

Ghost Rider: The Story of Seth Drew Scout, 1st Cavalry Afghanistan

A novelette about Mustangs, love, loss and moving forward with purpose.

By Albin Guillot, III

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There are things we know that we know (known knowns).

There are things we know we don't know (known unknowns).

There are things we don't know we don't know (unknown unknowns).

United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld 02/12/2002

Department of Defense Briefing

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Intro

When I decided to volunteer months in advance at a giant car show and almost cancelled, I never envisioned completing a project such as this. This was going to be a flash article of 500-700 words about not-cancelling, honoring your commitments and the joy of giving through volunteering. The touch of God, the universe, fate, karma, or whatever you may believe, was there to connect Charles and myself. We were destined to meet that day and start this grassroots movement. My grandfather's 1st name was also Charles and hearing that name out loud again was, and is, music to my ears. As I started interviewing Charles, Leslie, Kayla, Keagen and Chaysen, I realized we had gone from a short story to a novelette. The family and friends have received so much healing through this process, and it was important for them to have Seth's story told. The purpose is to raise awareness for PTSD and donations for Wounded Warrior Project and other veteran charities. Regardless of the outcome in book sales and donations, this is already a victory. We have more laps to run and we're just getting started. This book is benefitting and supporting Wounded Warrior Project and other veteran charities. Thank you for your support and for reading Ghost Rider: The Story of Seth Drew, Scout 1st Cavalry Afghanistan!

Albin Guillot 07/23/2025

Part I: People Meet for a Reason

Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American philosopher who experienced infinite grief said: “the past has slipped beyond our influence and the future is outside our knowing. To be happy and fruitful, we must engage with right now.”

It was the biggest car show, in the greatest city and at the best venue with over two hundred thousand in attendance; and they just happened to park next to each other. A show that’s held every four years and rotates around the globe to car enthusiasts. This is the holy grail of car shows with all major racing series having a points race during the 12-day event.

Previous host cities have included: Paris, London, Rome, Munich, Tokyo and Detroit to name a few. This year the granddaddy of car shows was in Houston, TX. This show catered to all makes and models; however, there was a strong showing of Mustangs in TX this year for the 60th anniversary of the Pony. The previous stop four years earlier was in Stuttgart, Germany and that was dominated in attendance, understandably, by Porsche & Mercedes Benz. And so in Houston, TX, Ghost Rider: The Story of Seth Drew, Scout 1st Cavalry begins.

This would be his 1st car show, and he almost cancelled on his volunteer duties. Sometimes you sign up for something in advance and it sounds like a good idea; however, as the date gets closer, the cancel bug starts to creep in. He was adding a new line to his creed, something he had been trying out: Don’t cancel, honor your commitments. He enjoyed volunteering and his previous volunteer efforts had revolved around food and providing food to those less fortunate; he was Cajun after all. That included a Saturday at the Fish and Loaves Soup Kitchen and at a famous basketball player’s Annual Thanksgiving mega event held at a major stadium venue. These were certainly worthwhile causes and provided a wonderful sense of satisfaction and gratitude after both experiences. This volunteer experience was completely different in the sense that it was a hobby, an event that he wanted to be a

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part of to support Pony nation and attend his first big car show. It was in his back yard after all, and it was the: El Exhibición de autos del pueblo, *The People's Car Show*.

It was a beautiful spring Friday, and the participants were in a good mood. Studies show people are happier on Fridays and it certainly was the case today. Events such as these, that bring people together, make you realize we have more in common with each other than not. What happened next was totally unexpected and is the beginning of the story you're now reading.

During a break, he went to his truck to grab a bottled water, and he saw it: the amazing memorial painting on this 6th generation Mustang that was parked next to him. It wasn't there when he arrived earlier in the gigantic grassy parking area, or he would have noticed it. With a closer look, he could see the car hood had a tribute to a fallen soldier with the following: "In Honor of Specialist Seth Drew". The hood also included a black cowboy hat, American Flag and soaring eagle painted with such detail and skill that it grabbed and held your attention. As well on the sides of the car had amazing graphics displaying Ghost Rider. This was a high-end paint job to say the least! He stood there for a moment, paid his respects to this fallen hero, took some pictures of the car and proceeded back to his volunteer shift thinking two more hours to go. Now, you're about to be introduced to a family that, unfortunately, has experienced tremendous heartache.

His second shift included a new person that he had not yet met. They engage in a little small talk and continue to enjoy the symphony of American muscle V8 and the smell of burnt rubber. His new acquaintance Charles is likeable from the start. He

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has a smooth Texas drawl and friendly personality. The more he talks the more you want to listen.

Charles also knows cars as a retired *Ford Senior Master Technician* and on the weekends he's part of a racing team that competes on a short track in late model modifieds. The following story will depict Charles' character:

One day Charles went to look at a Mustang chassis for sale in the back of a farmer's barn and realized it was a much rarer, more valuable car than the farmer realized or that Charles was looking for. He let the farmer know this. Also, he could tell that the farmer was suffering from some slight cognitive decline, so he passed on the transaction. Charles didn't feel right about taking advantage of someone. The 3rd generation farmer was very grateful.

A few months later Charles gets a call from an acquaintance that tells him about a recent purchase of this rare mustang from a farmer. Charles says: "I know the car you're talking about; how much you pay for it?" His acquaintance spoke a number that was the ultimate lowball. *Charles shakes his head in disapproval and says: "you just ripped that old man off."* And when Charles told the story, it's 100% clear he wasn't upset that he had missed out on a large financial windfall but rather utter disapproval. It sure is refreshing to meet people with such high values and morals.

Then Charles says he brought his Mustang down and is competing in the car show. Charles and his wife live near the panhandle, which is about 650 miles away. He said: "that's my Competition Orange Mustang GT Performance Package over there". At that moment, they realized they had parked next to each other as their eyes

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converged on the same spot. Then Charles proceeds to tell him the story of the loss of his son: Seth Drew. The sunglasses hid his watery eyes while he listened to Charles tell him the story of love, loss & moving forward.

Charles' son, Seth, bought a 1996 Mustang while in the Army as a project for he and his father to work on while on break. With the goal to be to turn it into a drag racing car. Seth served his country in the U.S. Army, where he was a Scout 1st Cavalry. He was deployed in Afghanistan before returning home to TX. After being home four months, and after being out earlier in the evening with a friend, the young soldier went back home and took his own life.

The pain of working on Seth's 1996 Mustang, without him, was too great to bear for Charles. So, in a difficult decision, he decided to sell the car. The car was sold to a buyer across the state and many, many *hours away from their hometown*. Charles never expected to see the car again, until...

A few months after the sale, Charles sees a Mustang that looks a lot like Seth's for sale two blocks away. He looks closer and it is the same car. Charles takes a deep breath and does a double take while he contemplates next steps.

Charles doesn't initially mention seeing the car to his wife, Leslie, Seth's mother. A few days later while having morning coffee, Leslie simply asks Charles if he's seen the Mustang for sale a few blocks away and if that car is Seth's car? He said: "Yes, it was Seth's car." Leslie said: "*we have to buy it back because Seth put that car there for us to see it.*"

Charles purchased the car back and is fulfilling Seth's dream by building a drag racing shell with the 1996 chassis and has transferred the engine to a 2003 Mustang.

Charles then purchased a new 2015 Mustang and Leslie went to work on getting the custom paint job that would serve as a vessel to raise awareness for PTSD. Who ended up doing the artistic mastery? You'll want to hear the rest of the story. It's going to be hard to tell Momma no. When Momma calls....**End of Part I**