



Smarty Jones'
trainer one leg away
from Triple Crown

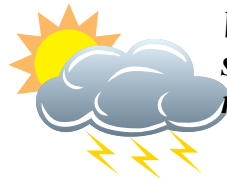
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The story and people behind a photograph

Past brought
to life in
photographs

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mostly cloudy, 55 tonight

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WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

Tuesday, June 1, 2004

203rd Year, No. 153

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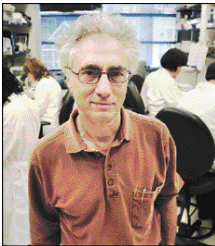
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Good morning,
William Lundy.
Thank you for subscribing
to the Sun-Gazette!

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AREA SALUTE GOES TO THOSE WHO GAVE THEIR ALL



Kari and Cayla Betz, left photo, daughters of Laurie and Jeremy Betz of Muncy, watch the Memorial Day Parade from under an umbrella Monday in Muncy. At right, Fred Temple and David Taylor, both of Muncy, are on their way home after the parade. Their float promoted the upcoming 21st annual Muncy Valley Hospital Lawn Party on June 21.

(More photos on Page A-3)



BRENT SHIRK/Sun-Gazette Correspondent

Rolling Thunder tribute paid

Area cyclists join thousands in Washington

By DENA PAULING
Sun-Gazette Staff

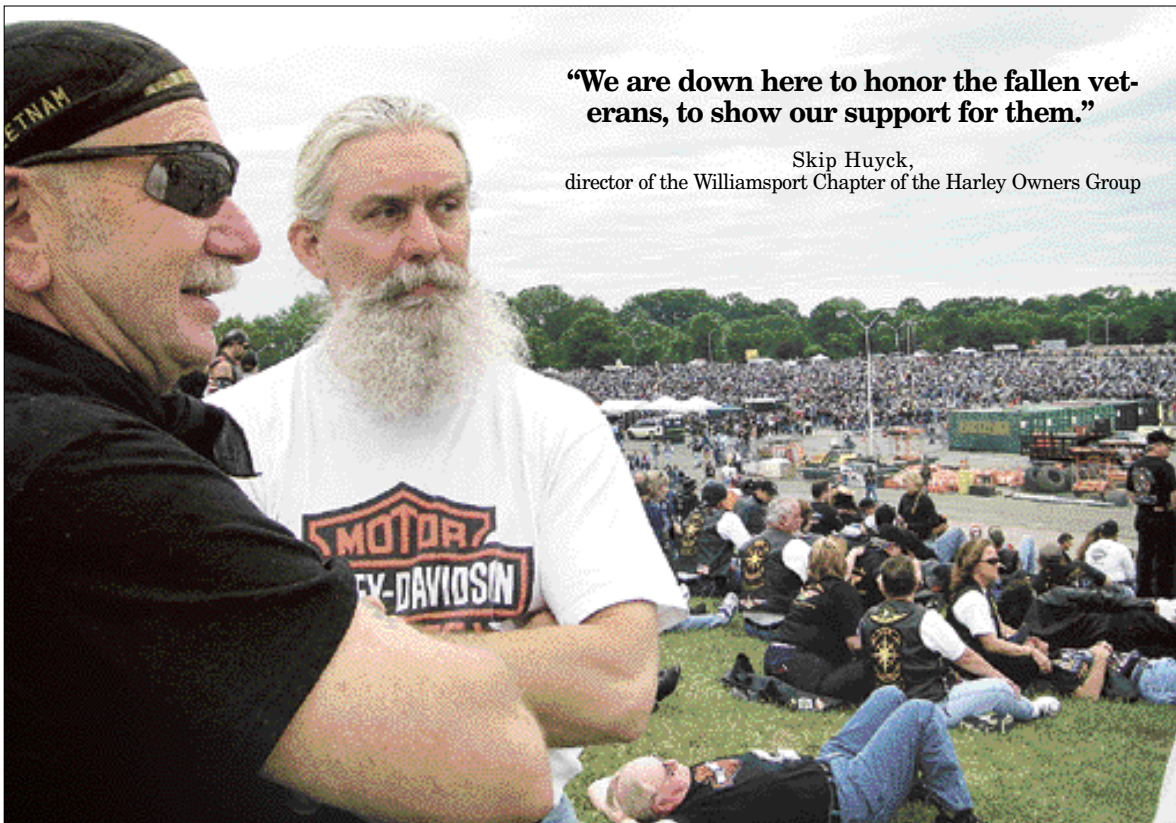
WASHINGTON — Waves of motorcycle fanatics, from the Williamsport area and across the nation, rumbled past America's most hallowed monuments Sunday — for a cause.

"Sounds like heaven," said Muncy resident Curt Vander Vere, as he watched the motorcycles depart from the Pentagon parking lot while waiting for his turn to rev his Harley's engine.

Vander Vere and at least 10 others from the Williamsport area participated in the 17th annual Rolling Thunder "Ride for Freedom," a Memorial Day weekend tradition meant to pay tribute to prisoners of war and military members missing in action.

Staying within sight of the Washington Monument, the ride looped around streets near West Potomac Park and covered a route that took an hour. Some members of the group concluded their time at the parade with a stop at the National Mall, where thousands of visitors gathered around the Lincoln, Vietnam, Korean and new World War II memorials, placing pictures and flowers around the granite monuments.

"We are down here to honor the fallen veterans, to show our support for them," said Skip Huyck, director of the



"We are down here to honor the fallen veterans, to show our support for them."

Skip Huyck,
director of the Williamsport Chapter of the Harley Owners Group

Sid Alpaugh of Pennsdale, left, and Curt Vander Vere of Muncy watch as thousands of motorcyclists gather.

DENA PAULING/Sun-Gazette

Williamsport chapter of the Harley Owners Group, a non-profit organization where the cyclists hold membership.

Decked out in leather beside their most prized possessions, the Williamsport motorcyclists joined the 400,000 who began assembling at the Pentagon

during the early morning hours.

"Man, I got to thinking, if al-Qaida were to slide right through the parking lot, they would get more people than what they killed on 9-11," said Mike Aldenderfer, looking on the masses of bikers wearing

leather chaps, Harley T-shirts and vests covered in pins.

The Williamsport group departed from the Pentagon around 1:15 p.m., though thousands were still rolling out into the late afternoon. The kickoff began at noon, and until their departure, the crowd spent

time comparing Harleys against the backdrop of a colorful crowd with vendors passing out free pocket Bibles and coffee.

"You get more mileage out of the parking lot than on the road," said Steve Confair of (See ROLLING, Page A-6)

Bush, Kerry honor veterans on Memorial Day; nation pays quiet tribute with parades, picnics

By PETE YOST
Associated Press Writer

ARLINGTON, Va. — President Bush declared Monday that "America is safer" because of its fighting forces while Sen. John Kerry went to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in somber but historically asymmetrical Memorial Day tributes.

"Through our history, America has gone to war reluctantly," said Bush, speaking at Arlington National Cemetery after laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. "In places like Kabul and Kandahar, in Mosul, and Baghdad, we have seen their decency and their brave spirit," he said.

A charcoal sky and light mist hung over the remembrance as if to underscore the solemnity of Bush's speech, Kerry's visit to the Vietnam monument and a parade along historic Independence Avenue. A smattering of World War II veterans marched with people, in some cases, three generations younger, capping a weekend highlighted by the formal opening Saturday of the Na-



ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Bush, left, lays a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier marking Memorial Day at Arlington National Cemetery Monday near Washington.

tional World War II Memorial.

Frances and John Carter, both 82, were separated by an ocean during World War II; he was a paratrooper and she was a "Rosie the Riveter," one of the thousands of women who went to work at home to support the soldiers abroad.

It was a day when political rhetoric was somewhat muted, eclipsed here by public tributes and the playing of Taps. Bush did take a moment to praise Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld for "your great leadership," however. Rumsfeld has (See BUSH, Page A-6)

Marines take home more than memories at the end of big war

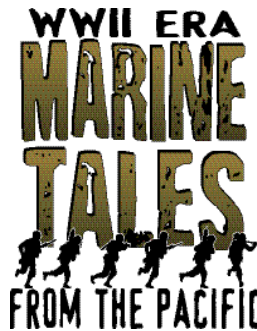
(EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is the conclusion of a three-day Sun-Gazette series focusing on the reunion of two Marines 57 years after World War II.)

By GWEN E. HOCK
Special to the Sun-Gazette

Going home. Marines Jim Horner and Kenneth Wheat parted at Omura, Japan, when the 2nd Marine battalions loaded out for discharge in late December 1945. Wheat was discharged as a corporal at Mare Island, Calif., on July 7, 1946, while Horner was discharged as a line corporal a day later in Bainbridge, Md.

"They paid me \$66 for each month of service and \$12.75 for a train ticket to Altoona where my wife and brother met me and took me home to Boalsburg," Horner said.

Both Horner, now of Trout



Run, and Wheat said it took them a while to orient themselves after arriving back home after the war.

"Jane was half afraid to sleep with me because I would jump up in a threatening and defensive pose every time there was a strange noise in the house," Horner said of his wife. (See MARINES, Page A-6)





DENA PAULING/Sun-Gazette

Sharing a laugh as they wait for other motorcyclists to participate in the Rolling Thunder "Ride for Freedom" are, from left, Curt Vander Vere of Muncy, Brenda and Todd Charles of Williamsport and Mike Aldenderfer of Cogan Station.



ASSOCIATED PRESS

A U.S. Marine salutes motorcycle riders in the Rolling Thunder's 17th annual Motorcycle Ride and Rally Sunday in Washington.

Rolling Thunder tribute paid to POWs and MIAs

(From Page A-1)

Williamsport.

The group also passed the time making friendly jokes with each other, often picking on Kenny Shollenberger of Montgomery, a quieter member of the bunch.

"Sure you do get more mileage out of the parking lot, but that's not the point. The point is that we came down here because we could be entertained by Kenny all weekend," Aldenderfer joked.

But Shollenberger just smiled and fired back with more jokes throughout the day when given the opportunity.

"This is a good bunch of fellas; we have a good time," he said.

Brenda Charles, the only female among the group who attended the event, said the men are always courteous.

"She would come down by herself if I couldn't come. That's how nice they are," said Todd Charles, her husband, as he waited for the ride to begin.

Many in the group spent time trying to calculate the value of the amount of motorcycles in the parking lot.

"Could you imagine how much is in this parking lot?" Aldenderfer asked his buddies. "Holy crapes! There has to be \$1 billion."

The group figured that the cost of 10 motorcycles would be about one-quarter of a million, but they had difficulty doing the multiplication for the entire crowd. Aldenderfer called on Vander Vere, a math professor at Pennsylvania College of Technology, who figured the total value to be between \$2.5 and \$3 billion.

"That's a few dollars worth of hardware out here," Aldenderfer

said.

As the group finally left the Pentagon parking lot, they were cheered on by thousands of people lining the streets with fists raised. Some bystanders were crying as many slapped the hands of the motorcyclists as they drove through.

"I'll tell you what was amazing — all these people standing around, the crowds cheering. It was great," Aldenderfer said as he went on to tell of grabbing a "Bikers for Kerry" sticker from one of the members of the crowd.

"I would do this again, and you know why I would? Because of the people on the side of the road," said Aldenderfer, referring to those who came to pay homage to loved ones who served.

Vander Vere agreed.



Enjoying a meal in Omura, Japan, in the fall of 1945 are Ken Wheat, Yosui, Jim Horner and two other Marines. Yosui was a Japanese man who befriended the soldiers shortly before they returned home to the United States.

Marines take home more than memories at the end of big war

(From Page A-1)

"In case you ever wondered where the term 'shell shock' came from, I can soon tell you."

Once settled, Horner continued taking a few more forestry courses at Penn State while cutting logs for a living with his brother. In December 1949, he accepted a position as a forester for a hunting club in Lycoming County.

"They offered me \$70 a week along with a farm house to live in," Horner said. "That was a pretty good deal back in those days." Horner eventually started his own lumber business and ended up fathering seven children. "The war taught me not to fear anything, and that I could do everything I set my mind to."

A few months after Wheat returned home, he decided to enter college.

"The war changed my life," Wheat said. "I started out working as a machinist apprentice and if I hadn't had the privilege of getting college tuition through the GI Bill, I probably would have ended up working as a machinist for the rest of my life."

Wheat graduated with an engineering degree and worked for Phillips Petroleum in Oklahoma until he retired. He also married the girl he corresponded with during the war and together they had four children.

An item Wheat wanted to see during his reunion with Horner was an ornate Japanese vase. Wheat said that one day while he was on liberty in Omura, a Japanese man named Yosui approached him and asked for a light for his cigarette.

Wheat explained that during one of his visits he picked up an ornate vase and admired it.



A last photograph was snapped before Jim Horner of Trout Run, at left, and Kenneth Wheat, center, left Japan on Dec. 7, 1945. That was the last time the two war buddies saw one another until their reunion earlier this year. The soldier at right is not identified.

"Yosui saw me looking at it and he gave it to me as a gift. I later decided that I really had no use for the vase, so I gave it to Horner, since he was married," Wheat said. Horner packed the vase carefully in his duffel bag and carried it home after the war.

"Jane put the vase in a dresser drawer for safekeeping," Horner said. "I always put my spare change in it at the end of the day and the money paid for a lot of school lunches and other necessities."

After Jane died and their children were grown, Horner took the vase out of the drawer. Wheat found the vase sitting on the fireplace mantel in Horner's home.

Before Wheat packed his bags for the journey back to Oklahoma, he told Horner that he

was planning a special celebration for his own 80th birthday this coming August.

"I want Horner and his family to come to my party. They treated me and my wife like royalty during our visit here, and we want to return the honor," Wheat said.

Even though Horner is still suffering from a back injury he received while operating a bulldozer last year, he said he is determined to make the trip to Wheat's home.

"Wheat and I looked out for each other during the war," Horner said. "We were good friends and it's unfortunate that life kept us separated for 57 years."

"Now that we've found each other again, we should try to make the most of the time we have left."



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Democratic presidential candidate Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., facing at right, hugs Barbara Bronson at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington on Monday. Bronson's son William Bronson's name was recently added to the memorial. Bronson died in 1976 from a grand mal seizure directly related to a wound he received in combat in Vietnam.

Bush, Kerry honor veterans

(From Page A-1)

heard calls for his resignation in connection with the prisoner abuse scandal. And Kerry resumed his political campaign in earnest later Monday in Virginia.

Traditional Memorial Day observances including picnics and parades were played out coast to coast — half a world away from U.S. fighting forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. But overseas, the conflict raged.

Two Americans died Monday as U.S. troops clashed with Shiite militiamen in fighting that strained a cease-fire called last week around the holy cities of Kufa and Najaf. And in Baghdad, a car bomb exploded near U.S. coalition headquarters, killing four people and injuring 25. Two other American soldiers died over the weekend in separate attacks, the U.S. military said.

Still, American soldiers took time to remember their slain comrades during holiday ceremonies across Iraq.

"When we return to our home stations, we must ensure that we never forget those fallen comrades that deployed with us that will not return to their loved ones," Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, the senior U.S. military officer here, said during a ceremony at Baghdad's Camp

Victory. "They must not have died in vain," said Sanchez, who is due to rotate out of Iraq soon.

A year ago at this time, more than 160 American soldiers had been killed in Iraq. The total since has risen to more than 800, and last week the Pentagon reported that the number wounded in action is approaching 4,700.

Bush took time out in the afternoon to call Crown Prince Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and express condolences over the loss of life in the attack by militants in the kingdom's oil industry hub. Bush expressed support for the Saudi government's handling of the shooting rampage and hostage standoff that killed 22 people, White House spokeswoman Pamela Stevens said.

Bush also called German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to urge support of a strong United Nations resolution for a new Iraqi government. Bush urged that the two nations work together to back the new government.

In his speech, Bush singled some of the dead from Iraq for special commendation:

• Capt. Joshua Byers, a West Point man and South Carolina native. "When this son of missionaries was given command of a 120-man combat unit, he wrote to his parents, 'I

will give the men everything I have to give,' " Bush said.

• Pfc. Jesse Givens of Springfield, Mo., had written to his wife, Melissa: "Do me a favor after you tuck the children in — give them hugs and kisses from me," the president noted.

• Master Sgt. Kelly Hornbeck of Fort Worth, Texas, wrote his parents saying, "I am not afraid and neither should either of you be," Bush said.

"Because of their fierce courage, America is safer, two terror regimes are gone forever and more than 50 million souls now live in freedom," Bush said to a warm applause.

Bush's appearance, by dint of tradition and practice, was a generic tribute to people who have fallen in all U.S. wars past and present, although he particularly cited Iraq. For Kerry, a decorated veteran, it was a day to focus on that conflict of the 1960s and early 70s — one he would ultimately march and speak against.

Bush gave a speech; Kerry said little as he walked somberly along the shiny black granite wall where the names of the more than 58,000 who fell in Vietnam are etched in time and remembrance. He rubbed his thumb over one of the newest names to be added to the memorial.

Three killed in Bradford County crash

Three people are dead and one person is in critical condition after a crash Sunday on Route 706 in Wyalusing Township, Bradford County, according to state police in Towanda.

Gregory Liddick, 48, of Laceyville; Elsie Liddick, 68, of Stevensville; and Judith Wargo, 59, of Laceyville were pronounced dead at the scene by Bradford County Coroner Gordon E. Farr about 7 p.m., Farr said. Autopsies will be done to determine the cause of death, he added.

The wreck happened when 19-year-old Mark Shingler of Sayre, traveling south just north of Cold Creek Road, crossed the center line and struck a car driven by Gregory Liddick head-on, police said.

Shingler is reported in critical condition at Robert Packer Hospital in Sayre. He was not wearing his seatbelt, according to police.

All three of the deceased were wearing seatbelts, police said.