

THE RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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2024 Rucker Family Reunion Fredericksburg, Virginia

By Michael "Mike" P. Rucker

The 19th Rucker Family Reunion (since 1988) was held June 17 - 20, 2024 in Fredericksburg (FXBG) which claims the title "America's Most Historic City." The reunion organizers hope the participants agree with that claim after two full days of tours and lectures.

The Courtyard by Marriott hotel, in the center of FXBG's historic district, was a perfect setting for the venue within walking distance of many historic sites. Monday evening people arriving gathered in the meeting room. Dinner was on one's own.

The Rucker Family Society President, Dr. Chris Rucker, opened the event Tuesday morning with thanks to Price Wood and his committee for organizing the event.

The first speaker was Scott Harris, Director of Museum Programs, University of Mary Washington who gave an overview of some of the FXBG historic sites. He was followed by Genevieve Bugay, director Hugh Mercer Apothecary Shop who spoke on 18th century medicine, displaying the "tools" and methods used by "doctors" of the era, including a huge live leech which visitors were permitted to "cuddle."

On Tuesday afternoon, the group visited the Civil War Battlefield Museum and some brave souls, with a tour guide, walked the battlefield in the 100+ degree heat.

Dinner was held at the Gari Melchers Home and Studio across the Rappahannock River from FXBG. Jeannie Brydon gave a short history of John Rucker's connection to Lot #5 in Fredericksburg. This was followed by each participant introducing themselves and providing personal stories.

After dinner, Mike Rucker presented the new James River Batteau Song accompanied by a slide presentation about the history and importance of this unique design of vessel to the Commonwealth of Virginia during the 18th and 19th centuries. Price Wood presented an excellent overview of his family software program.

The Wednesday morning speaker was G. Scott Walker, Director Hallowed Grand Tours, who gave an energetic overview of FXBG's amazing and dynamic history. Phyllis Rucker and Alice Rucker presented their plans for the Rucker Family Y-DNA Project and the results of their investigation to date.

In the afternoon, reunion attendees toured downtown historic sites including the Hugh Mercer Apothecary Shop, Rising Sun Tavern, James Monroe Museum and viewed the "Old Stone Warehouse" situated on Lot # 5 purchased by John Rucker, son of Peter, in 1737. Visits were

made to Kenmore, home of George Washington's sister and FXBG's best preserved historic building, and to the nearby home of Mary Washington, George's mother.

The group then visited the newly rebuilt Ferry Farm, the "Boyhood Home of George Washington," which was recently reconstructed to emulate the original structure.

At dinner at the Gari Melchers Studio that evening, Susan Martin Mitchell explained the origin of the Virginia motto "Virginia is for Lovers" which her father's firm, The Martin Agency, developed, and which has become a most successful tourism promotion slogan. Subrina Rucker showed a video of her new company, StoryForge, to help new authors become published. Mike Rucker completed the evening function with the auction of Rucker Family Memorabilia.

The event concluded on Thursday morning with a delicious brunch at Courtyard by Marriott. Many participants continued their visits with family members until the afternoon.

The next Rucker Family Reunion is to be in Independence, Missouri, in 2026, which was also the site of the reunion in 2002.

Looking forward to seeing you there.

IN MEMORIAM

Charles Edward Rucker

by Phyllis Rucker

Charles Edward Rucker entered the world on Aug 21, 1946, in Brownsville, Oregon as the firstborn child of Jerome James Rucker and Imogene Ladela Kunkle. Charles passed away May 29, 2024, while undergoing heart surgery. He leaves behind five siblings: Dan in Albany,

OR., Wanda in Medford, OR., Alice in Portland, OR., Robert in Glendale, OR and Billy in Medford, OR. He also leaves behind his French bulldog, Mattie.

Charles graduated from Glendale High School in Glendale, Oregon in 1965. After graduation, he enlisted with the United States Air force and served as a Weapons Mechanic. During his four-year tour with the Air force, he served a year in Thailand and was also stationed at Joint Base Lewis McCord in Washington State and a base in the Midwest.

After his military service, Charles enrolled in Oregon State University and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Science. It was there that he became interested in genetic genealogy and heredity. After graduation, Charles worked on dairy farms in Colorado and in Oregon. Next, Charles moved to Salem, Oregon and made his career at a local cannery. He had several jobs there including driving a forklift until he retired. Later, he moved from Salem to Albany, Oregon and bought a house where he lived for the remainder of his life.

Charles had a love for animals, as his degree would suggest. He raised tropical fish while living in Salem and had several aquariums in his home. He also bred and raised prized guinea pigs. He bred the guinea pigs for specific characteristics and was well known as an expert in this field. He was also the President of the Rabbit Association, and he bred Pugs.

Charles had a heart for children as well as animals. He was a Big Brother and mentored several youths taking them fishing, hunting and go-carting.

Charles was a well-respected genealogist. He was a member of The Rucker Family Society for decades. He was also a Co-Administrator of the Rucker YDNA Project at Family Tree DNA. His knowledge of genetic

genealogy was invaluable to the Project. Through his work, he was able to determine the descendants of the sons of Peter Rucker, the first naturalized Rucker in the United States. Charles was very kind-hearted and generous. He purchased many DNA kits for Rucker relatives to further the research on his Rucker line. During the last two years, I had the pleasure of working with Charles closely and will treasure that relationship.

Charles was a very kind-hearted man. He continued to help others even after his passing by donating his organs. Later, his cremains will be interred at Eagle Point Military Cemetery in Medford, Oregon where he will join his parents.

Lineage: Charles² Edward Rucker, Jerome³ James, Eddie⁷ Robert, James⁶ Henry, Anthony⁵, Armistead⁴, Anthony³, John², Peter¹.

William Byron Arthur, Jr.

William Byron Arthur, Jr. passed away on January 22, 2024, at age 79 after a brief illness. Bill was born in March 1944 in Ashland, KY to William Byron Arthur, Sr. and Mary Graney Arthur. He graduated from Ashland High School where he starred on the football and track teams. Bill attended the University of Kentucky on a track scholarship, where he won an SEC championship as a member of the mile relay team and received his degree in Business.

While at the University of Kentucky, Bill married his wife, Diana Tracy Arthur. After graduation, Bill and Diana moved to St. Louis where he began his career at Peat Marwick Mitchell.

In 1970 Bill, Diana, and their children, Tracy and Mike, moved to Madisonville where Bill worked for Ligon Specialized Haulers. After leaving Ligon, Bill spent the majority

of his career at his CPA firm, Arthur & Company.

Bill loved to scuba dive, travel and attend University of Kentucky football and basketball games. He also loved spending time at Lake Beshear with his family and friends.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents, William Byron Arthur, Sr. and Mary Graney Arthur, and his wife Diana Tracy Arthur. He is survived by his daughter, Tracy Arthur Tupman (Rob) of Port Charlotte, FL, and son, William Michael "Mike" Arthur (Leslie) of Brentwood, TN, grandchildren, Logan Stuart, Bailey Arthur Gray (Marshall), William Jacob (Jake) Arthur, Evan Stuart, Stella Arthur, and Mary Jocelyn (MJ) Arthur, great grandsons, Jonas Gray and Mason Gray, and sister, Mary Frances Queen.

A Celebration of Life was held in Madisonville, KY at Southern Belle, 55 Union Street.

Lineage: William¹⁰ Byron Arthur, Jr., William⁹ B. Sr., b. 1911, Margaret⁸ Rucker, b. ca1879, John⁷ Rucker b. 1839, Basil/Bazzel⁶ J., Elzaphan⁵, Ephraim³, James², Peter¹.

Martha R. Diggle

Submitted by Mike Rucker

On the one-year anniversary of her death, we remember Martha R. Diggle, who died October 4, 2023, at the age of 79. Martha was born on May 11, 1944, in Virginia to Martha Cosby Rucker and Benjamin Ambrose Rucker Sr. She grew up in Arlington, VA and graduated from Yorktown High School in 1962.

She continued her education, earning degrees at Radford College and Ohio State University. She met and married a University of Michigan graduate, Raymond H. Diggle, Jr., in 1966. In her professional life, Martha taught math at several schools throughout the

US for 36 years before retiring from Mainland High School in 2009.

After retiring, Martha dedicated her time to traveling, dancing, playing tennis, and playing bridge.

Dawn Johnson

Submitted by Lawrence Clay

Dawn Johnson, 88, passed away on December 16, 2024, at McCook, NE. She was born April 8, 1936, to Ralph and Avis (Headley) Clay at Broken Bow, NE. She graduated from Broken Bow High School in 1953 as valedictorian. She then started a teaching career that spanned 45 years including 20 years in Nebraska rural schools and 25 years at Anselmo-Merna High School in Nebraska. While teaching she attended summer schools and correspondence schools and receive a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Nebraska, Kearney.

She married Clyde Johnson on March 3, 1961, at Pierre, SD. They had one son, Barry, who became a Church of God pastor.

Dawn is survived by her son, Barry (Faye) Johnson; sisters, Jean (Dillard) Anderson and Liz Baker; brothers Richard Clay and Lawrence Clay; and two grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Clyde Johnson; parents; brothers, Jim Clay, Roger Clay and Pat Clay; sisters, Sandra Clay Meinhardt and Anita Clay Campbell; and granddaughter Kara Dawn Johnson Haller.

Her lineage is: Dawn⁹ Clay Johnson, Ralph⁸ R., James⁷ W., Mary⁶ E. Rucker, Lemuel⁵, Ambrose⁴, Lemuel³, James², Peter¹.

Need Proof of Reuben to Joshua Rucker (Sr.)

Letter from Joanelle Mulrain

In the RFS newsletter Vol. 5, No. 3, Sept. 1994 on page 25, Anne Glover (then) listed herself as a descendant of Joshua (Sr.) Her lineage: Anne⁹ Rucker, John⁸ A., William⁷ H., Joshua⁶ T., Joshua⁵, Reuben⁴, Isaac³, John², Peter¹.

I, too, am trying to prove parentage between Joshua and Reuben for my application papers to the DAR.

My lineage is Joanelle⁹ Wood, Nelle⁸ B. Rucker, Walton⁷ T., Joshua⁶ T., Joshua⁵, Reuben⁴, Isaac³, John², Peter¹.

I have the gold marriage ring engraved "Joshua to Emily" - my mother gave it to me and I used it as my own wedding ring in 1978. So, this is very special to me.

Does anyone have proof of parentage between Reuben and Joshua Rucker? Any help would be appreciated.

My email is jmulrain@comcast.net,

Joanelle Wood Mulrain
Jacksonville, FL 32205
904-476-9099

Gideon Rucker - Guilty of Counterfeiting!

By Phyllis Rucker

I recently had a chance to go to the Kansas City, Missouri area. While on that trip, I visited the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Missouri, got a library card and began researching. I ran across this interesting article about Gideon Rucker (Gideon³, William², Peter¹).

Gideon was married to Elizabeth Cooke. As you will see in the article, both Gideon and other men named Cooke were involved in this crime.

Could it be that some of these Cooke's were his wife's relatives that he was involved with in the counterfeiting scheme? Regardless, it appears he was quite a scoundrel! Now for the article:

New York Journal published as The New York Journal or The General Advertiser March 25, 1773
Williamsburg, (Virginia) Feb. 25, 1773.

"On Tuesday last Capt. John Lightfoot arrived in Town from Pittsylvania, having executed the commission he lately went upon to that County, by instructions from the Governor, in apprehending and bringing down, under a strong guard, Benjamin Cooke, Joseph Cooke, James Cooke, Benjamin Woodward, and Peter Medley, informed against by one Short, formerly a Sheriff there, who had been concerned with them in counterfeiting and passing the Treasury notes of this colony, as also in making and circulating several false coins, particularly Dollars, Pistoles, and Half Pistoles. They were taken about two o'clock in the afternoon, at work in their shop; with all their tools for engraving, frames for making paper, a rolling press, dies for Dollars and Half Pistoles, besides a large quantity of Five Pound bills, and a plate for the Forty Shilling bills. Upon their arrival they were immediately carried to the Palace and examined by the Hon. Peyton Randolph, Esq; in presence of his Excellency the Governor, the Attorney General, and other Gentlemen, who thought proper to order them all to be committed to the public gaol, except James Cooke, nothing criminal appearing against him; and next Tuesday they will be carried down to York, for a further examination.

We hear of several others being committed to different county gaols, upon suspicion of being concerned in the same crime; and Gideon Rucker, and Shem Cooke, of Pittsylvania, John Hightower, and William Hightower, of Lunenburg, are fled, for the

apprehending of whom the Governor has been pleased to issue his proclamation, offering a reward of Fifty Pounds for each.

It is hoped that a nest of the fame pernicious crew to Society, in the province of North Carolina, are by this time apprehended, an express having been sent to the Governor there, acquainting him of sundry persons informed against; and thus a stop be put to the schemes and machinations of a gang of villains, who would aggrandize [sic] themselves upon the ruins of the public."

Notes from Jeannie Brydon:

Gideon Rucker, b. ca 1737, m. 9 Feb 1762 (Virginia Marriage Records, 1700-1840), Amelia Co., VA to Elizabeth Cooke, daughter of John Cooke. Later Gideon and The Cookes moved to Pittsylvania Co., VA. John Cooke deeded to Gideon Rucker, son-in-law, for love and affection, one hundred acres of land on Crab Tree Forks of Snow Creek, July 28th, 1774, Pittsylvania Co., Virginia.

In 1777, Gideon Rucker of Henry County [VA] took the oath of Allegiance. September 13th, age 40 years old.

Sometimes the name is spelled Cook and sometimes Cooke.

See Wood, p.239-240.

Peter Rucker
/ \
William Rucker Ann Rucker
m. Honor m. Shem Cook
|
Gideon Rucker
Elizabeth Cooke

The 2024 Alaska Outhouse Calendar

By Michael "Mike" P. Rucker

In January 2022, during Fiona's stay with Miki and Julie Collins, I visited them there for a few days. They live about 50 miles from the nearest road, 96 miles by air from Fairbanks and five miles across Lake Minchumina from the air-strip. Access is via the mail plane which visits Mondays and Thursdays, or by private plane. Their home is in the geographical center of Alaska within view of Mount Denali about 70 miles away. A very remote location.

Their log cabin home does not have an indoor toilet. A log cabin outhouse about 100 feet from their cabin provides relief. One subzero night I experienced the need to visit the facility. I pulled on my boots and jacket and made the trek to the facility. My headlamp beam shown ahead in the darkness. Suddenly two huge eyes at my height appeared just in front of the outhouse. My immediate reaction was, "OMG! Is that a grizzly bear?" But to my relief it was only "Mr. B" one of Miki and Julie's Icelandic horses.

The next day he was still there so I decided to snap some photos of him. My son Derek took several of me. I had no plans for the photos except for memories. Then, I learned of the annual Alaska outhouse calendar by the Fairbanks Newsmineer. With permission from Miki and Julie I submitted the photos to the Newsmineer. The newspaper used several of them, including a photo of me feeding "Mr. B" a horse snack for the December 2024 calendar photo.

New Rucker Intermarriage Found

By Jeannie Brydon

Inez⁷ Burrus. 6 Apr 1880, d. Dec 1968 (SS Death Index), Memphis, Shelby Co., TN; (Burrus family is in Wood, p.130).

Lineage: Inez⁷ Burrus, Charles⁶ J., James⁵ R., Sophia⁴ Rucker, Benjamin³, John², Peter¹.

Inez married 26 Nov 1898 (Mississippi Marriages, 1776-1935), Yazoo Co., MS, to William⁷ W. Rucker. Who was he?

Unfortunately, there were two William W. Ruckers, both born 1869, and lived in Yazoo Co., MS. After much research, I discovered that the William W. Rucker that married Inez was her third cousin: William⁷ W. Rucker, William⁶ W., John⁵ W., James⁴, Benjamin³, John², Peter¹. Wood, p.126.

Youth Articles

Note from Mike Rucker

We would like articles from young people - articles about their life, activities and/or experiences. Please send them to me at mikruc@aol.com.

Mary Goop and the Magic Words

By Price Sumner Sigal

Price Sumner Sigal has recently published a children's book titled, Mary Goop and the Magic Words.

It is about a young girl, (who is a pig) who has terrible manners. Once she learns about the power of "magic words," her life turns around for the better. It is a sweet story about manners and kindness.

It is available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble and other online retailers. The Instagram handle for it is @marygoopandfriends.

Lineage of Price Sumner Sigal: Beverly¹⁰ Anne Wilson, Sudie⁹ Rucker Mann, Sudie⁸ Elizabeth Wood, Sudie⁷ S. Rucker, William⁶ A. William⁵ B., George⁴, John³, John², Peter¹ and Wm.⁰ B.'s wife, Mary⁶ A. D. Rucker, Col. Ambrose⁵, Reuben⁴, Ambrose³, John², Peter¹.

Query of the Quarter Who were the Ruckers of Rucker Falls?

Rucker Falls is the largest of the waterfalls that run off the north face of Big Four Mountain about 40 miles east of Everett, Washington.

The total height of the falls is about 1,000 feet. There are three falls in the group with the tallest drop of 600 feet.

If you know the identity of the Rucker for whom these magnificent falls were named, please advise Mike Rucker (mikruc@aol.com) and we will include that information in the next Rucker Family Society Newsletter.

Editor's note: You might want to read about the Ruckers of Everett, Washington in the Rucker Family Society News-letter, Vol. 4, No. 3, p. 21, Sep 1993 found on the Rucker Family Society website.

A Biographical Sketch of Addison Clay Rucker

Compiled by Christopher D. Rucker, M.D., August 15, 1998

Lineage" Addison⁶ Clay Rucker, William⁵ B., George⁴, John³, John², Peter¹ and Wm. B.'s wife Mary⁶ A. D. Rucker, Ambrose⁵, Reuben⁴, Ambrose³, John², Peter¹.

Addison Clay Rucker was born 19 Feb 1843 in Amherst County, Virginia, the last of four children of William Ballenger Rucker and Mary Ann Dawson Rucker. Addison likely was educated at the plantation school, and attended the New Prospect Baptist Church at Pleasant View, where his parents had been members since 1844. In 1850, seven-year-old Addison was living with his parents, older brothers Daniel and William, and sister Susan. By 1860, Daniel and Susan were married and living elsewhere, and Addison and William were still at home, helping to run their father's farm. Their parents, no doubt, welcomed the help, as the farm was large and successful, and required the labor of at least a score of slaves.

The spring of 1861 was an exciting and uncertain time for the residents of Amherst County, with impending civil war. Virginians voted for secession on May 23, and the men of Amherst responded to their new country's defense by enlisting in the local company of cavalry and two companies of infantry. It would be surprising if an eighteen-year-old was not eager to join his friends and relatives for a chance to "see the elephant" and do his patriotic duty, and one can imagine the family conference to decide how many Rucker sons would be needed to run the farm. William promptly enlisted, and Addison apparently stayed home, as he was still there in August, when he donated \$150 to help fund one of the local Confederate companies.

William Ballenger died 28 Dec 1861,

and Addison assumed even more of the responsibilities of running the plantation. When the Confederacy began drafting men the next spring, Addison claimed an exemption as an overseer of his slaves, rather than leave them and the land unattended. His duties at home became even more critical when his mother died 11 Mar 1863, leaving him the 353-acre mansion tract. Congress took steps that spring to remove the exemption for slave overseers, and Addison responded by successfully bidding \$75 for a four-year contract to deliver the mail between Big Island and Pedlar Mills. That contract, beginning 1 Jul 1863, provided lasting exemption from the draft for the remainder of the war. No muster roll records confirm the claim that he served under John Mosby, and his name is not found in that unit's history.

The war must have brought great hardships to the Ruckers and other Southerners, not the least of which was the loss of their slaves. Large farms could not be worked profitably without them, and the post-war years saw many properties divided by sale. Addison persevered for several years in Amherst, and on 1 Apr 1868 married Lucy Lyle Snead at her family's residence in Rockbridge County. By 1870 they were farming in the Pedlar District of Amherst County, employing two workers, and their first child, William, was one year old. At least two more children were born in Amherst, Robert Snead and Mary Ann Dawson, so that the family was still on the home-place, 13 Aug 1873, when Mary came. Evidently, Addison saw a better opportunity elsewhere, so that by 1880 the family was in Bath County, Millboro Township. Addison was now a miller, and the family had grown to include five-year-old Henry, three-year-old Charles M. and infant Addie, born in April.

Another move occurred sometime in the next twenty years, for the family was renting at 913 E. Jefferson Street in Charlottesville by 1900. Addie C.

was still at home, and 17-year-old Edgar P. and 11-year-old Lyle W. were the last two of Mary Ann's eight children.

Robert Snead had died 30 Sep 1895 while juggling a daytime job and nighttime studies at the University of Virginia School of Medicine. Addison was city engineer and street commissioner, a member of the High Street Baptist Church and the Widow's Sons Masonic Lodge No. 60.

True to his peripatetic nature, Addison moved from Charlottesville in 1901. His son, William H., had moved to Newport News by 1898, where he lived until his death at age fifty-eight. If Addison joined his son at some point, he was not listed in the city directory. However, in 1906 he is listed in Roanoke as a surveyor and engineer. Sons Charles M., Edgar P. and Lyle W. were clerks for the railroad in Roanoke the following year, but do not appear any later in Roanoke.

Addison died of "La Grippe" 10 Oct 1906 in Newport News, his occupation listed as food inspector. He is buried in the northeast of Charlottesville's Oakwood Cemetery, the third row, with his wife (died 7 Jul 1911), son Robert Snead, son Charles Manley (a veteran of the Spanish-American War, died 22 Feb 1978), and Charles's wife Charlotte Goodwin (5 Feb 1881 to 26 Jun 1965). Seven children survived Addison and Lucy Lyle Snead. Earlier census data says that six of eight children were alive in 1900, but this is evidently in error. Sudie Rucker Wood states that daughter Mary wed A. R. McNeil in 1899; both of her parents' obituaries list Mary's last name as Owen, which may represent a second marriage, not noted by Wood.

A New Chapter in the Life of A. C. Rucker

By Jeannie Brydon

February 2025, Doug MacLeod sent me the following article from the Lynchburg newspaper, Sept 12th, 1901, p.8.

"Mr. Ryan's Estate"

"Mr. Thomas Ryan who is interested in a charitable enterprise in Lynchburg, has employed as the super-intendent of his large estate in Nelson [County. VA], Mr. A. C. Rucker of Charlottesville.

The Charlottesville Daily Progress wrote:

"Mr. A. C. Rucker, of this city, has been appointed superintendent of Mr. Thomas F. Ryan's estate at Oak Ridge, Nelson County, and also general manager of the large sheep ranch of Messers Ryan and Woods. These properties comprise almost five thousand acres of land. Mr. Ryan has recently greatly improved the Oak Ridge property, and there is now no more beautiful place in Virginia.

"As is well known, Mr. Rucker has been for years our city engineer and commissioner of streets and had been elected in July for a term of two years which he resigned on his present position. There has never been a more faithful and conscientious officer in the city and his departure is universally regretted.

"Mr. Rucker's family left today for their new home at Oak Ridge."

At The time, I pondered: Who was A. C. Rucker and why would he want to leave a good job in Charlottesville to be overseer of a farm in Nelson County? And who was Thomas Ryan?

I googled Ryan and found he was an American tobacco, insurance and transportation magnate. He was known as a cutthroat businessman and at one time, had controlling interest in

The Rucker Family Society Newsletter

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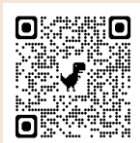
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30 companies. By 1900, he became the wealthiest man in Virginia, the South, and the 10th wealthiest man in the U.S. He founded The Union Tobacco Company, and it merged with his greatest competitor, James Duke of North Carolina, forming The American Tobacco Company.

In 1901, he returned to his native Virginia and purchased Oak Ridge Farm in Nelson County, Virginia and hired Mr. A. C. Rucker of Charlottesville to be his overseer.

The job must have appealed to a former farmer, but it didn't last very long as by 1906, A. C. Rucker was living in Roanoke.

There were a lot of Ruckers with the initials A. C., e.g. Ambrose Clark Rucker. It took a while searching, but I finally discovered that he was Addison Clay Rucker. And then I found Chris's article on him.

SAVE THE DATE!!

PLAN ON COMING TO OUR 2026 RUCKER FAMILY SOCIETY REUNION

**SEPT 23 - 26, 2026
INDEPENDENCE, MO.**

The schedule of events will be announced in the upcoming months. If you know Ruckers that live in the area close to Independence, please spread the word!!

Our theme is Wagons Ho!!!!



The Rucker Family Society

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