

Iron Warriors Motorcycle Club

<https://ironwarriorsdesertsouthwest.com>

THE DRY HEAT



President: Lee "Bling" Lozo

Vice President: Ben "Aero" Laswell

Secretary: Rhonda "Twister" Johnson

Treasurer: Jeff "Adam Henry" Hanley

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Member at Large/Web Master: Ben "Aero" Laswell

Road Captain: Various

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BLING, President

This is a very special edition about a very special lady we have in our chapter. Please read on about our very own “Tink” wife of our Vice President Aero. Enjoy!

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FORWARD: From March 21, 2022 - April 12, 2022 my wife, Sammy "Tink" Laswell, traveled to the Polish-Ukrainian boarder to help with the unfolding humanitarian crisis. Like many people in this organization who, in their own ways and for different reasons, have been called to action in their own communities and abroad, Sammy heeded the urging of Providence and set off alone into the great unknown. With the help of our Brothers and Sisters, she showed a small part of the world what we have long known to be true – when push comes to shove, Americans will roll up their sleeves to help someone in need, even when that someone is half-way across the globe and that American is a single person from California. What follows is a brief summary of Sammy's experiences on the Polish-Ukrainian boarder in her own words.

- Aero

February 24, 2022: Russia invades Ukraine. After years of aggressive behaviors from Russia, they launched a full invasion. This would cause one of the largest humanitarian crises since World War II.

Every day, every hour, Aero and I would sit and watch or read about the new updates coming from Ukraine. Watching with absolute horror at the monstrosity and evils being done. I couldn't just sit back and do nothing. I HAD to help. I wanted to do more than just donate money. Donate, then sit in my happy little home like nothing is happening just because it's on the other side of the world. I couldn't do it. What could I do though? I'm just 1 person.

I spent 3 weeks scouring the internet looking for a way to physically help. The call came, and the Polish Red Cross in Lublin, Poland said yes! I spent the next 3 days preparing. This meant finding a place to stay, flights, transportation, safety issues, and gathering supplies (physical and monetary).



On March 21 I left Los Angeles for Poland, not entirely knowing what to expect. My flight ended up taking 2 days, through Zurich, Warsaw and Lublin. As I moved through the airports in my travels you could tell something big was happening in Europe. The terminals were empty. On

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March 25, 2022 I was in Poland, met with a coordinator from the Red Cross and received my vest and headed to my first assignment.



Being a healthcare worker, they wanted my assistance with 2 of their Ukrainian shelters, overnight shifts to start with. One shelter was more adults and young kids, the other was adults and older kids. Back rooms held medications, extra food, clothes, toiletries and more. Both shelters had the same feel, kids up and running during the day, the moms and adults up throughout the night...crying. In the early morning hours when the electric trams started running, a woman would run out to us scared and reporting that the guns were firing and they weren't safe any longer. A couple of us went out with her and stood with her and talked. She finally calmed down and came back in.



I also had the opportunity to travel to a small town, Hrubieszow, and work 2 of the Polish/Ukrainian border crossings and a shelter. The first crossing point I was at was the foot traffic side of the Polish border. I was set up in tents with the Polish Military, medics, and a couple other Polish Red Cross people. We stood out in the cold, wind and rain for hours to help. Half-way through the night we succumbed to the cold rain and huddled in the medic

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tent. The rest of the time I was at another crossing as the buses came through. I would spend the nights watching person after person getting off a bus, going through a checkpoint.



So many sights and faces I will never forget. The gentleman with 4 kids who tried his best to hold back tears when we handed him and his kids free food and drinks, the older lady traveling with her cat and dog and needing help to repack her items after the search and the kisses and hugs she gave me, the older generation who have lived through these types of times before. They took their time shuffling through the checkpoint not feeling any rush.

While both there and before leaving I was able to coordinate with a friend of mine who had contacts at an orphanage in eastern Ukraine. All the children were disabled and unable to evacuate. They spent their days and nights in the basement. I collected items for them and was by some miracle able to find a beautiful soul to ferry them across the border to Ukraine where someone was waiting to pick them up and bring them. There were items like blankets and warm clothes as the basement was freezing, cleaning supplies and even laundry soap. The few last days before returning home was assisting in the shelters again in Lublin. They were now used to seeing my face. I took blood pressures, assisted with anxiety attacks, fear and even a little violence. I found a sweet 12yr old Ukrainian boyfriend in the shelter who would fill my pockets with candies. I was able to help a young mother with a small daughter. The daughter was able to escape with just a shirt and a dress on. She played on her own as she didn't trust any other adult other than her mom. I went into the closet and found her some underwear and a warm outfit to put on and gave her an extra sweater. By the end of the night, she was sitting in my lap playing and being introduced to Snapchat. Her laugh was music to my soul. I befriended a young girl having massive anxiety attacks after she watched a video of Russian soldiers in her hometown dragging girls by their hair down the road. The video was jarring.

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I must admit, I loved being there with all of the people, both Polish and Ukrainian; my host family that took me in while there, the Red Cross personnel and Polish Humanitarian Aid. If I had the chance, I would go back in a heartbeat. My time there has inspired me to help with the American Red Cross. I just signed up to volunteer with them in my area for Disaster Management. I'm so excited.

The money you all gave helped me with things like room and food, but also with getting supplies for those in Poland and the orphanage in Ukraine. I sent 4-5 large bags of items into Ukraine to help the kids. I spent money to get socks for the older men who came and had no clothes. An adult coloring book and colored pencils to help a traumatized woman relax. I wish I could find the right set of words to tell you how much my heart appreciates what you've shared. I hope that I could bring your love and light to them through me.

- Tink

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Thanks!