

VFW National Home for Children

Press Release

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VFW Riders thundered into the National Home for a 4th of July Celebration

Eaton Rapids, Mich. – The memory of a dear friend and a desire to help others fueled the first annual John Fair Memorial Ride for the Kids. On July 4, VFW Riders from across the country rumbled into the campus of the VFW National Home for Children. The ride was a nationwide effort to increase awareness of the National Home.

The ride's humble beginnings stemmed from a few individuals' desire to honor their friend John Fair. Ride Commander Bill Pratt and others desired to create an event that captured the essence of Fair. They settled on two of Fair's favorites; motorcycles and veterans and their families. As a result, a cross-country fundraising ride for the National Home was born.

Pratt worked, cajoled, and corralled VFW Riders from across the country to join his efforts. He recruited Posts along the route to help with camping and meals along the way. At every stop, he made sure he spread the word about the families of veterans being helped every day at the National Home thanks to the generous spirit of the VFW and its Ladies Auxiliary.

67 individuals, 37 motorcycles, and 7 follow vehicles made the trek to the National Home campus in the first Annual Ride for the Kids. Their efforts raised more than \$28,000 for the National Home. Riders from Texas, Virginia, Louisiana, Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan joined the event.

Karen Fair, the guest-of-honor and John Fair's widow, passionately spoke of his last days and the dedication and commitment he had to his VFW family even in the face of a terrible battle with cancer. Several buddies who served in Vietnam with John Fair accompanied her to pay tribute to their friend.

The event was also attended by past Commander-in-Chief Jim Goldsmith, representing National, who was impressed with the turnout and proud of the hard work done on behalf of the National Home. National Home Board Trustee Roy Ator also said a few words on behalf of his friend, John Fair, and thanked all the men and women present for their commitment to supporting the National Home.

The first annual Memorial Ride for Kids was a great success. Next year's Memorial Ride for the Kids Ride Commander is Randy Schilling from Virginia. The National Home is looking forward to welcoming the group again next year.

Since 1925 the VFW National Home for Children has provided Help, Hope and Honor for the children and families of our nation's military and veterans. For more information please call (517) 663-1521, toll-free at (800) 424-8360 or visit www.vfnationalhome.org

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Help ★ Hope ★ Honor



Executive Director Patrice Green, Ride Commander Bill Pratt and National Home District 10 Trustee Roy Ator.