

SOUL SMOKE NEWS LETTER

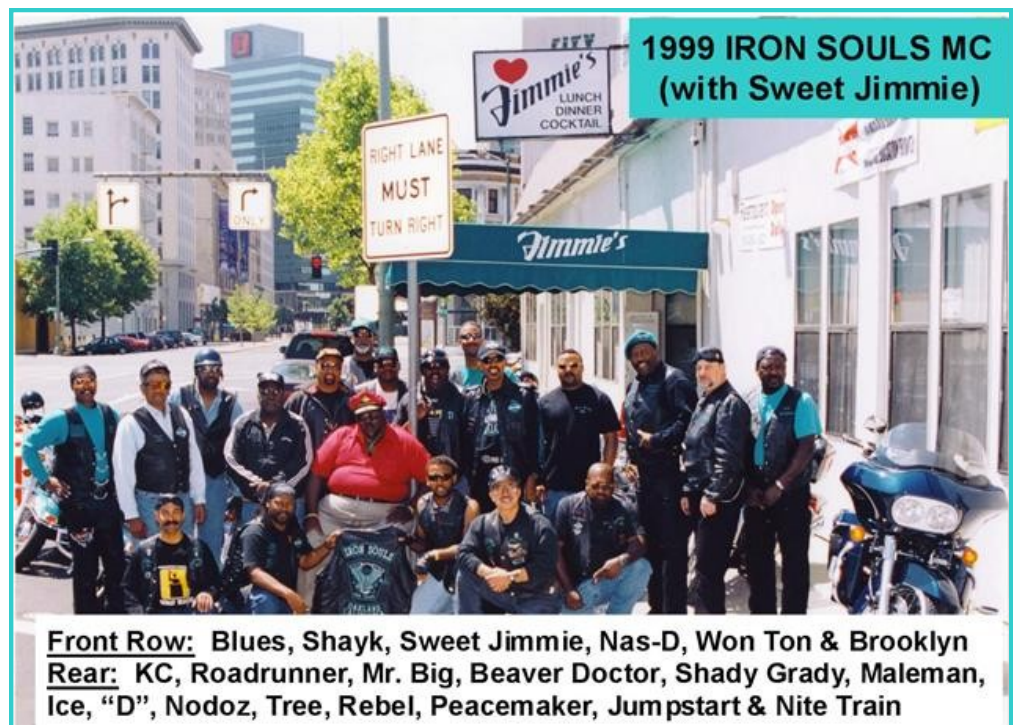
EDITOR
MACGYVER



SPECIAL EDITION

SWEET JIMMIE

SWEET JIMMIE = HONORARY MEMBER #2 IN REMEMBRANCE



1999 IRON SOULS MC
(with Sweet Jimmie)

Front Row: Blues, Shayk, Sweet Jimmie, Nas-D, Won Ton & Brooklyn
Rear: KC, Roadrunner, Mr. Big, Beaver Doctor, Shady Grady, Maleman, Ice, "D", Nodooz, Tree, Rebel, Peacemaker, Jumpstart & Nite Train

When the Iron Souls first started we had our meetings at Walt's Restaurant. We met at Walt's for about four years. He really treated us nice. Walt passed away of cancer in early February 1997. The Iron Souls were without a home. We bumped around meeting at many different places. Zephyr knew Sweet Jimmie well enough to ask if we could have club meetings on Saturday mornings at his club. Little did we know Jimmie's or Linda's Restaurant would be our home for the next nine years from late 1997 until 2006.

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Photo courtesy of Roadrunner

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SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)

Sweet Jimmie and his wife Linda allowed us to have E-board meetings on Friday evenings and club meetings on Saturday mornings once a month. Sweet Jimmie and the Iron Souls got to know each other very well. On the weekends when there was a cover charge to get into the club, Jimmie let us in for free. The Iron Souls had some great times dancing and socializing on the weekends. You can see an example of the fun we had, because we are on a video he made entitled "I still got it". Some of the members have the video.

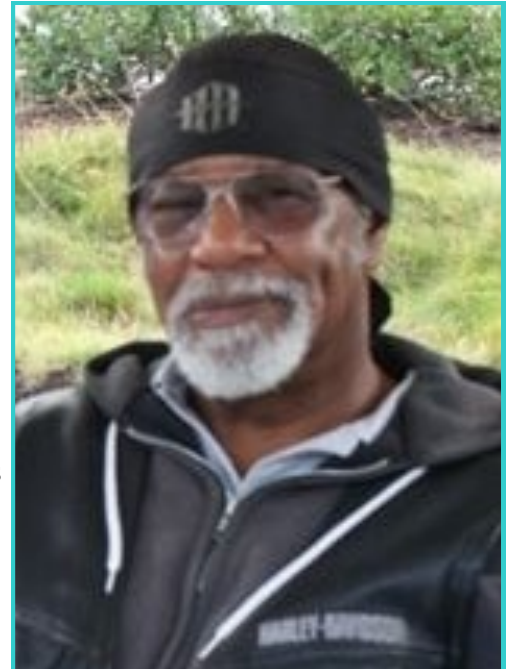
This passed Saturday, 4/17, we fulfilled our project Earth Day 2010. We take care of two blocks. We chose the block in front of Sweet Jimmie's old site years ago when the club was open. We continue to do this in his honor. Sweet Jimmie will be missed. He was first class, always down to earth and treated us special.

Maleman

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The passing of "Sweet Jimmie" has a place of honor with the Iron Soul MC for priceless and countless reasons. "Jimmie" allowed the ISMC to use his nightclub / restaurant as the "Home" for ISMC for many years. During those years ISMC members were always treated as VIP guests inside the famous "Sweet Jimmies Nightclub". Jimmie also supported all the ISMC events and was considered "Family". The ISMC eventually honored Jimmie by accepting him as one of the two Honorary Members of the ISMC. Another one of those priceless reasons for honor is exemplified by my personal interaction with Jimmie. During my time as a "hang around" with the club, Jimmie gave me so much welcome it initially took me by surprise. As you know "hang arounds" wear no visible sign of club connection as such. So one morning when I was "hanging around" waiting for the club to finish business...I was outside when Jimmie arrived in "the Escalade".

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SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)

He would always greet me and offer me something to drink. On the occasions I took up his offer, he would never take my money, even though he didn't know who I was. One morning he noticed I was wearing a ILWU (International Longshoreman Warehouse Union) Pin and asked why..."Local 29" I replied (which is the chapter out of San Diego)...the Jimmie million dollar smile appeared as everyone knows Jimmie is THE "ILWU" being one of Oakland's old school Longshoreman. From that point on Jimmie called me "local 29" and my money was never accepted in the club whether on the morning of meetings or just taking advantage of the clubs night entertainment...I felt very honored to have a nickname from Jimmie and always to be personally invited to various "Sweet Jimmies" events.

A memory that stands out for me, was when I attended his 70th birthday party. When I wished him Happy Birthday, he gave me the "ILWU handshake" and then made me sit down as he introduced me to various other guests and stated very proudly "...this is 'Local 29', a brother from my motorcycle club".

Jimmie embodied the ISMC Creed, "Brotherhood, Respect, Unity BRU"

I will miss Jimmie, but know his legend lives here in Oakland, in my soul and beyond...

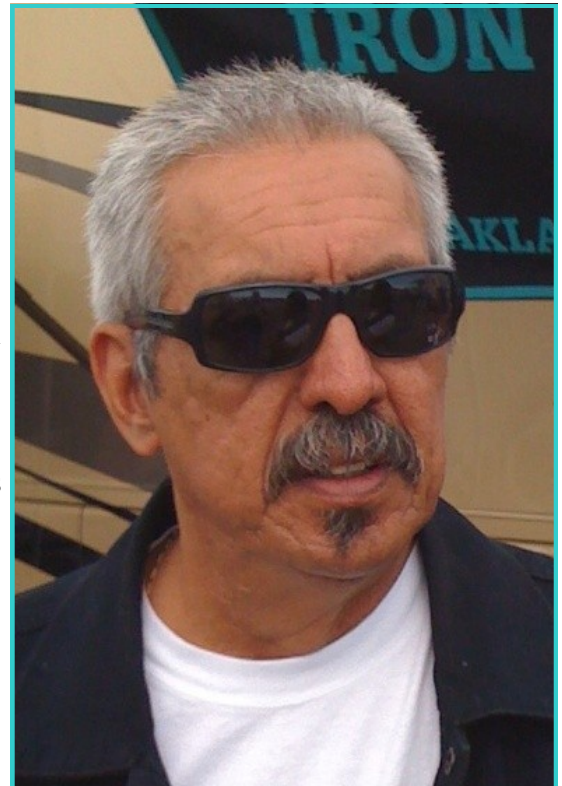
**Heavy K,
President**

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I met Sweet Jimmie when I was starting my prospect period. I was sitting in the foyer at Sweet Jimmie's, when he drove up and came in. He told his driver that he lost his contact and, like the good prospect that I was, I helped in trying to find his contact. After about 15 minutes of looking for his contact he took me aside and told me that he was f***** with his driver, and that he was sorry he got me involved in his prank. He then took me into his bar area and gave me a bottle of "Patron" and told me to drink as much as I wanted. The Big Man had a fantastic sense of humor. From that day on Sweet Jimmie never forgot who I was and every time I saw him he would offer me a drink. Little did I know that Jimmie would never forget who I was or what I did. Jimmie was a kind man, had a sense of humor, and I believe he never forgot those that treated him with respect.

3-HAWKS

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SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)



Arriving at the Good Hope Church. Negotiator leads the pack in the standing room only group.

Arriving at the Good Hope Church for Memorial Services in honor of Sweet Jimmie.



Arriving at the Good Hope Church. Leading the pack Mack, Maleman, RG, T-Bone and Mr. Big. Not seen is Richie Rich aka Bling Bling and MacGyver taking pictures.

SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)



Top left to right: Negotiator, Richie Rich, Nodoz, Mack, Jumpstart. Neither rain or shine could stop all of us from showing up and paying our respects to Sweet Jimmie.

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SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)

Sweet Jimmie's heart was bigger than he was. It wasn't just lip service that he took ISMC in as family, and treated us as such. He had a photo of us all on the wall that he called a family photo. He was a real man in all ways.



Jumpstart

* * * * *

Jimmy treated us better than family. We would have continued to meet at Sweet Jimmie's today if it didn't close down.

He always made us feel welcome there. It was like our second home. It was quiet, and it was ours for the time we spent there. We had all the privacy we wanted at our meetings. We liked to park our bikes and hang outside at Jimmie's. We also "Adopted a Block" to clean up because Jimmy's was our own backyard neighborhood.

We all loved the food at Jimmy's!!! Everyone had their own particular favorite...Mine was pork chops with hashbrowns, toast and eggs. Others were catfish or fried chicken with the same. I never watched my diet at Jimmie's. The food was always delicious and plentiful, tasted just like home cooked. The price was always reasonable. The waitresses were all nice and extremely accommodating to us. I always tipped them big.

Ain't nothing been and never gonna be the same like Jimmie's.



Won Ton



Group shot Photo
courtesy of Roadrunner

SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)

Historically, the Iron Souls Motorcycle Club (ISMC) was established and held its' meetings at Walt's BBQ on MacArthur Boulevard in Oakland. However, as time passed, Walt's was unable to meet the increasing needs/criteria of the ISMC and its' members. It became necessary to seek another place where we could hang out and hold our meetings. Thus began our relationship with Sweet Jimmie, and his establishment, which served as a focal point of meeting and/or just hanging out. His wife Linda managed the restaurant that served breakfast, lunch and dinner. Typically, Linda opened early for breakfast on Saturdays for the club's monthly meetings. Prior to monthly meetings, the E-Board held its' meetings there in the evening with dinner and liquid refreshments of choice. Favorite dishes included fried chicken, fish (catfish or red snapper), pork chops with sides of green beans, greens, red beans, corn bread, etc. Prominently displayed on restaurant walls were pictures of the ISMC. Our members needed only to sport their club colors to gain entrance without charge to Sweet Jimmie's night club's evening entertainment & performances. In addition to monthly meetings, we used Sweet Jimmie's club facilities to host retirement or going away parties for our club members. As one of ISMC's efforts to enhance décor in the community, the ISMC voted for and maintained street landscaping on the dividers in front of Sweet Jimmie's establishment.



Unfortunately, nothing good lasts forever, evident by the closing of Sweet Jimmie's and the recent passing of Sweet Jimmie himself. The good times we've had at Sweet Jimmie's are happenings of the past leaving us with fond memories of another chapter in life. Although some of us didn't know Sweet Jimmie personally, as an organization the Iron Souls Motorcycle Club reaped the benefits of his good heart, generosity and support, which earned him a deserving award as an Honorary Member of the ISMC.

Our loss was also Oakland's loss. Not only did we lose a pioneer in Oakland's African American community and entertainment industry, but the community lost a venue where people of color and others could gather and interact in the true spirit of diversity.

Roadrunner

* * * * *

My experiences with Sweet Jimmy will always be remembered & be very fond to me. Anytime we showed up to the club, we were treated as royalty. Jimmy considered the ISMC family: head of the line privileges, no VIP membership cards needed, drinks, food, friendship and fond memories, some of which I cannot elaborate on, but I can say "good times for all." He was a quite person, a man of few words & would just sit back, observe and run his business. Jimmy & his establishment will be greatly missed.

Nas-D

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SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)

"Sweet" Jimmie Ward, Bay Area club owner, humanitarian, dead at 74

By Cecily Burt and Sean Maher

Oakland Tribune

Posted: 02/10/2010 05:30:48 PM PST

Updated: 02/11/2010 08:16:06 AM PST

"Sweet" Jimmie Ward was a big man whose friendship and Southern-style hospitality were legendary, and whose largesse and good word helped elect more than a few judges and politicians. But, friends say, Jimmie Ward never forgot his blue-collar roots and he always opened his heart and wallet to help those who were down and out.

"He could dine with the president, and he could eat with the hobo," said longtime friend Eddie Dillard.

Ward, who died Feb. 5 at age 74, came to the Bay Area from Louisiana in 1955 and quickly got acquainted with the local bars and the ladies. He landed a gig as a bartender at the 4500 Club in 1961, and continued to tend bar at various clubs, even after going to work as a longshoreman. By 1969, he had opened his own place, the Lamppost on Telegraph Avenue.

He opened Sweet Jimmie's on 17th Street in 1982, and when that building was damaged in the Loma Prieta earthquake, he launched a large club called Jimmie's around the corner on San Pablo Avenue.

Ward was a master entertainer and he loved to show folks a good time, strolling through the scene in his trademark yachting cap. The venue quickly gained a reputation as a friendly nightspot where patrons young and old, dressy or casual could dance to oldies or reggae one night, check out a comedy routine the next, or work up enough nerve to get onstage and perform during a talent contest.

It was a place where good-natured rivalries and ribbing were honed while rubbing shoulders with fellow pigskin fans on football Sundays.

Ward was a joker, going so far as to hold a "wake" complete with red and gold painted casket carried by six pallbearers and a reverend standing by to deliver the eulogy when the San Francisco 49ers played the Dallas Cowboys (Ward's favorite) in the NFC title game in 1993. The fans who showed up for the barbecue and to watch the game, were "90 percent 49er faithful," Ward said, chuckling, to the Tribune at the time.

Ward also blazed new ground. Though a devoted drinker of Beefeaters gin (on the rocks, a son said), he launched an alcohol and smoke-free night every other Monday to suit his customers who loved to come to the club to dance and socialize but preferred not to be around people who were drinking.

Dillard, president of the Oakland Black Board of Trade and Commerce, was working for the city of Oakland when he met Ward. Ward had applied to the city for a business loan to open the Lamppost, and Dillard handled the details. The men became good friends and worked on many projects together over the years, from voter registration drives to toy giveaways and political events.

Dillard said that Ward cared deeply about Oakland and worked hard to boost the city and its residents, but his friend didn't toot his own horn.

"He was the catalyst behind getting Olympic boxer Andre Ward to help recruit volunteers for a voter-registration drive," Dillard said. "He wasn't just a club owner like people think he was. He was much more than that."

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SOUL SMOKE NEWS LETTER

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ISMIC



MacGyver



Brotherhood, Respect Unity

SWEET JIMMIE (CONT.)

That voter registration effort resulted in 200 volunteers going door to door in every census tract in West Oakland, Dillard said. Ward also bought toys to give out to children at Christmas every year, served on the board of Cole School in West Oakland, and provided turkeys for needy families at Thanksgiving. A charitable organization he founded provided scholarships and dental and health care for disadvantaged youths.

"He was concerned about the quality of life for people, particularly African-American people," Dillard said. "You don't replace someone of that caliber, because he touched so many lives that didn't even know him. He was a kind-hearted man who believed in sharing the gifts that God gave him."

Ward grew tired in recent years after troubles with city officials over security at Jimmie's led him to sell the club, thus giving up a lifelong passion that had been keeping him energized, said son David Ward.

"A month ago, he said to me, 'I'm tired, I'm ready to go,' " Ward said Wednesday. "Let me tell you. If he still had a club to run, if he was still in the mix making sure everybody was having a good time, he wouldn't be tired." David Ward illustrated his point by recounting the legendary story from the early days of his father's bartending career when a jealous woman stabbed him in the chest. The blade missed his heart by a fraction of an inch, David Ward said.

"But he just bandaged it up. He stuck around and closed the club, and he didn't go to the hospital until after it was all closed up. That's how much that work meant to him."

It was while in the hospital for his wounds that Ward garnered his nickname, given him by doctors who "thanked sweet Jesus" for Ward's miraculous survival.

In the end, Ward's sons said, they took two lessons from their father as the most important.

"He always used to tell me, 'Take care of those who take care of you,' " David Ward said. "That, and he hated lies. You could get away with stealing from him before he'd forgive you for telling a lie."

Another of Ward's sons, the Rev. Steven Ward, said his father passed on a maxim he has carried his whole life.

"He believed in honesty in all things," the reverend said. "He told me, 'Your word is the only thing you can give, and keep.' "

Ward is survived by first cousin and mother figure Leola Johnson, wife Linda Ward, 13 children, 15 grandchildren, a great grandson and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

A memorial service for Ward, where members of the community are welcome to share their memories, will begin at 7 p.m. today at Good Hope Church, 5717 Foothill Blvd., Oakland. A public funeral Friday will follow at noon Friday in the same location.

END