

RUN TO THE REZ #19

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Run to the Rez 2022 took place the weekend of October 14-15. Activities were based out of Apache Gold Casino & Resort in San Carlos AZ, just outside of Globe. This gathering has been taking place for 19+ years.

While the majority of events took place on Friday & Saturday, early arrivals enjoyed additional hospitality on Thursday night, with a biker cook out.

Friday morning started with 100+ bikers taking off for the Casino to Casino Run out to Apache Sky Casino in Winkelman for a day of riding, food, giveaways, & more.

Registration was open all day outside the entrance to Apache Gold Casino. There were several vendors set up including The Custom Stitching Company, AZ Hot Rods, MotorCycleRiders Jewelry, 19 Pueblos Native Apparel, and Superstition Harley-Davidson ~ also a sponsor of the event. There was some beautiful Native American beaded jewelry as well. RideScapes was taking photos. There were informational & support booths hosted by the Vets Center, MMIW – Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women, and the Dept of Health & Human Services.

Friday night's dinner was set up outdoors on the Apache Stronghold Golf Course. It was a beautiful setting and the weather cooperated nicely... cool but not cold. There was a cultural presentation including traditional Native American music and Crown Dancers. Then a traditional meal was served.... including menudo, po-

zole, chili beans, and fry bread ... Mmmm!

Friday night's Welcome Party kicked off at about 8pm in the AGCR Convention Center. It was a FULL house and another great time! There was excellent music with Mar, Dee, & the Buzz. They kept the dance floor busy! An amazing collection of raffle prizes, valued at over \$6000, included leather jackets & vests, wallets & purses with cash in them, a beautiful handcrafted knife, a sleeping bag, sweatshirts, a rain suit, & more.

A dance contest offered a \$150 prize. I'm not sure who had more fun... The dancers or the audience 😊

The joke telling competition was great! There were some really good entries! 😊 Gary ended up the winner, collecting a \$100 prize.

Congratulations to all of the night's winners!

Saturday morning saw everyone gathering for the parade to Burdette Memorial Hall in San Carlos. SO many people were waiting along the route to watch, wave, honk horns, and pay respects. It is always a very heartwarming experience to be part of this ride.

Although the Run to the Rez has grown to include more activities than the original Honor Ceremony for Veterans, it remains the heart of the weekend. As the itinerary says, 'This is what this run is all about.' Residents of the community, old & young, attend this commemoration. Honoring Veterans & community Elders is a way of life here.

The San Carlos Veterans Association presented the Colors. Tom Socie offered greetings & a prayer, and Hubert Martin sang the National Anthem. Dignitaries were introduced, including Tribal Council member John Bush and a San Carlos Apache Princess. Army Veteran Carol Slim was among the speakers. She spoke on the issues of Veteran Suicide and PTSD. Apache Female Warriors were recognized, including an Army Veteran named Sarah who would be the Grand Marshall in the upcoming Veterans Parade. Patty Dimitriou spoke on behalf of the MMIW organization. It was noted that more children of the Indigenous Peoples of this Country sign up for military service than from other communities... and acknowledging the worries that Mothers take on when their children deploy.

Among those honored this day was the family of US Marine Michael Angelo Nolene, Private 1st Class. He was Killed In Action 31 years ago, at the age of 20. His mother & additional family members were there, being offered comfort & hope in their loss. She shared that the grief never goes away and expressed heartfelt thanks for her son being remembered.

There was a Moment of Silence for a rider & Veteran who had come in from NM for the event. He was in a wreck the night before and passed from his injuries.

Anthony Bush, President of the San Carlos Veterans Association, and a nephew of organizer Dr John, thanked everyone

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for coming. He then called all the Veterans to muster. After some closing comments, he dismissed the Vets and the service was completed.

The Poker Ride that followed wound its way back to Apache Gold. There were 5 stops to draw for cards: the SC Lake Store on Rt 3, Apache Burger in Peridot, The Drift Inn and The Huddle – both on Broad Street in Globe, with last card at Humphrey's 2 Lane Saloon on Ash in Globe. The Apache Jii Festival was also taking place in downtown Globe, so riders took some time to enjoy that as well. Yes. It rained. A lot. But not for long. ☺

The winners of the Poker Run were announced later that evening. They were Jolene C \$250, Jason F \$450, & Kimberly L \$800.

Back at Apache Gold, entries for the Bike Show were lining up. There were six classes, with \$1500 in prizes to be distributed. Best of Show was judged by the entrants in each class.

Bagger: 1st place Harold Bentley, 2nd place Pancho ; Vintage: 1st place Clearence Willson, 2nd Ryan Martin ; Trike: 1st place James Kniffin, 2nd Ed Mazzetti ; Custom: 1st place Ausie John, 2nd Walleed Alanu ; Metric: Huge Lano, 2nd Beverly Begay ; American: 1st place Scott Riggan, 2nd Patricia Benally ; Best of Show: Alfredo Beca

Congratulations to all of this day's winners!

Additional music during the weekend

was provided by Chaka & Friends, Eagleheart, and Aravapai. Each are talented groups that have played this gathering over the years.

Saturday night's Steak Fry dinner was set up in the Pavilion at Apache Gold.... Steaks, potatoes, veggies, desserts, & more. And it was also included in your entry fee.

The rains that came in on Saturday night did not seem to dampen anyone's Spirits or enjoyment of the event. There was a great deal of camaraderie and laughter. Standing in line for dinner was an opportunity to meet new people or visit with friends. Back at the Casino, awaiting the grand prize drawing, everyone gathered under the portico to stay dry.

Unfortunately, Saturday night's concert was hampered by rain. Those who got to hear the Creedence Clearwater Revival tribute band said they were very good. Unfortunately, they had to cut their set short when the rain came POURING down!

The rain let up enough for the next band, a Metallica tribute band called Damage Inc, to play before the event's Main Attraction The Grand Prize motorcycle drawing after the last song. THIS is what people were waiting for!

Pam DeVall of St. Johns, AZ was the big winner of the weekend. She won the new Harley-Davidson motorcycle, \$1,000 cash, and a brand new HD leather jacket! She doesn't know how to ride... YET ... but you can pretty much figure she plans to learn.

She was a VERY Happy Lady -- SO excited to win! How many tickets did she have in the drawing? *One* ... the one she received as part of her registration. How about THAT! Congratulations!

After that it was time to start winding down & wishing everyone safe travels home.

Dr John shared that nearly 600 had registered for the event. Riders came in from across the country. Plates on bikes in the parking lot included AZ, CA, CO, MN, NM, NY, OK, PA, SD, TN, TX, UT, & WI.

This is one of our state's great weekenders! It is amazing how Dr John and his small team are able to bring such a big event together each year! They do a wonderful job! Of this group of about 8 people, Dr John is the only rider ☺ It is a 'labor of love' with all their hard work going to support the Veterans of their community. The San Carlos Veterans Association will receive more than \$20 thousand thanks to this event and some additional fundraising efforts on their behalf! Outstanding!

Everyone I spoke with was having a terrific time, even with the rain. There were so many positive comments. If you've been to this event before, you know what a good time it is. If you've never attended... you really ought to check it out.

I hope to see you there next time. 'bye for now ☺ *Betsy*

