

Much More Than A Fishing Trip

On October 12 - 15, 2015 six Wounded Veterans, floated the San Juan River in New Mexico. They did not just catch fish, they also experienced the peace of mind that only nature can provide as well as the camaraderie of being with their military brothers and sisters.

A Veteran explained his emotions this way, "It is like having broken glass in my brain, I know that the pieces will never go away, but I am working on making the edges a little more rounded". All our participating Veterans have stated that there is a healing essence that only nature can provide. Maybe it is the solitude, the quiet, being on the river, watching the birds flying past or just being able to share the experience with others.

Most Veterans had little or no fishing experience, let alone fly fishing experience. All were supplied a guide and two days of float boat fishing and all caught fish. Or should I say that the fish caught "them". It was only catch and release but many pictures were taken that will last them a lifetime. (See above photo).

During our welcoming reception, all our Veteran guests were allowed to voluntarily share their personal journeys of recovery. It was their choice to participate only if they wished to and they all did. The comfort level and feeling of trust probably could not have ever been achieved in any other outside environment. It help us all understand that you can take the Warrior out of the war, but it is much more difficult to take the war out of the Warrior. Their recovering struggles are not only day to day, but hour to hour.

What is also humbling is how thankful these Veterans are for this opportunity. Our Veterans, who have given so much to our nation, way of life and freedoms are thanking us for a fishing trip.

This event was the 5th Annual White Mountain Fly Fishing Clubs Wounded Veteran San Juan River Event. Not only was this event sponsored by our Club and its membership, it was also sponsored by people in our community by their personal donations. We hope to continue the program in 2016 and hopefully expand the opportunity to even more Veterans.

To our Club members and outside sponsors we want to say Thank You for your support and let you know that your contributions have made a difference and direct impact on a Veterans life. You have helped to round the edges on their broken glass fragments.

Next years event is planned for October 10 - 13, 2016. If you would like to join our team of supporters or learn more about this event, please contact Mr. Barry Curseaden, 623-398-5242.