

Catch the Spirit...



Oklahoma District Directors

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Let Freedom Ring

It is July! We would like to say happy Independence Day to all our GWRRRA members in Oklahoma. This month Shawn and I would like to start out with something that all of us do at the beginning of our chapter gatherings and that is our Pledge of Allegiance:

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

The following is from the US Department of Veterans Affairs for Celebrating America's Freedom understanding the pledge of allegiance.

Thirty-one words which affirm the values and freedom that the American flag represents are recited while facing the flag as a pledge of Americans' loyalty to their country. The Pledge of Allegiance was written for the 400th anniversary, in 1892, of the discovery of America. A national committee of educators and civic leaders planned a public-school celebration of Columbus Day to center around the flag. Included with the script for ceremonies that would culminate in raising of the flag was the pledge. So it was in October 1892 Columbus Day programs that school children across the country first recited the Pledge of Allegiance this way:

I pledge allegiance to my Flag and to the Republic for which it stands: one Nation indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

Controversy continues over whether the author was the chairman of the committee, Francis Bellamy — who worked on a magazine for young people that published the pledge — or James Upham, who worked for the publishing firm that produced the magazine. The pledge was published anonymously in the magazine and was not copyrighted.

According to some accounts of Bellamy as author, he decided to write a pledge of allegiance, rather than a salute, because it was a stronger expression of loyalty — something particularly significant even 27 years after the Civil War ended. "One Nation indivisible" referred to the outcome of the Civil War, and "Liberty and Justice for all" expressed the ideals of the Declaration of Independence.

The words "my flag" were replaced by "the flag of the United States" in 1923, because some foreign-born people might have in mind the flag of the country of their birth, instead of the U.S. flag. A year later, "of America" was added after "United States." No form of the pledge received official recognition by Congress until June 22, 1942, when it was formally included in the U.S. Flag Code. The official name of The Pledge of Allegiance was adopted in 1945. The last change in language came on Flag Day 1954, when Congress passed a law which added the words "under God" after "one nation."

Originally, the pledge was said with the hand in the so-called "Bellamy Salute," with the hand resting first outward from the chest, then the arm extending out from the body. Once Hitler came to power in Europe, some Americans were concerned that this position of the arm and hand resembled the salute rendered by the Nazi military. In 1942, Congress established the current practice of rendering the pledge with the right hand placed flat over the heart.

Section 7 of the Federal Flag Code states that when not in military uniform, men should remove any headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, thereby resting the hand over the heart. People in military uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute. The Flag Code specifies that any future changes to the pledge would have to be with the consent of the president.

As we celebrate July 4th for Independence Day, let us remember why we always start our chapter gatherings with the pledge of allegiance. It shows the loyalty that we have to the United States of America.

We look forward to having lots of pictures from Wing Ding 43 in our next article.

Member Meet & Greet in Enid, Oklahoma

On June 25th at 9:00am, we are meeting at the Wee Too Restaurant in Enid, Oklahoma with household GWRRA members who live in the Enid, Alva, Woodward, and northwest part of Oklahoma. We hope that there are enough members who live in that area to possibly form a new GWRRA chapters. We are using Enid as the focal point for all three areas of households. If you know someone that lives in the area and rides a motorcycle, please let them know and come and join us for the meet and greet.

Out-of-State Visitation Travel Program

Start planning for the 2022 Out-of-State Visitation Travel Program which is going to be a fun time for all chapters. This is a good way to get people involved in visiting other chapters and rallies outside their own Oklahoma district for 2022. Going to Missouri, Texas, Kansas rally? Do you plan on visiting another states chapter gathering? Get 1 point for visiting an out-of-state chapter gathering and 3 points for visiting an out-of-state rally. You will even get 3 points for taking an on-bike/trike course or other seminar such as a training weekend if it is out-of-state. This cannot be in conjunction with any out-of-state rally. It does not matter how many members attend, or how many times during the year you attend. Your chapter gets 1 point for visiting an out-of-state chapter gathering or 3 points for visiting an out-of-state rally or training weekend for the entire chapter per visitation. Just added get 5 points for attending Wing Ding. Just take a picture with the host chapter, rally, or training weekend, do a short chapter article for the district newsletter, and make sure that it is on your monthly chapter calendar as a visitation to get credit. The chapter with the most points at the end of 2022 will get a \$100.00 food gift card to help defray the cost of your chapter Christmas party. Send in articles to Sandi Miller you Oklahoma District Newsletter editor <mailto:sandimiller6850@gmail.com> or call her at 918-344-7530. For more information, please contact John & Shawn Irons.

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