughts - email us at: highgrnd@tds.net

25th Anniversary Bicycle Tour

**Bicycle Tour
Fundraising
Total:
\$43,152
THANK
YOU!!!**



Northern Route:
Top Fundraisers!

Way to Ride!



Reading of ALL
Vietnam KIAs (and
KIAs since Vietnam)
1527 names! Thank
you Russ Iwen and
Wilford "Twiggy"
Johnson!

Tom Miller
Welcomes
riders onto The
Highground.



9th Annual Motorcycle Tour

**Motorcycle Rally
Raises:
\$10,246
THANK YOU!!**



Motorcycles procession from
WCCN to The
Highground.

A record 161
bikes!



Cycles line the Plaza
Parking Lot

DMZ join the
Ride from
southern WI.



Volunteers and Contributors are the Heart of The Highground.



W7031 Ridge Rd.
Neillsville, WI 54456



VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION
3:00PM
Help us honor veterans on Veterans Day
with your Color Guards!!

FALL CLEAN UP DAYS
October 28-29, 2009
Volunteers Needed
Bring your gloves and rakes!

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park

Diversity Day

Tuesday, September 15, 2009
9:00 am - 2:30 pm

Our Mission and Objective:

- To celebrate our similarities and differences
- To recognize misinformation
- To claim pride in group identity
- To understand the personal impact of discrimination through the telling of stories.
- To learn hands-on tools for dealing effectively with discriminating comments and behavior

Students in grades 3 through 12 are invited to discover independent living for people with disabilities, explore new cultural traditions, and learn a little something about respect, duty, honor, and country on The Highground Tour.

Contact: 715-743-4224
Cost: \$3.00 per person
Lunch: not included

Participants may bring their own sack lunch and use the picnic areas in the park.

The High Ground

5TH Annual Car Show

October 3, 2009
10 am - 3 pm
\$8.00 donation for car and driver -
Dash plaques to the first 100 entries

Show and shine

rain or shine

Volunteers and Contributors are the Heart of the Highground
All donations to the Highground are tax-deductible.

The High Ground

CHILI COOK-OFF

Saturday October 3, 2009
10:30 am

Participants needed to make an 18qt roaster of chili.

Park visitors purchase a bowl to taste & one voting ticket for \$5.00.

Judges top 3 and popular vote winners announced at 12:00 noon.

Participants should pre-register by September 22nd by calling 715-743-4224

Four Color printing sponsors needed for next newsletter at \$100 each.