



Peninsula Mommies School Supply Drive
A local organization of mothers donates much needed school supplies to the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA's Bright Beginnings program at the Victory Family YMCA Monday, August 23 at 3 p.m.

YORKTOWN, Va., August 20, 2010 – Peninsula Mommies will ensure 100 school children start the academic year off right when they donate a collection of school supplies to the Peninsula Metropolitan YMCA's Bright Beginnings program at the Victory Family YMCA Monday, August 23 at 3 p.m.

...of Association Advancement at the Peninsula ...
...ent over 221 items ranging from classroom supplies ...
...thers' support community between July 17 ...

- TODD WHITE RESEARCH CENTRE REPORTS**
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U.S. wind power increased at an average annual rate of 22 percent in the last five years

... U.S. wind energy projects than from federal initiatives. ...
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... U.S. wind power increased at an average annual rate of 22 percent in the last five years ...



Rummie ink

marketing, public relations & writing

PORTFOLIO

Rummie ink is a full-service design and marketing company dedicated to helping every client make their mark in the world. The following pages contain a sample of Rummie ink's past marketing, public relations and writing work. You're invited to navigate this portfolio by clicking on the topic headings below.

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Exotic Orchards: Marketing Analysis

Rummie ink was responsible for the full market research, analysis, writing and promotional development found within the following report. Please note the following text has been modified and information has been omitted to protect the business interests of the client.

Project Overview/Executive Summary

Exotic Orchards Zoo is a recently developed limited liability, non-profit organization in Traverse City, Michigan. The northern region is known as the Cherry Capital of the World and is the recent home of the second largest film festival in the United States. Building around 24 acres of cherry orchards overlooking Lake Michigan's Grand Traverse Bay, the founding board of directors are developing an animal park and educational facility that focuses on humans living in harmony with the animals and eco-systems of the world. Exotic Orchards Zoo will entertain and educate while minimizing the organization's environmental footprint.

Exotic Orchards Zoo will stand out from other zoos. The entire facility will incorporate visually pleasing designs with the versatility of rotating exhibits to ensure visitors stay interested through the years. To the organization's knowledge, Exotic Orchards Zoo is the only business of its kind with the goal of becoming self-sustained. Renewable energy resources, an on-site water processing plant and embracing the three R's concept – reduce, reuse and recycle – will demonstrate the zoo's commitment to nature and serve as an example to others. Quality personnel and resources will help zoo leaders provide top-notch customer service and programs that entertain while they educate. By building around an existing cherry orchard and incorporating the fruit into its logo, Exotic Orchards Zoo shares in the community's love and commitment to a Traverse City area tradition.

The cost of entertainment is a major consideration for many American households. Exotic Orchards Zoo believes they can provide an array of services for less than what many of their competitors are charging. Admissions tickets will undercut the cost of movie tickets by charging \$5 for adults, \$3 for children 17 and under, and providing free admission to those 3 and under. This discounted price will also be reflected in the price of food, beverages and store merchandise. A fixed percentage will be added to the at-cost

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price of each item. Posted signs at each vending location will state what percentage of profit is going towards operations and conservation costs. The zoo will be able to pass a greater savings to their visitors due to lower annual operating costs generated by Exotic Orchards Zoo conservation efforts.

Exotic Orchards Zoo has several exciting and innovative opportunities for promotion. *(Rest of paragraph omitted to protect client's business interests).*

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis (omited)

Research

Two surveys have been conducted thus far to determine the Traverse City area's desire for a zoo, visitor expectations, and whether to offer educational programs to both children and adults, or just children. Survey 1, which researched desires and expectations, was conducted a direct mail campaign of 10,000 postcards to a random sample of residents from the Traverse City five county region (Grand Traverse, Benzie, Antrim, Kalkaska and Leelanau) inviting them to participate in an online survey. *(Rest of paragraph omitted to protect client's business interests).*

Survey 2, which focused on educational programs, was conducted through phone calls to a random sampling of 42 Traverse City Area Public Schools grade school parents. The purpose of the survey was to determine if Exotic Orchards Zoo should pursue educational programs for children and adults, or if interest was only present for children. *(Rest of paragraph omitted to protect client's business interests).*

Secondary research reinforces Exotic Orchards Zoo's belief that conservation efforts and education can have an impact on the public and their actions. In early 2007 the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) published a report titled "Why Zoos and Aquariums Matter: Assessing the impact of a visit to a zoo or aquarium" which examined their findings regarding what visitors take away from their visits to zoos and aquariums from a conservation stand point. This survey went further than previous studies by not just examining what visitors learn, but also examining how their visits impacted their view of zoos and aquariums roles in conservation and education. The study showed that 64% of participants "...leave the zoo or aquarium thinking differently about their role in environmental problems." Follow up emails and phone calls to selected survey

participants also showed that a year later the same visitors still felt that “...zoos and aquariums play an important role in species preservation and in increasing [a zoo or aquarium’s] visitors’ awareness of conservation issues.” *(Rest of paragraph omitted to protect client’s business interests).*

Strategy/Objectives

The following strategies are based off the above stated analyses and research:
(Section omitted to protect client’s business interests).

Recommendations/Conclusions

Exotic Orchards Zoo has a strong chance for success if the following recommendations are kept at the forefront of every decision:

Stay true to the message. The majority of zoos throughout the world concentrate on awareness education and environmental conservation. There are few zoos in existence that function purely off entertainment. Deviating from Exotic Orchards Zoo’s emphasis on humans living in harmony with the animals and eco-systems of the world would undermine the foundation of what the zoo was built on. It would also alter public opinion of the zoo and the importance of conservation. If Exotic Orchards can’t stay committed, why should they?

Treat the zoo like a business. It’s not enough to spread the message of conservation while entertaining and educating the masses. Exotic Orchards Zoo cannot and should not depend on grants throughout its existence. The zoo must find a way to attract enough visitors and stimulate enough interest to create an annual revenue capable of sustaining the zoo while supporting its expansion and conservation efforts.

Consumer opinion and desires change and must be continually re-evaluated. Keeping the previous recommendation of treating the zoo like a business in mind, another crucial aspect is addressing the expectations of the public. Without their support and interest the zoo cannot survive, and if the zoo cannot survive how can Exotic Orchards Zoo make a difference?

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Shaggy Shelter: PR Campaign

Rummie ink was responsible for the full development, and design of the campaign found within the following report. The shelter saw a 46% increase in business following the initiation of this campaign. Please note the following text has been modified and information has been omitted to protect the business interests of the client.

Situation:

The Shaggy Shelter is the sole animal shelter in its area, yet has a surplus of dogs in need of homes. They've noticed a decline in the number of overall dog adoptions in the past year. Shaggy Shelter would like reverse this trend and increase the number of dog adoptions in the local community.

Objectives: There are two program objectives to this campaign:

- 1.) Increase number of dogs placed in proper homes
- 2.) Attract a new audience for adoptions

Audience Analysis:

The target audience for this campaign is families in homes with yards large enough to accommodate dogs, as well as single women 23 and older who may want a dog for protection.

Research: Qualitative research has found that the general perception of dogs is that:

- 1.) maintenance and care is expensive
- 2.) large dogs shed lots of hair
- 3.) the liability of owning a large dog is high
- 4.) large dogs can be aggressive
- 5.) small dogs are hyper

Budget:

\$100,000

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Strategy:

This campaign aims to educate the community and change their perceptions about dogs, while providing the necessary tools to new dog owners to promote healthy, positive relationships between owner and pet.

Tactics:

The following tactics will be implemented to meet campaign objectives:

Free Training. Shaggy Shelter will utilize two certified dog trainers and offer free monthly training clinics for the community. The sessions are open to current and future dog owners as a way to educate the community on proper training and break the misperceptions people have about animal behavior. The sessions will require a weekend commitment with the first day dedicated to ‘training’ the owners, and the second day working with their dogs. At the same time shelter staff and volunteers will work with the dogs currently in their care to get them to a point where they are trained to perform basic behavioral commands.

Doggy Meet and Greet

Three weekends a month Shaggy Shelter volunteers and staff will set up a “Dog Days” activity center in the community. Certified trainers and other specialists will be on hand to talk to current and future dog owners. Booths will be set up with special offers from area pet stores for those that participate in doggy budgeting services to educate the community on what the monthly and annual costs are for various sized dogs. The differences between premium care and basic care will be discussed. Grooming services will be on hand to pamper the pets and teach owners how to perform basic care to reduce shedding. The local police K9 unit will be asked to demonstrate their dogs’ abilities at the “Dog Days” events. During this time it will be well publicized that the K9 unit offers free monthly protection training for dogs that have gone through previous behavioral training. The main focus of the meet and greets will be a dozen dogs from Shaggy Shelter in need of a home.

Tool Kits

Shaggy Shelter will offer tool kits in the shape of a dog house to those that adopt a dog from the shelter. In these kits will be a free training DVD, a leash, doggy treats, a training collar, and a ball.

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Media Campaigns

Local newspapers, radio stations and television stations will be utilized to advertise upcoming “Dog Days” and monthly training sessions. Shaggy Shelter will also create press releases centered on proper training, budgeting and care for dogs. The staff will work with the local radio and television stations to secure weekly segments on animal care that will focus on Shaggy Shelter pets.

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NH Hotels - Denver Launch: Release

Rummie ink was responsible for the development and release of this article to media outlets in the surrounding Denver, Colorado area. The release was later modified for a national release to travel industry outlets.

NH Hotels Says “Gutentag” to Denver German Based Hotel Opens its First U.S. Hotel

DENVER, Colo., April 29, 2007 – NH Hotels will bring international sophistication to Denver when they open their first U.S. based hotel on Downtown Street Wednesday, May 2.

The \$25 million facility will include plush four-star amenities, a conference center, restaurant, bar and spa for hotel clients.

“We’re excited to open our first U.S. hotel here in Denver, a city that balances sophistication and comfort, much like NH Hotels,” said Martina Zungel, NH Hotels president.

NH Hotels can be found delivering comfort, style and convenience throughout Europe, South America, Africa and now the U.S. More information about NH Hotels various services and locations is available at www.nhhotels.com.

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The Box Company: Media Coverage

Rummie ink developed an email template for The Box Company's movement of a 1600 lb. grizzly bear. Rummie ink remains a consultant for the company's marketing and public relations needs.

Good morning Ms. Dyer,

What exactly does it take to move a 1600 lb. grizzly bear? Have you ever wondered how the Denver Zoo moves its animals back and forth between other zoos?

The Box Company knows how. We'll be working with the Denver Zoo May 23 to move Alaska, a female grizzly bear, to her temporary home at the Memphis Zoo. There, Alaska will participate in the American Zoo and Aquarium Association's breeding program.

Designing a crate that will get Alaska to Memphis safely and comfortably takes a special kind of know-how. The Box Company offers a multitude of special services to their customers that involve finding the right 'box' for their job. We also offer referrals to transportation companies equipped to handle a customer's cargo. The Denver Zoo is taking advantage of this extra service and has expressed confidence that the Box Company will provide the very best of care to Alaska.

I'd like to invite you to cover this special event in your weekly segment, "Kyle's Kritters." Melanie Lambdon, our vice president in charge of live animal transport, would be more than happy to take you through the steps of the creation of Alaska's temporary home, and her transport.

I will contact you Wednesday, May 9 to discuss this exciting event further.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Rumbach
Media Relations Director
The Box Company

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Herron Todd White & Sullivan: Executive Copy

Rummie ink was responsible for taking content supplied by Australia's Herron Todd White & Sullivan and developing a full executive report following the company's merger. Rummie ink was responsible for the reorganization and rewrite of the copy found within the report, as well as the design of the booklet. Though Rummie ink is a U.S. based company, we're well versed on the subtle differences in English spelling and vocabulary from country to country.

Herron Todd White & Sullivan Valuation Services

Herron Todd White (Western Australia) and Sullivan Valuation Services are both highly regarded mortgage valuation practices providing specialised mortgage valuation services within the Perth Metropolitan Area. The two companies merged 7th July 2008 and continue to combine proven techniques with a pro-active approach to the valuation industry.

We repeatedly meet our clients high standards by:

- Communicating directly with our client to understand their requirements and expectations before following through
- Ensuring methodical and effective development through proper planning.
- Employing personnel with appropriate skills, qualifications, experience, capabilities and attributes.
- Utilising appropriate office systems to support the service we provide.
- Utilising current information technology to accelerate the receipt and dissemination of information.
- Keeping the client informed and involved throughout the entire process.
- Providing recommendations to our clients to meet their objectives.
- Regularly reviewing and benchmarking our performance against proven management plans and making any necessary corrections.

The management of Herron Todd White (WA) and Sullivans ensures that our employees will never have a conflict of interest that will affect our clients. Every valuations employee participates in ongoing professional development and is provided with outstanding support from our administrative staff and Student Valuers. Management believes that meeting the needs of staff leads to increased client satisfaction.

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While Herron Todd White (WA) and Sullivans team focuses on client satisfaction, versatile reporting and information systems enhance the proficiency of the Perth office's ability to remain at the top of their game. The current software utilized by each office was created specifically with their unique needs in mind. Every part of the valuation process is carefully recorded and stored to ensure efficiency, seamless reporting and top-level organization. New technological advances are currently explored to evaluate how their implementation might best serve the needs of Herron Todd White (WA) and Sullivans clients.

Communication continues to be the corner stone of Herron Todd White (WA) and Sullivans success. Both companies pride themselves on the commitment their staff places on corresponding with clients through every step of the process. The overall performance of Herron Todd White (WA) and Sullivans communication practises has been the subject of regular praise by their clients. Both companies are able to correspond using all forms of electronic communications including telephone, facsimile, internet and e-mail. Contact Herron Todd White (WA) and Sullivans and see how they can make a difference in your valuations needs.

Area of Service

- Perth Metropolitan Area including Yanchep and Two Rocks to the north.
- Southern boundary of Perth Metropolitan Area to City of Mandurah and Shire of Murray (Pinjarra).
- Periphery hills districts including Bullsbrook, Gidgegannup, Chidlow, Roleystone and Bedfordale.

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Project Equilibrium: Marketing Article

This article is an example of several public service/marketing pieces developed for Project Equilibrium to educate homeowners on responsible landscaping options they have available to them. Rummie ink was responsible for developing the campaign, the articles, and submitting the releases to newspapers, magazines, home owners associations and residential newsletters in the Denver, Colorado area.

Natural ways to enjoy your garden

Highlands Ranch homeowners are dedicated to upholding the community's landscaping standards to create a beautiful neighborhood.

Water conservation and Xeriscaping have made it possible for residents to embrace ecological responsibility. But did you know there is more you can do to protect the local environment?

Chemical pesticides are expensive, and dangerous to the health of residents and wildlife living in Highlands Ranch.

A combination of neem and garlic oil sprayed on plants and trees will keep pests, bacteria and fungus at bay. Both oils can be found in many natural food stores.

Have a weed problem? Use vinegar on those pesky plants to balance the pH (acidity) levels in the surrounding ground.

To keep your garden lush and beautiful, fertilize your garden with organic compost rather than peat. Peat is pulled from ancient bog lands with fragile ecosystems. Many home improvement stores carry attractive composting supplies that eliminate the smell and mess once associated with this rich resource.

Most importantly, take the time to enjoy your garden. Taking little steps to reduce your family's environmental footprint creates a world of beauty and saves you money!

For more tips on how you can become more environmentally savvy check out www.projectequilibrium.org.

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The Mortgage Gallery: Brochure Development

The following three articles were part of a 16-page newspaper insert designed to both educate the Australian public on topics of real estate and advance the public's awareness of The Mortgage Gallery. The goal was to show The Mortgage Gallery as a reliable asset to both the individual home owner and the community. Rummie ink was responsible for the content development and the design of the final product.

Bignell, Mortgage Gallery redefine industry

After 17 years in the industry, The Mortgage Gallery continues to help Australians realize their dreams through a comprehensive lending and education service.

The company began in 1992 as one of Australia's first mortgage broking companies servicing the homebuyer. John Bignell, Chairman of The Mortgage Gallery, was frustrated with what he saw as a lack of assistance to homebuyers during his early years in the finance industry. Lack of education and resources led to a variety of issues for both lenders and the lendees. Bignell became among the first to introduce the concept of "mortgage broking" when he founded The Mortgage Gallery.

Since then, the company has assisted thousands of Australians match their loan needs with the correct lender. A complete range of loan products is available through a gallery of over 30 different bank and non-bank lenders.

The Mortgage Gallery has built a solid reputation while the industry has undergone dramatic changes. The company's core philosophy of customer focused service has resulted in thousands of Australians sail through the lending process with confidence. All Finance Managers are Accredited Mortgage Consultants of the MFAA and have lending experience or an industry recognised qualification. A rigourous selection process also ensures that Mortgage Gallery team members are among the best there is to offer.

The Mortgage Gallery also believes that educating the customer is paramount to the success of all parties involved. It is for this reason every team member takes the time to understand the unique needs of each client and what they hope to achieve through the lending process. With this information underhand the finance mangers will begin

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researching the loans that best meet the client's needs. From the beginning to the end The Mortgage Gallery provides a professional, confidential and informed experience.

This commitment to service led to The Mortgage Gallery receiving The Astute Golden Morgie Award for Lifetime Achievement in the Mortgage Industry in 2007. This is the most prestigious award available in the Australian Mortgage industry. This award recognises the single highest contributor to the industry as a whole. The Mortgage Gallery was also a finalist for the award in 2006, as well as a finalist for the Mortgage & Finance Association of Australia's Award of Excellence in 2008.

Just as Bignell pioneered the way for mortgage broking, The Mortgage Gallery will champion the lending needs of all Australians.

What The Mortgage Gallery has achieved for Heart Kids

HAVING A HEART WHILE DOING BUSINESS

The Mortgage Gallery is proud of their reputation as a company that cares about the welfare of all Australians. We strive to help those from all walks of life reach their goals and realize their dreams.

This philosophy extends to even the smallest members of our community. That is why the Mortgage Gallery strives to provide support to HeartKids, a nonprofit organization committed to the care and research in the area of congenital heart defects in children.

HeartKids offers support to families and their children during a time when they need it most. The organization provides information ranging from what to expect during hospital stays and operations to dealing with the day-to-day challenges of raising a child with a congenital heart defect.

More families are touched by this condition than many realize. Congenital heart defects affect 1 in 100 children making it the most common birth abnormality. More children will die from a congenital heart defect than all childhood cancers combined.

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Surgery is able to repair a portion of these conditions, though many children and their families are faced with the prospect that no cure currently exists for their condition.

HeartKids aims to help researchers through fundraising, community awareness and support. Monthly newsletters and campaigns have shed light on this epidemic with the tireless efforts of their staff and family community. However, more is needed.

It is for this reason that the Mortgage Gallery continues to champion the cause of HeartKids. Our team members directly contribute throughout the year, both monetarily and through their volunteer efforts.

The Mortgage Gallery plans to support HeartKids until there is a cure for each child.

Making the decision to invest

When looking to invest in property, there are many considerations which may include:
Arranging the most suitable loan for your circumstances. For example, should you choose a fixed rate interest only loan, a variable principal and interest loan or a line of credit?

- Obtaining accounting/taxation advice as to how best structure your property investment portfolio.
- Arranging a depreciation schedule.
- Should you invest in residential or commercial property?
- Should your investment be positively or negatively geared?
- Unlike buying your home, you should take the emotion out of buying an investment property. To this extent, using a Buyers Agent may be useful.
- Do your research. Again, this is where a Buyers Agent may assist.
- What are the pros and cons of managing the property yourself compared to engaging the services of a professional property manager?

For professional assistance in developing your property investment portfolio contact your closest Mortgage Gallery Finance Manager.

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OrganDonor.gov: Radio PSA

This 30-second public service announcement was developed for the U.S. Organ Donor campaign which falls under the government's Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Healthcare Systems Bureau (HSB), and Division of Transplantation.

SFX: HEART MONITOR BEEBS

CHILD: READ THIS ONE MOMMY.

MOTHER: HUMPTY DUMPTY SAT ON A WALL. HUMPTY DUMPTY HAD A GREAT FALL. ALL THE KING'S HORSES AND ALL THE KING'S MEN COULDN'T PUT HUMPTY TOGETHER AGAIN.

CHILD: THAT'S NOT HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO GO.

MOTHER: WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

CHILD: KING'S HORSES AND MEN CAN'T HELP HUMPTY DUMPTY. HE NEEDS TO GO TO A DOCTOR. MOMMY? DO YOU THINK THEY WOULD PUT HUMPTY DUMPTY ON A WAITING LIST?

VO: MORE THAN 94,000 PEOPLE ARE WAITING FOR THE GIFT OF LIFE. EACH DAY, ABOUT 77 PEOPLE RECEIVE ORGAN TRANSPLANTS. HOWEVER, 19 PEOPLE DIE EACH DAY WAITING FOR TRANSPLANTS THAT CAN'T TAKE PLACE BECAUSE OF THE SHORTAGE OF DONATED ORGANS.

SFX: COUGH

CHILD: HOW MUCH LONGER DO YOU THINK IT WILL BE MOMMY?

MOTHER: I DON'T KNOW SWEETIE. I DON'T KNOW.

SFX: (PAUSE - HEART MONITOR BEEBS STOP)

VO: TIME IS RUNNING OUT. VISIT ORGANDONOR.GOV TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE MANY WAYS YOU CAN POTENTIALLY SAVE A LIFE.

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Feature Article

Fighting for freedom, riding for freedom

“Riding gives me a feeling of what it was I fought for,” said Walt Heller, member of Viet Nam Veterans Motorcycle Club (VNVMC). “Coming back from Vietnam as veterans we didn’t feel much like anything, in fact we were made to feel like less than anything. But being part of this brotherhood and being able to stand up with guys that are going down range makes you feel a sense of comradery. The bond we gain in the military as servicemen and women, who work together in very strange circumstances sometimes, it makes for very good people. It has been my big learning experience in life.”

Heller, who served during the Vietnam War as an airborne fire fighter rescue specialist, is one of many veterans who returned home from their service and discovered the bonds that motorcycle riding could bring.

A rider for over 40 years, he learned his first lessons on a bike from his uncle, a World War II veteran who had purchased one of the government’s surplus motorcycles after the war ended. Heller’s uncle was one of several returning veterans that took advantage of the program, thereby introducing the motorcycle culture into mainstream America.

Through the 1950s to the mid-‘70s riders across the country formed clubs based off their riding preferences and lifestyle choices.

When service members began returning from Vietnam in the early to mid-‘70s, many felt out of place in the big motorcycle clubs. Many more opposed the lifestyle of one percent clubs, a term developed after the American Motorcyclist Association stated that 99 percent of motorcycle riders were law-abiding citizens, while the remaining one percent represented the outlaw lifestyle.

The VNVMC was born out of this desire to form a riding organization that embraced the veteran brotherhood.

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“If you look at veterans issues,” said Heller, “the term ‘brothers in arms’ fits all veterans of all services and of all wars. As us Vietnam guys started getting a little bit older and other wars happened, guys who were veterans of other wars and didn’t like the general riding scene needed a place of their own, so that’s how the Legacy VNVMC came about.”

Both the VNVMC and Legacy VNVMC’s primary mission is to support POW/MIA efforts and the families involved. Chapters, located around the world, work together to build rolling tributes, lay wreaths at cemeteries and memorials, and raise money to support the families and service members of today’s military efforts.

Poker runs are a common source of fundraising for VNVMC. When a group of motorcyclists gather together for such a ride they’ll each pay a set fee to ride with the rest of the group on a predetermined route. Along the way the group will stop and members will select a card. At the end of the trip whoever has the best poker hand typically wins a prize.

Members of VNVMC were joined on their recent poker run through southwestern Sicily by Italian veterans clubs. Together they raised over \$500, which was donated to Operation Helmet, an organization that provides free helmet upgrade kits to Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Lately the organization has taken on more of an international involvement as other countries around the world begin to see the immergence of their own veterans’ motorcycle clubs. Those clubs include countries such as Great Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Scandinavia, Italy and more.

For veterans still located overseas, such as Heller, access to these other organizations means more opportunity to share in what it means to have served ones country during a time of conflict.

“You meet men that have been in other wars, served in other ways and it’s a very humbling experience to sit down with these guys and talk about the things they’ve done,” said Heller. “When I talk to the Scandinavian brothers about what they did in Kosovo and

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Bosnia when they were with United Nation forces, I hear about some of the restrictions they had to operate under. We get to share these things together.”

Heller’s location in Sicily, where he serves as assistant fire chief of operations at Fire and Emergency Services Naval Air Station Sigonella, means he also has the opportunity to visit sites many only read about.

He has paid respects at such places as the Anzio War Cemetery in Rome; the Florence American Cemetery and Memorial; and the Catania War Cemetery, the final resting place of Italian and British service members. Someday, he hopes to make a trip to Normandy, France, the site of the Allied invasion in World War II to pay respects, and host the British Patriots Motor Cycle Club on a tour of World War II battle sites in Sicily.

Members of VNCCM and Legacy VNVMC are required to provide their Proof of Service (DD Form 214) upon joining the club as verification of their having served during a time of conflict. Heller says that the members do need to have served in direct combat, and that the club’s unit patch designates if members were in a combat zone.

Heller explains that not all riders are cut out for the commitments of the brotherhood, which include a strong dedication to POW/MIA efforts and continuing involvement within the brotherhood, even if a member should change location.

“The key is: we go out, we ride together, we do things together, and our interests are alike,” said Heller. “It is truly a brotherhood.”

His love of the brotherhood and love of the road have a common connection: freedom.

“I love the freedom to just get out on two wheels, to feel the wind and to feel more in tune with what it is we’ve done,” said Heller. “How would Europe be if we hadn’t come here to help topple the fascist regime? I don’t think people would have been able to just ride to Austria like I do every year. You would have to have tons of papers and permission to go. Having the ability to be free enough to travel freely...I don’t think we would have those freedoms if it wasn’t for so many people giving so much of themselves.”

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News Article

HC-4 Departs Sigonella, Joins Navy's Transformation

Helicopter Combat Support Squadron (HC) 4's "Black Stallions" began their relocation from Naval Air Station (NAS) Sigonella to their new homeport of Norfolk, Va. Jan. 7.

Four of the squadron's five MH-53E Sea Stallion heavy lift helicopters lifted off for a seven-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), before joining the remaining aircraft and crew in Norfolk.

The move is part of the Navy's ongoing transformation, which will ensure increased efficiency in the use of its forces.

"The Navy's transformation in Europe does not have a finish line," said Adm. Harry Ulrich, commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, in a press statement August 2005 by the U.S. Naval Forces Europe and 6th Fleet Public Affairs. "It is the process of continually evolving to capture operational and fiscal efficiencies. Homeporting HC-4 in Norfolk allows us to maximize resources available stateside while retaining the capability they bring through forward-deployed operations."

"We have the ability to reach out and touch naval assets all over by bringing people and supplies out to the ships, saving them time in station so they don't have to pull into port," said Cmdr. Eric Shirey, HC-4 commanding officer. "That's what is unique about the MH-53E. It has a large cargo capacity with a long range."

The squadron has recently undergone extensive training and modifications to prepare them for the deployment and the transformation of their overall mission. Many crew members are anxious to see what else is in store for the squadron within the coming months.

"I like my job and I like being able to see the aircraft fly," said Aviation Structural Mechanic 2nd Class Nicholas Trim. "I'm looking forward to what lies ahead."

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“One thing I’ve learned about being in the Navy is that they never keep you in one place long enough for you to get bored,” said Aviation Structural Mechanic Airman John Peace. “That’s one of the reasons I joined. There’s always a new adventure.”

“The troops have done a great job during this period of change,” said Shirey. “The change of homeport is just a small piece of the puzzle, and I really want to thank them for all that they’ve done.”

Already a 43-year-old squadron, the Black Stallions arrived at Sigonella Aug. 25, 1983. Through heavy lift and aerial logistics the squadron has participated in every major operation and exercise within the theater since they arrived. They have also provided support services for the 6th and 5th Fleet.

The local community has benefited from the Black Stallions presence as well. In 1992, they helped to divert the flow of lava from the town of Zafferana during the eruption of Sicily’s Mount Etna. They assisted in the movement and placement of several culturally important statues, and serviced the area with their fire fighting capabilities.

“I think HC-4 will miss Sigonella, and I think Sigonella will miss HC-4,” said Shirey. “We’ve always been a part of the community and have always participated in the Sigonella affairs as well as the local community. We’ll miss the families here, the food and the culture, but we’re ready for the upcoming mission.”

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