



Official Publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc. • March 2014 • No. 116

## 68th Merrill's Marauders Reunion

*August 28-August 31, 2014*

*Hosted by the Merrill's Marauders Proud Descendants  
in honor of their beloved Burma heroes*

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This year's Friday morning excursion at 9 a.m. will be a guided tour at the Harley Davidson Museum beginning at 9:30 a.m.,

then we depart the museum at 11 a.m. We arrive at Lakefront Brewery at 11:20; our tour starts at 11:30. After the tour (about 45 minutes) which includes four 6oz samples of root beer that they make and a souvenir pint glass, we have lunch. We depart the brewery at 2:30 p.m. for a 3 p.m. return to the hotel. Our sincere thanks to Gary and Rudy Binter for their generosity in

paying for the two tours and lunch, but you will have to pay the \$15 for the bus fare. As usual, Marauders get a free bus ride. Please plan your arrival to take the tour, and let us know if you plan to take the tour, since we have to arrange for the bus (limited to 48 guests) and the purchase of tickets. It may not be possible to accommodate last minute decisions to join us. ☘



Scott Walker

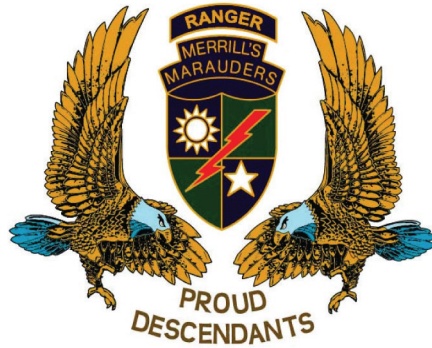
## Wisconsin Governor to be 68th Reunion Speaker

Merrill's Marauders Proud Descendants are honored to have Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker join us to speak at our Saturday dinner.

Scott Walker grew up in a small town called Delavan. The son of a pastor, Scott had the spirit of service instilled in him at an early age. He was involved in sports, band, church, and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout.

*(see Wisconsin Governor, page 2)*

# A Message from the MMPD President



Chill, friends! At least that's what most of us are doing. Here in the Northeast where I live we've been enduring record cold weather and way above average snowfalls. I'm sure that so many of you are experiencing similar grief so let me give you something to look forward to.

Harleys and beer.

We're going to Milwaukee, my brothers and sisters, home of Harley-Davidson and *Laverne and Shirley* the TV girls who worked at a Milwaukee brewery.

The 2014 reunion at the Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel of course will feature the normal good stuff like pictures of the past and conversing with the Marauders in attendance and getting to see each other for the first time in a year, but this year we also will be treated to tours of the Harley-Davidson Museum and the Lakefront Brewery.

Even if you're not a motorcycle fan, getting to see the history and actual bikes of the one of the most

successful and game-changing companies in American industrial history will be exciting. Examples of the first motorcycles of 1903, which were not much more than a bicycle with a motor attached and changes throughout the years, including the World War models and up to present day iron beasts will be eye-popping.

Hey, I'll get to see where my own Harley came from!

And then it's beer and lunch time! Don't worry; they also have root beer there too. A tour of an actual Milwaukee Brewery followed by lunch (Brats maybe!) and there you have a day that will wipe away all memories of this horrid winter we've been having.

I don't know about you, but I can hardly wait to see Harley's, beer, my Marauder Heroes and all of my brothers and sisters that are Proud Descendants of the greatest of our Veterans.

Please come!

— Bob Menta, Pres. MMPD

## **Don't Miss It! Friday Reunion Excursion**

Milwaukee is the home of Harley Davidson Motorcycles so we are headed to the Harley Museum for a guided tour. The museum has more than 450 historic motorcycles and thousands of artifacts from the Motor Company's 110-year history. There are 10 bikes that visitors can sit on so bring your camera.

Next we're off to one of Milwaukee's craft breweries, Lakefront Brewery for a tour and lunch. You will also receive a souvenir beer mug.

Nothing is more Milwaukee than beer and Harley's, so be one of the first 48 people to sign up for the excursion or you'll miss out on a great Milwaukee experience. 🌟

(Wisconsin Governor, from page 1)

While in high school, Scott was selected to attend the American Legion's Badger Boys State program. There, he was picked as one of two representatives from Wisconsin to Boys Nation in Washington, D.C. Both of these programs teach young men about the virtues of the American form of government and the protection of freedom. The experience opened Scott's eyes to public service.

On January 3, 2011, Scott Walker was inaugurated as Wisconsin's 45th Governor. Scott is married to Tonette and have two sons—Matt, a sophomore in college; and Alex, a freshman in college.

We are very grateful that Scott Walker is coming to honor our Marauders. 🌟

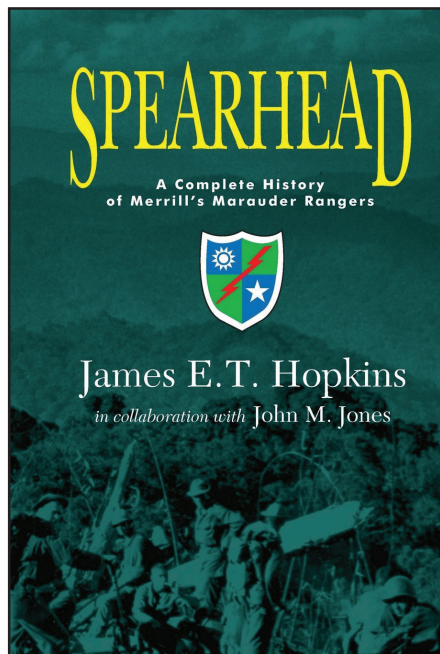
### **EDITORS NOTE:**

A few years ago, we—that is, me—had decided to end my publishing the Merrill's Marauders Newsletter, *The Burman News*. At that time, a Proud Descendant, Sheila Fredrickson, an independent publisher herself, offered to help. Sheila's invaluable help enabled us to continue for a few more years. Now even with Sheila's help, the time has come to end my involvement in the newsletter. Therefore, this next August issue, will be my last issue of the newsletter.

Publishing the newsletter has been a wonderful undertaking which I enjoyed. I am thankful for all the people I have corresponded with. I wish to thank all the good friends that helped support the newsletter over the years, with their invaluable donations. God bless you all.

—Robert Passanisi



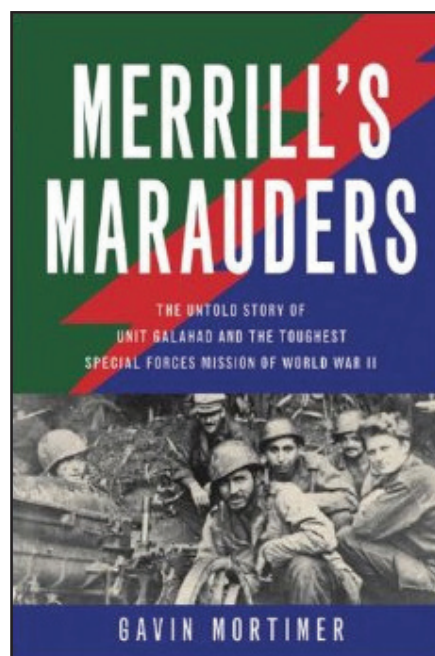


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**70th Anniversary  
Memorial Service  
May 23, 2014**

Four years ago on the 15 of July 2010, we attended a burial ceremony at Arlington Cemetery in Washington, DC. for seven airman that had been missing for sixty years. They were to deliver supplies to Merrill’s Marauders, and crashed north of Myitkyina on May 23, 1944. The seven missing

airman were identified as; Capt. Joseph M. Olbinski, Chicago, Ill.; 1st Lt. Joseph J. Auld, Floral Park, N.Y.; 1st Lt. Robert M. Anderson, Millen, Ga.; Tech. Sgt. Clarence E. Frantz, Tyrone, Penn.; Pfc. Richard M. Dawson, Haynesville, Va.; Pvt. Robert L. Crane, Sacramento, Calif.; and Pvt. Fred G. Fagan, Piedmont, Ala.; all U.S. Army Air Forces. Three of these men Pfc. Richard M. Dawson, Pvt. Robert L. Crane, and Pvt. Fred G. Fagan, were original Marauders that were



**Center, Robert Crane**

assigned to the 4th troop Carrier Squadron, to assist with the (see *Memorial Service*, page 7)

# Merrill's Marauders 2014 Reunion

## Hosted by Merrill's Marauders Proud Descendants

### August 28 – 31, 2014 – Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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

Spouse/Companion(s): \_\_\_\_\_

MARAUDER or Relationship to: \_\_\_\_\_ BN: \_\_\_\_\_ Co.: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please list all names, addresses and relationship to Marauder of all attending.***

Make Checks Payable To: Merrill's Marauder Proud Descendants (MMPD)

Mail To: Jerrie Daly, 4373 Victor Path #1, Hugo, MN 55038

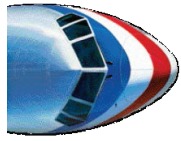
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**Room Reservations Call:** Crowne Plaza Milwaukee Airport, 6401 S. 13th Street, Milwaukee, WI 53221. Please reserve your room/s directly with the hotel by calling at 414-764-5300 or toll-free at 1-800-227-6963 and referencing Merrill's Marauders Proud Descendants. Rates are \$99 + tax per night. Rooms accommodate up to 4 guests. To make online reservations use the code **MMA** in the Group Code box. <http://www.cpmilwaukeeairporthotel.com>

**Rates are good up to noon August 6, 2014.** Reservations made after that date are subject to availability. Rates are good 3 days pre and post reunion dates. All meal packages include Friday and Saturday Dinner and Saturday and Sunday Buffet Breakfast. All meal packages include Friday and Saturday Dinner and Saturday and Sunday Buffet Breakfast.

| ACTIVITY  | NUMBER ATTENDING | PRICE PER PERSON             | TOTAL |
|---|------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| MEALS – Adults<br><input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian           |                  | \$115                        |       |
| MEALS – Kids 4-12 years<br><input type="checkbox"/> Vegetarian  |                  | \$65                         |       |
| Harley-Davidson/Milwaukee Brewery Tour & Lunch — Friday AM      |                  | Paid for by a PD Member      |       |
| Tour bus fee to Harley-Davidson & Milwaukee Brewery — Friday AM |                  | \$15, Marauders are FREE     |       |
| Ladies Reception — Saturday                                     |                  | No Charge                    |       |
| Men's Gathering — Saturday                                      |                  | No Charge                    |       |
| <b>Donation</b>   |                  | Suggested \$25/per household |       |
| <b>TOTAL DUE</b>  |                  |                              |       |

Visit the website at <http://merrillsmarauderspd.org>



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## From the Adjutant, Milwaukee Police Post 415 Honor Guard

Let me begin by stating it is a distinct honor for Milwaukee Police Post 415, The American Legion to present colors for this austere group. Being well versed in the historical value Merrill's Marauder's brought to the WWII fight for freedom causes us to humbly perform these duties with all due respect.

Our Legion Post was chartered in 1939 and from then until the 1980s we were; declared by city ordinance, the official Honor Guard for all City of Milwaukee ceremonies. With the inception of the Milwaukee Police Department Honor Guard, we have since shared those duties.

Please note our Honor guard is comprised of present, and retired Milwaukee Police Officers, who have served honorably in our Armed Forces. This next year we will have faithfully performed those duties for 75 years.

Yours in comradeship,  
Wayne JENSEN  
Past Department Commander  
Department of Wisconsin  
The American Legion, Captain  
Milwaukee Police Post 415 Honor Guard



# World War II Vet Storms Barricades, Enjoys D.C. Trip Despite Shutdown

By Mark Waite, Pahrump  
Valley Times

Pahrump resident Bernard Martin, 91, braved rain and the government shutdown to visit the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. last weekend with 35 other veterans as part of the Honor Flight of Southern Nevada.

The trip drew national publicity, as barricades were removed, enabling the veterans to visit the memorial despite the government shutdown that began Oct. 1. Martin said the reception at both ends of the trip was almost overwhelming for the elderly passengers.

“When we got to Washington, D.C., we couldn’t believe the amount of people that met us there. It was tremendous and I would say about 400 people were thanking us for our service, shaking our hands, we could hardly walk through the terminal to get to the buses waiting for us,” Martin said. “I couldn’t believe that all of this was for me. Women were hugging us, shaking our hands.”

Last Friday the World War II vets flew from Las Vegas to the nation’s capital where they were transported from the airport to their hotel, feted at a banquet dinner and went to bed. The next day they toured the World War II Memorial. They tried to visit other sites, like the Jefferson Monument, the Washington Monument, the Iwo Jima statue at the Marine Corps Memorial, the Air Force Memorial, the Navy Memorial, the Korean War Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial and others, but for many they had to be content to view them from their seats on the bus due to the shutdown.



*Bernard Martin displays photos of himself as part of a unit called Merrill’s Marauders during World War II.*

But they were able to march into the World War II Monument with the same determination that helped win the war.

“The fences were there but they were removed just before we got there,” Martin said. “Then the guards put tape around but we cut the tape and we went in anyway. In fact, I have a piece of the tape. The guards didn’t do anything, they just stepped off to one side while we went in.”

The World War II Monument has a star for every 100 people that were killed in that conflict, which claimed 405,000 lives. It contains 56 pillars, victory arches and a fountain, built from donations raised by veterans’ groups over a decade. It opened in 2004. It had been open until the government shutdown—that is before the veterans started removing the barricades.

“The World War II Monument was really, really impressive, I couldn’t believe the fantastic size of the monument,” Martin said. But he added, “The best thing we saw was the changing of the guards at the Tomb of the Unknown

Soldier. It was awesome. The guy walks about 65 feet from one end to another on the rubber mat. He’s just like a robot. He doesn’t smile, he doesn’t flicker and he’s dressed impeccably.”

Martin was a resident of Rhode Island who joined the National Guard out of high school, which was then converted into the U.S. Army. He served with U.S. Army commandos from 1940 to 1947. From 1943 to 1944 he served with Merrill’s Marauders in China, Burma and India as a combat radio operator. It was a regiment-sized unit trained for long range penetration of Japanese lines named after their commanding officer, Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill. For their efforts, each soldier in the unit was awarded a Bronze Star.

“There was 18,000 Japanese, there was only 3,000 of us. But we took Burma and we beat the living hell out of them,” Martin said. “When the battle was over and we came back, there was 200 of us. I was one of the lucky ones.”

He added, “I was lucky, every time I saw a bullet come I ducked it. I was very fortunate, bullets were

all around me, not one had my name on it.”

Martin dodged fate again at the end of the war; he contracted Japanese typhoon fever, which he said had a fatality rate of 90 percent. He survived it, though he was hospitalized for a year.

Martin is one of a dying breed. He said World War II veterans are dying at the rate of 800 per day.

Upon his return to the U.S. after the war, Martin studied to be a construction engineer in Florida using his veterans’ benefits. He got his contractor’s license and started building houses. During his last move two years ago, he left San Diego because of the high cost of living and settled for life in Pahrump.

“Welcome to your tour of honor! It’s going to be a long couple of days, but we hope it will be a visit you will never forget,” reads the top of the itinerary from Honor Flight Southern Nevada. “This is our tribute to you for all of the sacrifices you’ve endured so the rest of us can live free.”

Martin complimented the Honor Flight people for doing everything to help the veterans make the trip, some of them had more difficulty flying. The flight was funded by donations, otherwise Martin said he absolutely didn’t have the money nor the ability to make the trip.

“They made everything so easy, it was just like being held in a mother’s arms. They did a great job,” he said. “They helped us on the airplane, they got us seated, even at lunch time they had box lunches coming and going that they had gave us. They couldn’t have done it better.” All but two of the other veterans were from Las Vegas, Martin said.

It would be expected the veterans would be grumbling among themselves during the trip about politics and the shutdown, but Martin said that wasn’t the case.

“There wasn’t much political talk at all, there really wasn’t. We were very quiet and subdued. My wife put it right, it was a contemplated journey. We thought of what was and what we went through,” he said.

But asked his opinion about the shutdown, Martin said, “I think it wasn’t good on the government’s part and (President) Obama did it just to make us miserable.” Martin said the reception when they arrived back at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas Sunday blew him away as well with another throng of well-wishers.

“When we came into Las Vegas they had an orchestra there, then they had the bagpipes playing at the same time. It was so noisy,” Martin said. “We were 90 years old, we can’t stand too much of that stuff. They gave us a heck of a greeting.” ☆

## Our Heroes Forever

**PFC, EDWARD J. KASPEREK, 475/3/I,** Buffalo, NY, From Widow, Josephine, **Final Roll Call, September 5, 2013.**

**PFC, JOHN N. KIENLEN, 5307/475/2/HQ,** Narberth, PA, From son-in-law Leonard Lakin, **Final Roll Call, February 2, 2014**

**PFC, JOSEPH CHARLES KONOPACKI JR. 5307/475/2/E,** Frankford, DE, From Jonnie Clasen, **Final Roll Call, December 4, 2013**

**2<sup>ND</sup> LT, WINSLOW B. STEVENS III, 5307/3/HQ OCT,** Bartov, FL, From son Winslow B, **Final Roll Call, January 10, 2014**

**PVT, JOHN E. WHITELEY, JR, 5307/475/2/E,** Hobart IN, From Jeff Bondy, RCAF Ret, **Final Roll Call, September 16, 2013**

*(Memorial Service, from page 3)*

airdrops. Now on the 70th Anniversary a memorial service honoring the seven airmen will be held at Arlington.

Robert F. Frantz, SSgt. Retired U.S. Army, writes: We are holding a 70th Anniversary Memorial Service on May 23, 2014 Arlington National Cemetery, 12 noon, Section 60 Grave 9558. The service is for the first and only crew to be returned home after sixty years from Burma. We will have 4 or 5 of the families of the crew, other family members and friends, and military personnel from McChord Air Force Base. Invites have gone out to several politicians from the states each crew member was from. Military and other personnel from the Washington DC area are on the invited guest list. It will be a military service with *Taps*, a wreath bearer, Color Guard carrying the US Army/US Air Force Flags and a Military Chaplain doing the Service. At the burial July 2010, both the Army & Air Force worked together for the first time in history burying military personnel. ☆



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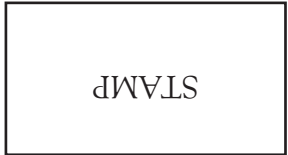


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March 2014