

Protecting PGR Trademarks

(Official PGR Communication)

Posted to Patriotguardmi.org 4/29/2014 Per the State Captain.

Patriot Guard Riders are defined by our mission statement. We are further defined by the respect and honor we show those entrusted to our care. Our mission and vision are clear. We often hear the words “Mission First”. Those words speak to the heart of the matter. Those we serve are first. The reason we exist is for them. They – are what – we are about.

Patriot Guard Riders is a 501(c)3 - non profit entity. As with all non-profit organizations we have images and words associated with our organization that portray what we do and who we are. These images and words are expressions of our mission. They are our trade marks (trademarks).

The time has come for us to protect our mission and those we serve by protecting our trademarks. There have been a few folks around the country that have decided to set up similar organizations using our marks. “Differences of opinion” concerning local leadership guidance have lead some to set up their own leadership and their own “Patriot Guard”. When differences like these arise, we ask all to focus on the mission and settle the differences as amicably as possible at the local level. Patriot Guard Riders leadership at all levels is readily available to assist if needed.

Putting those we serve in their rightful place is paramount. That place is – first. Mission First! The last thing a grieving family needs is to find themselves in a spat involving various groups. They should not be put in the position to choose one “Patriot Guard” group over another. During a time when they need strength and comfort they should only find caring and unified people at the ready. Some of these other groups make fund raising a priority. Some have had the audacity to ask for donations at funerals. Some even offer their services to political action groups.

Our vision and mission statements make it clear what Patriot Guard Riders is about. We ask that those that have joined our ranks to respect the principals and direction found in each document. If an individual or group desires to separate from Patriot Guard Riders and honor our veterans, that is fine; however, to prevent confusion for grieving families and others we serve, we believe those groups need to develop their own name and marks. The marks of Patriot Guard Riders are associated legally with only one group. The Patriot Guard Rider's marks are representative of our vision and mission statements. Our marks are not, and should never be, associated with raising funds at a funeral. Our mark is not and should never be associated with politics.

Patriot Guard Riders has always stated our mission is about honoring the fallen and not about us. There are times when folks have a great idea for the use of a Patriot Guard Rider's mark and want to share. Feel free to share your idea with national. Then there are times when some go beyond having an idea they want to share. Instead they decide to charge something to cover their costs. Sometimes it goes a step further and they see that they can make a little profit by adding more. Obviously, at this point it becomes more about profit than the mission. The sharing of the idea is the point at

which this should have stopped. There are times when Patriot Guard Riders may approve the use of a mark. However without that permission there ensues not only a breach of trust, but one of a legal nature as well.

Patriot Guard Riders desires to avoid all such cases. For these reasons the use of our trademarks is limited to the Patriot Guard National store or those agreed to by the State Captain within his or her state. State Captains may authorize limited use of the Patriot Guard trademarks for sale of state specific items within their state as long as 100% of the profits go to the state 501(c)3. Direct competition with the national store is not authorized by Patriot Guard Riders. For example, the sale of identical or nearly identical merchandise is prohibited. State Captains may purchase Patriot Guard Riders merchandise at the National Store for resale by their state at a significant discount. State Captains may also authorize the use of the marks for their state specific websites and veteran related charitable advertising as they see fit. When in doubt, please review the policy with the national staff.

We have found many unauthorized uses of Patriot Guard Rider's trademarks. We have begun requesting unauthorized users to cease the use of our marks. We intend to settle any differences amicably, but will not allow the continued profiting from the use of our marks.

The following is offered for the sake of transparency.

All Patriot Guard Riders board and staff members are volunteers. No one at any level receives any compensation for their work on Patriot Guard Riders activities.

The Patriot Guard Rider's store is contracted to an outside entity because of the enormity of the tasks involved. Patriot Guard Riders pay Fast Color a monthly fee based on the sales volume of that month. All monies for the merchandise sold by Fast Color goes directly to Patriot Guard Riders. Patriot Guard Riders pay Fast Color a percentage (less than 10%) of the monthly sales based on the sales volume of that month. That fee pays Fast Color for design, order, stocking, maintaining the Patriot Guard Riders store front, and for receiving and shipping orders to our members. Patriot Guard Riders volunteers monitor the cost of items and approve all Patriot Guard Rider's items sold. Any member may suggest a new item or discuss quality concerns with the PGR store managers.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully

Tony "Zap" Turner

*Patriot Guard Riders
National Communications Officer*