

PROCLAMATION

June 14, 2003 is
Alf Larson Day in
The City of Crystal

WHEREAS, Alf Larson is a WWII Veteran and former POW now residing in the City of Crystal; and
WHEREAS, He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in March 1939 at the age of 22 and was stationed in the Philippine Islands at the time of the Japanese invasion in December 1941; and
WHEREAS, He and his comrades were forced to surrender to the Japanese on April 9, 1942; and
WHEREAS, He became a prisoner of war that day with approximately 7,500 American soldiers; and
WHEREAS, On April 12, 1942, he and his comrades began a forced walk of about 70 miles on a rugged, mountainous peninsula named Bataan in what is now called the "Bataan Death March"; and
WHEREAS, The captured soldiers were forced to walk six days without food or water in unbearable heat and under barbaric conditions and treatment by soldiers of the Japanese Imperial Army; and
WHEREAS, thousands of American and Filipino soldiers died at that time; and
WHEREAS, To many it will be remembered as one of the most horrific events in U.S. military history; and
WHEREAS, Those who survived the march were later brutally mistreated in slave labor camps; and
WHEREAS, Alf Larson lived and tells his ordeal in the book, Footprints in Courage: A Bataan Death March Survivor's Story written by Kristin Gilpatrick and Rick Peterson; and
WHEREAS, His story and experience should never be forgotten, but rather, that people would remember the courage, faith, and sacrifices made at Bataan; and
WHEREAS, Alf Larson would like all Americans to remember that the price of freedom is high and the men and women on Bataan paid that price in full.

NOW THEREFORE, I Mayor Peter Meintsma on behalf of the Crystal City Council and the people of Crystal do hereby proclaim June 14, 2003 as Alf Larson Day in the City of Crystal.

Dated: June 3, 2003

Peter E. Meintsma, Mayor