

# **BIG THUNDER RUN**

**Help Those Who Fought For Our Freedom**



 *R.J. Zayat*

**14th ANNUAL**  
**Sept. 13th, 2015**

**Visit our website: [www.rollingthunderil1.com](http://www.rollingthunderil1.com)**  
**E-mail: [rollingthunderil1@gmail.com](mailto:rollingthunderil1@gmail.com)**

# NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY



Fulfilling Our Nation's Promise

September 18, 2015

[www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil)



## Illinois Soldiers Still Wait

### Illinois POW/MIAs

WWII	1310
Korean War	417
Vietnam War	60

### Rolling Thunder® Mission Statement "To Correct The Past and Protect The Future"

Rolling Thunder Inc.'s major function is to publicize the POW/MIA issue. To educate the public of the fact that many American prisoners of war were left behind after all past wars. To help correct the past and to protect future Veterans from being left behind should they become Prisoners of War/Missing in Action. We are committed to helping Disabled Veterans from All Wars.

I KNEW I COULD FIGHT,  
I HOPED I WOULDN'T DIE,  
I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD STILL  
BE HERE AFTER EVERYONE ELSE  
HAS GONE HOME

Alone from a plaque at the National Vietnam Veterans  
Art Museum, Chicago, IL.

Rolling Thunder® Charities  
★ COURAGE ★



PATRIOTISM ★ HONOR ★ SACRIFICE

Rolling Thunder®  
**POW/MIA**



Illinois Chapter

# Thank you for visiting Rolling Thunder®, Illinois Chapter #1

Chapter One, from Warrenville, Illinois (west suburban Chicago).

The major function of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. is to publicize POW-MIA issues: To educate the public that many American prisoners of war were left behind after all previous wars and to help correct the past and to protect future veterans from being left behind should they become prisoners of war-missing in action.



My name is Bill Sharpness, President of our chapter.

I would like to thank everyone in the United States and other countries that helped in the release of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, a live prisoner of war from Afghanistan. This mission is over but the POW issue is not. Chapter 1 Illinois at this time does not know of any live American POW's but that does not mean there are none. There are thousands of missing and some of those could very well be alive and being held. Our chapter will now look into the accountability of the missing in action. This is an American duty and something our politicians don't seem to care about. Their families deserve an answer. If anyone knows of, or has information on any missing service member, please let us know. We will take on the issue and won't quit. We will get results. Our chapter thanks all for their support. Ninety seven cents of every dollar we raise goes to the POW/MIA issue or helping veterans in need. No one gets paid here. We welcome you to join us. You do not have to be a veteran, or own a motorcycle or even a car. We are just a group of guys and gals, young and old trying to do the right thing. Regarding Bowe, we all heard of questions and even allegations regarding Bowe's capture. Our attitude was the questions didn't matter, get him home first and then let the military handle it. We have every confidence that our military knows how to resolve these circumstances.

Rolling Thunder®, Inc. is a non-profit organization. Members donate their time because they believe in the issues we are working on.

[RollingThunderIL1@gmail.com](mailto:RollingThunderIL1@gmail.com)

Bill "Hawk" Sharpness  
President

630-669-1317

**!!! REMEMBER !!!**

**"IT'S AN AMERICAN DUTY TO ACCOUNT FOR ALL  
PRISONERS AND THOSE MISSING"**

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# Gold Star Pin

Just a tiny gold pin. A token from this country in return for the life given for our freedom. This pin is sent to the widow, parents and other next of kin of a military person killed in action or serving during a military conflict.



It began with WWI, from April 6, 1917 to March 3, 1921; WWII, from September 8, 1939 to July 25, 1947; Korea, from June 27, 1950 to July 27, 1954; military conflict from June 30, 1958 'till the Vietnam War July 1, 1958 to the present.

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## What is a Gold Star Mother?

What is a Gold Star Mother?

A Mother whose grieving heart reaches out to comfort another.

A Mother who feels compassion when casualty lists are read.

A Mother who suffered the heartache of hearing her son was dead.

A Mother whose dreams were shattered on a battlefield afar.

A Mother who has the privilege of wearing the little gold star.

A Mother who walks so bravely to a fallen hero's grave.

A Mother who loves the nation her son gave his life to save.

This is a Gold Star Mother —

A Mother with courage and pride, whose son went forth to battle and in line of duty died.

Author unknown



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# Who is Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter One?

	Our fundraising efficiency is 97 1/2%, that is, we spend 97 1/2 cents out of each fundraising dollar on Veterans and the POW/MIA cause.
	Our local Chapter does not have administrative expenses such as salaries, perks, bonuses, fees or offices. We are all volunteers who believe in our mission.
	We are registered as a tax exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code.
	Our tax deductible, 501 (c) (3), charitable arm, is Rolling Thunder Charities.
	Our chapter, Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter One, is a 501 (C) (4) non-profit organization.
	Our Federal EIN # can be supplied upon request.
	We are registered with the Illinois Secretary of State as a non-profit organization.
	We are registered with Illinois Attorney General as an Illinois Charity Organization.
	We file Illinois Form AG990-IL annually with the Illinois Attorney General.
	We file Federal Form 990 annually with the Internal Revenue Service.

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## Where does the money go?

(97 ½ cents of every fundraising dollar).

Because of fund raising, donations and support of Rolling Thunder IL1, we have been able to help the following Veteran facilities over the last several years:

Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans	\$48,000
LaSalle Veteran's Home	\$150,000
Manteno Veterans's Home	\$57,500
Hines VA	\$51,000
Concord Place for Homeless Veterans	\$36,000
POW/ MIA Issue	\$64,000
Honor Flight	\$6,500
Various VFW's and Troop Support Orgs.	\$10,000

We hold three (3) fund raisers a year

- Big Thunder Run
- Gun Bash every May
- Motorcycle Raffle (drawing held at the BTR)



In 2012 and 2014, members of Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1 wrote grant requests to a donor that desired to remain anonymous. The grant requests were approved and received which allowed Chapter #1 via Rolling Thunder®Charities Inc® to provide two vans to the Illinois Veteran's Home in LaSalle, IL.



**Rolling Thunder® IL Chapter #1 Vice- President, Dominic “Hardcore” Ruggerio took to heart our mission of bringing awareness to the POW/MIA issue by taking the message to various classes at an elementary school in Wheaton, IL on Veteran’s Day.**



# 'WELCOME TO VIETNAM': DANANG, 1965

VIETNAM  
WAR 50  
ANNIVERSARY

The March 8 Marine landing set the stage for the American ground war to come. BY THE EDITORS

They were supposed to arrive "in the most inconspicuous way feasible." Instead, the Leathernecks received an elaborate official welcome, greeted by 1,000 South Vietnamese. "Welcome to Vietnam," Vietnamese Gen. Thi told Marine Brig. Gen. Frederick J. Karch, commander of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB).

Amphibious Task Force 76.7—flagship *Mount McKinley*, attack transport *Henrico*, attack cargo ship *Union* and amphibious transport dock *Vancouver*—brought the 1st and 3rd battalion landing teams of the 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division, based on Okinawa, to Red Beach 2 just after 9 a.m. on March 8, 1965.

L and then I and K companies of the 3rd Battalion moved inland with M Company providing beach security. "Get down and keep your weapons ready," barked Staff Sgt. Johnny Thompson of I Company. He need not have worried. With both battalions in place, the number of new Marines ashore was 3,500.

Four hours later, around 1 p.m., aircraft landed B and C companies of the 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, at the DaNang Airfield. D Company was already there providing security\*; A Company initially stayed on Okinawa. VC small-arms fire hit one of the KC-130 transports upon approach. 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines, remained on the airfield to protect it against mortar and sapper attacks.

Marine historian Edwin Simmons described the airfield perimeter: "It consisted of a ring of dilapidated concrete blockhouses, interspersed with spidery, steel watchtowers, a perimeter lighting system of unreliable performance and belts of rusting barbed wire hung, here and there, with triangular tin signs marking minefields left by some previous defender."

Intelligence reports placed 12 VC battalions equaling 6,000 men within striking distance of the airbase. So besides securing the base, Marines defended eight thinly populated square miles of high ground just west of the airfield. Within two days, I/3/9 occupied Hill 327 and K Company took over Hill 268.

## 'WE'RE NOT THERE TO FIGHT'

For the first six weeks, the only enemy encountered was the climate: stifling tropical heat and humidity. As one writer put it, "The fetid odor of the human waste used as fertilizer in the surrounding rice paddies assaulted the senses."

The Joint Chiefs of Staff orders were clear: "The U.S. Marine force will not, repeat

will not, engage in day-to-day actions against the Viet Cong." Phillip Caputo, as recounted in *A Rumor of War*, recalled being ordered: "We're to provide security and that's all. We're not going to fight, but to free the ARVNs [Army of the Republic of Vietnam] to fight. It's their war."

"Their" war quickly became America's. Policy changed dramatically in April. President Lyndon Johnson authorized participation in "active combat." *National Security Memorandum 328* allowed offensive action to secure "enclaves." Then Army Gen. William Westmoreland, overall U.S. commander in Vietnam, gave the OK to "fix and destroy the VC in the DaNang area." On April 22, a patrol from the 3rd Marine Recon Battalion engaged the VC for the first time at Binh Thai. It did not sustain casualties. Two days later, an executive order officially designated Vietnam a "combat area" and authorized "hostile fire" pay.

When Gen. Karch landed, famous photographer Eddie Adams snapped a shot of him, asking, "Can you smile?" Later, Karch would say, "When you have a son in Vietnam, and he gets killed, you don't want a smiling general with flowers around his neck as the leader at that point." Karch knew the die had been cast on that fateful March 8, 1965.

\*In addition to a Marine helicopter unit long based at DaNang, A and B batteries of the 1st Light Anti-Aircraft Missile Battalion arrived there a month earlier on Feb. 8-9, 1965.

E-MAIL [rkolb@vfw.org](mailto:rkolb@vfw.org)



Men of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade take defensive positions after landing at DaNang on March 8, 1965.

AP PHOTO



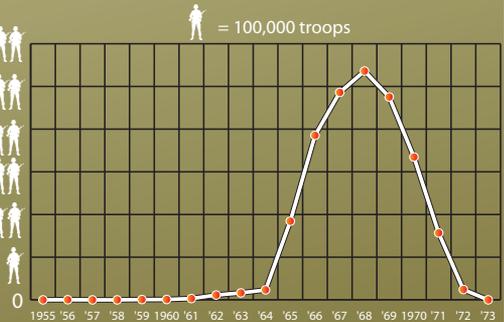
# STATISTICS OF THE VIETNAM WAR

The average U.S. infantryman in Vietnam saw about **240 days of combat in one year**, thanks to the mobility of the helicopter. In comparison, the average infantry in the South Pacific during World War II saw only 40 days of combat in four years.

U.S. forces sent to Vietnam were the **highest educated** of all previously deployed armies. **79% had at least a high school degree** prior to entering military service.

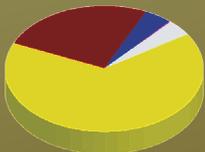


## U.S. Troop Strength by Year End (1955 - 1973)



## U.S. ARMED FORCES TOLL OF WAR (1955-1975)

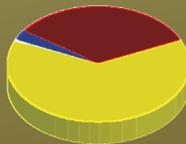
KILLED



As of 2013, the total number of U.S. armed forces killed in Vietnam in the two decades of involvement was **58,253**.

Of these, there were:  
**38,224 Army,**  
**14,844 Marines,**  
**2,586 Air Force,**  
**2,566 Navy,**  
**26 Merchant Marines**  
**7 Coast Guard.**

WOUNDED



The total number of U.S. armed forces non-mortally wounded in Vietnam was **153,363**.

Of these, there were:  
**96,802 Army,**  
**51,392 Marines,**  
**931 Air Force,**  
**4,178 Navy,**  
**60 Coast Guard.**

**658 U.S. prisoners of war returned home alive from Southeast Asia.**

**As of 2014, 1,638 are still unaccounted for.**

## PEAK STRENGTH OF ALLIED ARMED FORCES DURING VIETNAM WAR



## In loving Memory



### **Don Ross**

**(March 27, 1948 - July 18, 2015)**

Don "Old Man" Ross cared deeply about Veterans especially POW's and MIA's.

He was always concerned that he and Janet were not contributing enough to the chapter because they traveled during the winter. The fact is they did more than most.

Don worked hard at selling tickets and attending all of our events and meetings while he was in town. He traveled with us to Washington D.C. for the Rolling Thunder® Ride For Freedom.

Don was open, generous, and respectful. He never was heard to disparage another.

He will be missed.

**Ride Free, Brother.**

# Some People You Should Know

by First Cavalry Division Public affairs



**S**PC. ROBERT ZANFRANDINO said it was “sobering” to be pinned with the Purple Heart medal while standing among 11 of his fellow soldiers. All of the soldiers were wounded in four separate incidents while deployed with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, during the brigade’s most recent nine-month deployment to Afghanistan. Standing in a line on Cooper Field, Ft. Hood, TX, on June 4, Brig. Gen. Michael Bills, division commander, pinned the medal on the uniform of each soldier.

Zanfrandino was wounded Jan. 20 when Forward Operating Base Pasab was attacked by a force of heavily armed insurgents. “I woke up to a big boom,” he said. The soldier’s platoon then launched a counter-attack, with Zanfrandino acting as the gunner of the lead truck, according to the award citation. With the enemy firing just feet away, Zanfrandino calmly engaged and killed two insurgents. “In the process of returning fire Spc.

Zanfrandino was heedless of his turret being struck over 20 times, his M240B being damaged by enemy fire, and receiving multiple wounds from enemy ricochets and spall,” the citation states. The specialist was able to stay in theater and was treated for shrapnel to the shoulder. A warrant officer from 2nd Cavalry Regiment was killed in the attack.

Staff Sgt. Justin Ellis was wounded during the incident at Pasab by a bullet grazing his neck. The infantryman always thought if he ever received a Purple Heart, it would be for being wounded while on one of the many patrols he conducted downrange—not inside the wire. “That day they happened to hit at home. It was not expected,” Ellis said. “I take the (Purple Heart) with honor, but it’s not something you wish for.”

Sgt. William Schwartz said he was happy to see the battalion’s soldiers able to stand on the field with him in spite of how many dangerous interactions occurred. “All things considered, we fared a lot better than expected,” he said. “I’m standing next to some good guys.” Schwartz sustained a traumatic brain injury while on patrol outside of Pasab on Feb. 22.

Seven of the other soldiers honored were wounded on the same day. The

battalion returned from Afghanistan’s Regional Command South in April. Lt. Col. Matt Kinkead, battalion commander, said he was proud of the soldiers for their dedication to the mission. “You just kept getting after it,” he said. \*





CAPT. WILLIAM EBERLE

STAFF SGT. JEFFERY DAWSON

SGT. BRYAN ANDERSON  
DAWSON AND ANDERSON PHOTOS COURTESY ARMY TIMES

# MEN PERFORM FEATS OF VALOR UNDER EXTREME PRESSURE

In February, three soldiers received the nation's second highest honor for bravery for their actions in Afghanistan.

BY JANIE BLANKENSHIP

## GREEN BERET SAVES THE DAY

During a Dec. 2, 2012, attack on Jalalabad Airfield, Capt. William Eberle's Operational Detachment Alpha 3132, 3rd Special Forces Group, served as a quick reaction force after two vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (IED) were detonated at the base gates. Eberle led his men in two vehicles to the breach point, where he directed his vehicle to shield wounded U.S. and Afghan forces that were pinned in.

Next, Eberle maneuvered through enemy fire to the gates to attack the enemy with his M-4 carbine and grenades. Throughout it all, he was fully exposed to enemy fire, especially when he climbed a tower to better direct defensive positions. His actions allowed the wounded to be safely evacuated.

On the tower, Eberle was shot at by rocket-propelled grenades and small arms. Explosives burst just feet from him. Nevertheless, he remained and helped coordinate a helicopter attack on the enemy.



# EBERLE MANEUVERED THROUGH ENEMY FIRE

to the gates to attack the enemy with his M-4 carbine and grenades.

"Capt. Will Eberle moved to the sound of the guns with total disregard to his own safety and entered the breach to reinforce and defend his American and Afghan partners and take the fight to the enemy," Gen. Joseph Votel said during Eberle's award ceremony on Feb. 10. "His actions that day epitomized determination to defeat an overwhelming enemy force, compassion for his teammates in harm's way and valor for his courage to act in the face of danger."

Eberle said with his teammates behind him, he was not worried for his safety.

"Your men have high expectations of you, and you try to live up to it," he said, after receiving the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC). "We prefer not to be in the public spotlight, but it's an honor for me to represent the 3rd Special Forces Group."

Eberle, a 2004 graduate of West Point, is credited with saving multiple lives and preventing Jalalabad Airfield from being overrun by the Taliban.

## EOD TECH TO THE RESCUE

On the night of Oct. 5, 2013, Army Rangers entered an enemy compound in southern Afghanistan's Kandahar province. It was, by all accounts, a routine mission and the IED threat was low. They were charged with killing or capturing a "high-value" enemy target.

"It was supposed to be a quick, easy target," said Army Staff Sgt. Jeffery Dawson, a member of the 28th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company (Airborne), in support of the 75th Ranger Regiment. "Upon infiltration, everything changed in minutes."

The entire compound was rigged with IEDs, and suicide bombers wearing

explosive vests were running rampant.

"Being the only EOD tech there, it was up to me to clear medical personnel to the wounded and clear all other personnel to get them to safety," he said. "I knew there were IEDs everywhere; I just didn't know where they were at or how they were employed in the ground."

Although his legs were peppered with shrapnel, Dawson continued working to disarm IEDs and aided in the evacuation of dead and wounded soldiers. He located three confirmed pressure-plate bombs and an additional six suspected explosive devices.

"In any situation like that, you always revert back to training and stick with what you know," he said.

The 75th Ranger Regiment recommended Dawson for the DSC. Referring to accepting the award as "surreal," Dawson said, "It's kind of hard to process the whole thing. It's an honor."

## MEDIC MENDS WOUNDED

Also receiving the DSC for his actions that same day was Sgt. Bryan Anderson, a Ranger medic with the 3rd Battalion.

During the assault, Anderson repeatedly put himself in danger to provide medical attention to fallen soldiers. He is credited with saving the lives of at least two members of the assault force.

"I wasn't concerned with my life," Anderson said. "I was concerned that I had buddies who were bleeding out back on the compound."

At one point, Anderson was treating a seriously wounded soldier as two others ran to help him. Two more IEDs went off and Sgt. Patrick Hawkins and Spc. Cody Patterson, both of 3rd Battalion, were killed instantly. The blasts knocked

Anderson unconscious.

"I don't remember being knocked out, but I do remember being a little confused," he said. "I had to look down to make sure I had my legs and arms."

Anderson survived seven IED or suicide vest blasts from a distance of no more than 33 feet within a 30-minute timeframe.

"We train for these situations all the time so that when it happens, on these one-in-a-million chances, you're prepared to do what you need to do," he said.

## "I WASN'T CONCERNED WITH MY LIFE.

I was concerned that I had buddies who were bleeding out back on the compound."

—SGT. BRYAN ANDERSON

"I never even thought twice about running to one of those patients. The guys are basically my family, so when one of them is hurt, and I'm their medic, it's my job to go make them better."

When U.S. forces retreated from the compound, four U.S. soldiers had been killed and another 40 wounded.

"I was just out there doing my job," Anderson said. "I think every medic would have done the same thing out there, and I don't think any of us would have asked for recognition for it." ❁

E-MAIL [jblankenship@vfw.org](mailto:jblankenship@vfw.org)

## "I KNEW THERE WERE IEDS EVERYWHERE;

I just didn't know where they were at or how they were employed in the ground."

—STAFF SGT. JEFFERY DAWSON

## To Honor a Great Corporate Sponsor - Inland Bank

Rolling Thunder® Inc., Illinois Chapter #1 is privileged to have three great members who are senior management representatives from Inland Bank. All three ladies through their donations of time and talent were very successful in raising many generous donations for our Chapter treasury. They established the very successful Hometown Heroes Checking Program, and also secured several local venues that resulted in significant donations. Their fund raising Bowl-a-Thon also resulted in significant cash donations to our Chapter efforts of supporting the POW/MIA and Veterans programs.

Kandace Jacobs is currently the Vice President Business Banking & Lending at Inland Bank. Kandace is the catalyst behind many money making ventures for Rolling Thunder®.

Her family has a long history of serving in the military. Her father served in the US Army. Her Great Grandfather served in WWI, and both Grandfathers served in WWII. Her Great-Great Grandfather served in the Mexican-American War from 1846-1848. She also had an Uncle who served 30 years as an Army pilot with two tours of duty in Vietnam.

Kandace is a committed supporter of our military forces. She joined Rolling Thunder® Chapter #1 to honor the legacies of all those in her family that served as well as others who served and are now serving. She believes that membership in Rolling Thunder® allows her to do just that.

Kandace is a member of the Rolling Thunder® IL Chapter #1's Board of Directors, a member of the Chair of Honor committee and is Chairperson for the Bowling Thunder event that benefits the homeless Veterans at Concord Place located in North Lake, IL.

Kandace ....your brothers and sisters of Rolling Thunder salute you for all that you contribute.



**Dina Derman** is Senior VP and Administrator for Inland Bank's Internet Bank and Health Savings and HRA programs. Her work focus is on serving Employers, Brokers and Carriers with HSA and HRA products and provides sales support. She acts as the driving force for developing Inland Bank's newest departments, eBank, and the national HAS Program. She has held numerous senior positions in the banking industry.



Dina has been instrumental in developing the **Hometown Heroes Checking Program** within all the branches of the bank. This program rewards a new checking client with a

donation to the charity of his/her choice in return for establishing a new account. The initial response resulted in a **\$ 3,000 donation** made to Rolling Thunder®, IL Chapter #1. Dina was also a major player in the Wounded Warrior Games held at Soldier Field. Our Chapter sold a significant number of Bike Raffle tickets during that one day exercise.

**Kathy McGinnis** - is a professional and licensed mortgage loan officer with more than 20 years banking experience. Her timely service ensures that her client base is provided with a mortgage loan that best meets their needs. Kathy's reputation for being an honest, creative, and up front Mortgage Loan Officer are reflected in her successful career. She takes pride in providing the best customer service possible.

She is a member of the Inland Bank team that is also a "go-getter" for Veterans. Her fund raising efforts for Rolling Thunder® have been displayed throughout her time working with the chapter. Her efforts were instrumental in making the Chapter's Bike Raffle ticket sales a huge success. Kathy has established a great friendship and camaraderie with our membership and we know that whenever she takes on a task, it will be completed in a timely, professional manner.

**Big thanks to Kathy, for her friendship and extraordinary support of Rolling Thunder®, IL Chapter #1**



A man with a short haircut and a goatee is shown in profile, focused on painting a canvas. He is wearing a dark t-shirt and a white necklace. The background is a blurred art studio with various canvases and art supplies.

# Art & COMBAT

## COPING THROUGH CREATIVITY

Programs across the country recognize the healing properties art can have on veterans. These are just a few that focus on helping veterans and civilians start an open conversation about war. They include a VFW Post. BY KELLY GIBSON

*Images courtesy Elizabeth Washburn/Combat Arts San Diego*

**E**lizabeth Washburn is quick to tell you what she does is not art therapy. She is not a therapist. But through her program, *Combat Arts San Diego*, she has seen firsthand the positive outcomes combat veterans experience when they use art as an expressive outlet.

"Art is a very transformative process," Washburn says. "Making art is a thing we have been doing since we evolved. It's part of our culture and history."

### BREAKING DOWN STEREOTYPES

In 2007, Washburn, who holds a master's degree in fine art, was moved to use her skills to help veterans. She says she'd seen too many

news items about veteran suicide rates and wanted to find a way to help. So she contacted the Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego.

She started conducting art classes for wounded warriors, and eventually established her own non-profit—*Combat Arts*. She offers free art classes to combat vets in the San Diego area, encouraging vets of all art backgrounds to give it a try.

"Not every person is into art, but the ones who go through the class and will pursue it, I'm teaching them a life skill they can use," Washburn says. What started out as a way for veterans to cope with PTSD symptoms has evolved into something much larger for students and teachers alike.

One of Washburn's students says making

**LEFT: Mike Acid, Navy vet, paints with Combat Arts, a program that helps connect veterans and communities through artwork.**

art helped him reconnect with his family. The former Marine said he liked that other people saw different things in his art, and that he was able to express himself to his loved ones when words failed.

Washburn does not have a military background. No one in her family has served. So she says teaching these classes has helped her identify and overcome some of her own personal stereotypes associated with the military and veterans. That was an eye-opening experience and has influenced the big-picture goals of Washburn's class.

"The main goal is to break down stereotypes," Washburn says. "Just because someone is diagnosed with PTSD does not make them scary like the movies depict. In fact, that's not true at all."

So Washburn's big-picture goals have become to break down these stereotypes held by the civilian population through public art displays.

Veterans who take Washburn's class share their work at public art shows, thanks to a partnership through a San Diego libraries California humanities grant. Washburn also helps veterans with a mural project. The end goal? To open a dialogue between the veterans and their community.

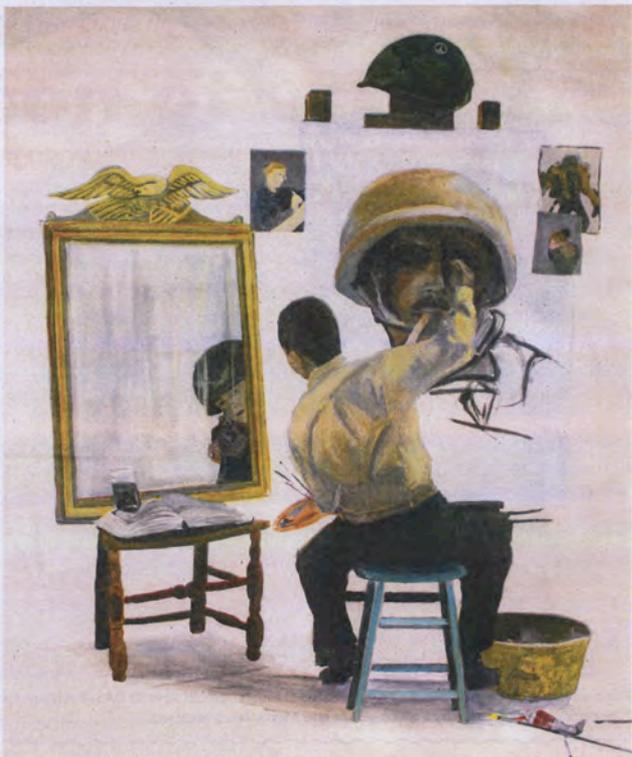
"Anything I can do to integrate combat vets with the public," Washburn says. "It's nice to bring them out and show them, 'Look at all the people who are interested in you and respect you.'"

## STARTING A CONVERSATION

The National Veterans Art Museum (NVAM) in Chicago, Ill., originated in 1981 as the Vietnam Veterans Art Group. The museum is dedicated to being "a space for military personnel, veterans and civilians to open a dialogue over the real impact of war," according to the NVAM website.

The museum's mission is similar to that of Washburn's work through *Combat Arts*. It hopes to offer therapy for the veteran-artists as well as the civilian community.

NVAM began as a project by a group of Vietnam War veterans from Chicago seeking to humanize war through a visu-



**ABOVE: "Triple Self Portrait" by a group of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans as part of Combat Arts in San Diego. BELOW LEFT: A mask by Navy veteran Zach Johnston. BELOW RIGHT: This piece, by Marine Corps vet Aaron Rather, was completed through the Combat Arts program.**





"Sacred Heart" is an example of a mural created through Combat Arts at OASIS, a Navy-sponsored PTSD treatment facility in San Diego. The painting was created by a group of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans.

al medium. In 1996, the group opened a museum. In 2003, exhibits broadened to include all veterans from all wars.

Today, the museum's permanent collection is home to more than 2,500 works of art. Currently, the museum features an exhibit comprising 100 portraits of Iraq and Afghanistan War veterans timed to coincide with the official end of America's war in Afghanistan.

"Artist Matt Mitchell has created an exciting visual experience personifying post-9/11 veterans," Ash Kyrie, museum curator, said. "It's our hope that the exhibition engages open contemplation and discussion about the experiences of war."

With that goal in mind, other galleries also seek to achieve a dialogue with veterans and their communities through art.

#### VFW POST JOINS IN

VFW Post 1 in Denver, Colo., subscribes to the idea that art provides healing.

Members collaborated with Curtis Bean, an Iraq War veteran, to open a gallery at their Post, located in downtown Denver.

Bean said he didn't realize he was struggling with PTSD until "four or five years out." He started painting to help, and, in 2013, began to offer painting classes out of the Denver VA Medical Center.

The Post hopes that by sharing Bean's work, it can help dispel the negative image of VFW as a closed-off place just for veterans. Members hope the gallery can help start a conversation between veterans and the community.

"We told Curt we wanted him to use [the building] to its maximum potential," Post 1 Commander Michael Mitchell told *Confluence Denver*, an online magazine.

Veterans can take free art classes on the third Friday of every month.

"Being a veteran, you always have that need, that want to be part of something larger than yourself and to serve

your community and your country," Bean told the *Denver Post*. "I wanted to give back somehow to my fellow veterans, giving them an opportunity to see if art can help them like it helped me."

#### NOT JUST VISUAL ART

*Combat Arts* and the efforts at *Post 1* are just a couple of iterations of programs primarily focused on helping veterans utilize art as a form of expression and healing available throughout the country.

Through VA, *Vet Arts* was created in 1981 at the McGuire VA Medical Center in Richmond, Va. That same year, the Waco (Texas) VA Medical Center started the National Music Competition for veterans interested in using music as a creative outlet. The two merged in 1989, thriving today as the *National Veterans Creative Arts Festival*.

Through the program, veterans' art

## Art & Combat

is featured in several categories: art, music, dance and drama. The festival is complete with an art exhibit and live stage performance. In 2014, some 3,208 veterans from 129 VA facilities across the country participated.

Similarly, the *Veteran Artist Program* (VAP) was founded in 2009 by B.R. McDonald, an Army veteran who served with the Joint Special Operations Command from January 2002-December 2008 as a cryptologist and Arabic linguist. VAP works across multiple artistic platforms to “expand the network and visibility of veteran artists,” according to the organization’s website.

Based in New York City, VAP helped produce films, community murals and gallery exhibits. This year, VAP partnered with the Pentagon to produce “The Telling Project,” an all-veteran exhibit focused on connecting communities with the veteran experience.

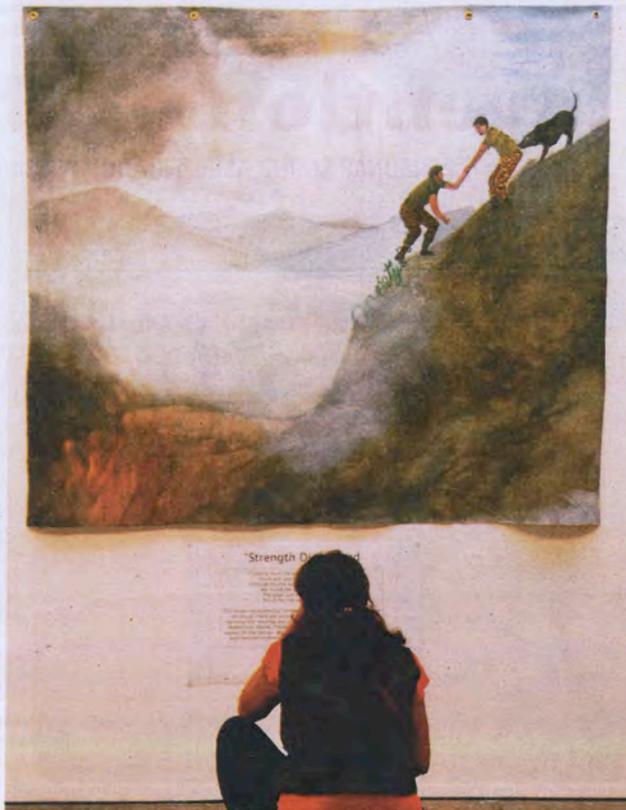
Additionally, veterans stories are being shared more widely and across many platforms. That’s thanks to art initiatives across the country aimed at growth and rehabilitation.

One such program is *We Are Veterans*, a collaborative effort between PBS and the *National Initiative for Arts and Health in the Military*. Launched in 2012, the show explains the role art can play in the lives of returning vets.

“The story of how veterans and their families are using art to heal, to connect with their communities and even impact the workforce, including the creative industry and art world at large, are worth sharing,” said Robert Lynch, president and CEO of *Americans for the Arts*.

“There are more than 22 million veterans in the United States today,” Lynch said. “Yet the sacrifices and contributions that they and their families make on a daily basis is a story yet to be fully told.”

Lynch’s *Americans for the Arts* was developed to advance art education. The group also hopes to increase interest in art among veterans through a collaborative effort called the *National Initiative for Arts and Health in the Military*. Starting in 2011, arts, health and military leaders have been working together to “advance the policy, practice and



A woman sits in front of “Rising Out,” a painting by a group of combat veterans, displayed at Space 4 Art Gallery in San Diego. Many artistic outreach endeavors hope to spark a dialogue between veterans and their communities.

quality use of arts and creativity as tools for health in the military,” as well as make those tools readily available.

One veteran participant said, “Trauma comes through the senses, and art can heal through the senses.”

Perhaps Rear Adm. Alton L. Stocks, commander of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., sums up the goal of each of these art initiatives best: “Art makes a difference in the quality of life for our wounded warriors and those around them.”

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## Contact Information

- Combat Arts**, San Diego, Calif.,  
[www.combatartssd.org](http://www.combatartssd.org),  
[elizabeth@combatartssd.org](mailto:elizabeth@combatartssd.org)
- National Veterans Art Museum**,  
Chicago, Ill., (312) 326-0270,  
[www.nvam.org](http://www.nvam.org), [info@nvam.org](mailto:info@nvam.org)
- VFW Post 1**, Denver, Colo.,  
(720) 515-8391
- National Veterans Creative Arts Festival**, nationwide, (320) 255-6486, [www.va.gov/opa/speceven/caf/index.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/speceven/caf/index.asp)
- National Initiative for Arts and Health Across the Military**,  
Washington, D.C., (202) 371-2830,  
[www.artsacrosshemilitary.org](http://www.artsacrosshemilitary.org)
- Veteran Artist Program**, New York City, (410) 929-3527,  
[www.veteranartistprogram.org](http://www.veteranartistprogram.org)

## Raising Awareness and Preventing Suicide

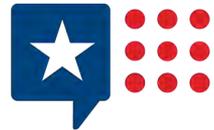
September is Suicide Prevention Awareness Month. Although preventing suicide in the Veteran population is a focus throughout the year, September provides an extra opportunity to educate the public about the problem of suicide and what can be done to help prevent it. By supporting both Veterans and efforts to raise awareness about suicide prevention, you are helping make a difference which could prove to be lifesaving.

Suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in all age groups. 41,149 people killed themselves in the United States in 2013. For every completed suicide, there are 25 suicide attempts. Veterans may be at an even greater risk of suicide than those in the general population. On average, we lose 22 Veterans and 1 Service Member a day to suicide.

### There is help available.

The Veterans Crisis Line is a free and confidential service designed for Veterans who are in crisis or distress to be able to reach out to talk to someone. The Veterans Crisis Line is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and is available through phone calls, computer chats, or text messaging. The Veterans Crisis Line has trained personnel, some of whom are Veterans, standing by ready to listen to and talk with Veterans. Also, the family and friends of a Veteran can contact the Veterans Crisis Line for support. Having launched in 2007, the Veterans Crisis Line has since answered more than 1.6 million calls and made more than 45,000 lifesaving rescues.

# Veterans Crisis Line



1-800-273-8255  
**PRESS 1**

**Confidential support is only one call, one click, or one text away.**

◆ **Veterans Crisis Line 1-800-273-8255 Press 1** ◆ **VeteransCrisisLine.net** ◆ **Text to 838255** ◆

It is important to know the signs of suicide risk in order to be able to recognize them in yourself or another person. If you are a Veteran who is experiencing any of these signs of suicide risk, contact the Veterans Crisis Line.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF SUICIDE RISK	
THESE SIGNS REQUIRE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION.	CALL THE VETERANS CRISIS LINE IF YOU EXPERIENCE ANY OF THESE WARNING SIGNS.
⇒ Thinking about hurting or killing yourself	⇒ Hopelessness, feeling like there's no way out
⇒ Looking for ways to kill yourself	⇒ Anxiety, agitation, sleeplessness, mood swings
⇒ Talking about death, dying, or suicide	⇒ Feeling like there is no reason to live
⇒ Self-destructive behavior such as drug abuse, weapons, etc.	⇒ Rage or anger
	⇒ Engaging in risky activities without thinking
	⇒ Increasing alcohol or drug abuse
	⇒ Withdrawing from family and friends

Resources available from the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital Suicide Prevention Team  
Rolling Thunder Point of Contact: Anita Carmona Caravelli, LCSW at 708-202-4096

If you know a Veteran that you believe is at risk of suicide, take the following steps to help the Veteran receive care and to make the environment safer for them.

- Ask them if they are thinking about killing themselves. This lets the Veteran know it is safe to talk about their thoughts or feelings.
- Call the Veterans Crisis Line at 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1.
- Take the Veteran to an emergency room or seek help from a medical or mental health professional.
- Remove any objects that could be used in a suicide attempt. 4 out of 10 suicides could be prevented by limiting access to objects that could be used in a suicide attempt.
- If possible, do not leave the person alone.

### Debunking Some Common Myths about Suicide

There are some common misperceptions about suicide, which may lead to either underestimating someone’s risk of suicide or missing opportunities to intervene. In order to effectively help Veterans who may be at risk of suicide, it is important to understand the truth about suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts. It is important that we learn to accept the reality, instead of the myths, below as the truth. Knowing the truth can empower you to step in and make a difference in the life of a Veteran who may be at risk of suicide.

<b>MYTH 1</b>	<b>MYTH 2</b>
Asking about suicide may lead a Veteran to complete suicide.	There are ‘talkers’ and there are ‘doers’.
<b>REALITY</b>	<b>REALITY</b>
Asking a Veteran about suicide does not create suicidal thoughts any more than asking about chest pain causes angina. The act of asking the question simply gives the Veteran permission to talk about his or her thoughts and feelings.	People who talk about suicide must be taken seriously. Talking about suicide is an important warning sign that further mental health evaluation is necessary.
<b>MYTH 3</b>	<b>MYTH 4</b>
If somebody really wants to die by suicide, there is nothing you can do about it.	A Veteran won’t complete suicide because... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• She has young children at home</li> <li>• He has made a verbal or written promise</li> </ul>
<b>REALITY</b>	<b>REALITY</b>
Individuals who have survived serious suicide attempts have clearly stated that they wished someone had shown an interest. By supporting the Veteran to get help, you’ve gone a long way toward saving a life.	The intent to die can override any rational thinking. A suicidal Veteran must be taken seriously and referred for evaluation and treatment.

Resources available from the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital Suicide Prevention Team  
Rolling Thunder Point of Contact: Anita Carmona Caravelli, LCSW at 708-202-4096



## Operation S.A.V.E

(Signs of Suicide, Asking about Suicide, Validating Feelings, Encouraging help and expediting treatment)

At the March, 2015, monthly meeting of Rolling Thunder® Inc., Illinois Chapter #1, Anita Carmona, from Hines VA hospital, came to speak and lead a discussion on “Veterans in Crisis”. She informed us that on average 22 American Veterans are completing suicide per day. There are varying factors that lead an individual to take their own life. However, what we know for certain is that we can all play a role in preventing Veteran Suicide by learning the warning signs and encouraging them to seek help.

Manny Lopez (left) with President Bill “Hawk” Sharpness (right) became the point men for a project to put together informational displays to be placed at strategic locations including displayed at Rolling Thunder® IL Chapter #1 events. Manny created a list of over 130 VFW Posts and secured volunteers to place the Veterans Crisis Line information packets in their bar areas where it can be viewed by Veterans in need. Manny also headed up the design and procurement of plastic brochure and card holders so that the information documents could be displayed appropriately at supporting businesses or locations.

If your VFW Post, American Legion Post, Church, or organization would like to display this information, please let Rolling Thunder® Inc., Illinois Chapter #1 know. You can contact us at [rollingthunderil1@gmail.com](mailto:rollingthunderil1@gmail.com)



**Soldier Missing From WWII Accounted For**

U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Alvin Beethe.  
*DoD photo.*

The Department of Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from World War II, have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Alvin Beethe of Elk Creek, Nebraska, will be buried June 8, in Arlington National Cemetery. On Nov. 26, 1944, Beethe, of the 393rd Fighter Squadron, 367th Fighter Group, 9th Air Force, was the pilot of an P-38 Lightning that failed to return from a bombing mission against enemy forces near Duren, Germany. Another U.S. aircraft in the mission reported that Beethe's aircraft crashed near the town of Morschenich. Beethe was reported killed in action and his remains were not recovered.

Following the war, the American Graves Registration Command (AGRC) conducted investigations on the loss of Beethe and successfully located his crash site. However, no remains were recovered at that time.

In 2008, the Department of Defense was notified that private citizens in Germany had located the wartime crash site. A DoD team traveled to Morschenich and surveyed the purported site. In June 2013, another DoD team excavated the site, and recovered human remains and aircraft wreckage.

To identify Beethe's remains, scientists from DPAA and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used forensic identification tools to include two forms of DNA analysis, mitochondrial DNA, which matched his cousin and Y-chromosome Short Tandem Repeat DNA, which matched his nephew.

***Of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II, more than 400,000 died. Today, more than 73,000 are unaccounted for from the conflict.***

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans, who went missing while serving our country, visit the DPAA website at [www.dpaa.mil](http://www.dpaa.mil) or call 703-699-1420.



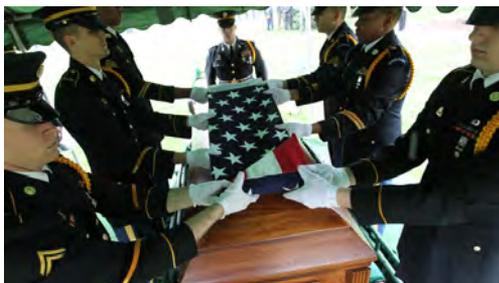
Chester Roper was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to the union of Carrie Lee and Clarence Roper on August 28, 1938. When the Korean War broke out he joined the US Army.

The Army corporal was part of a firing battery in a unit made up of African-Americans - the 503rd Field Artillery Battalion. In late November 1950 Roper and his unit were overrun by Chinese forces deep within North Korea.

After being held captive for weeks, Roper and others marched for five days, and on Jan 20, 1951 he entered a camp along the south bank of the Yalu River near a village called Pyoktong. But after weeks of malnutrition and exposure to the brutal winter, Roper fell ill with pneumonia. He died on or about Feb 10, 1951, and was buried by his fellow prisoners on a frozen hillside.

In 1954, the United Nations and the communist governments exchanged the remains of some war dead, including those who had died in Roper's camp. The Army was unable to attach a name to each person recovered.

Unbeknownst to his family, Roper and thousands of others were buried as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific. Then analysts began a routine re-examination of his file. Officials were able to narrow down possibilities because Roper was one of just a few young black soldiers held in the camp. Roper's remains were exhumed, and officials use dental records and an X-Ray of Roper's chest to help identify him. The X-Ray, among a group discovered by military analysts in recent years, showed Roper's clavicle. Clavicle bones have unique ridges that can be used to help confirm identity, similar to fingerprints. He was brought home by his family and reinterred in Illinois's Evergreen Cemetery Field of Honor Section.



*(Photo taken by Antonio Perez, Chicago Tribune - March 23, 2012)*

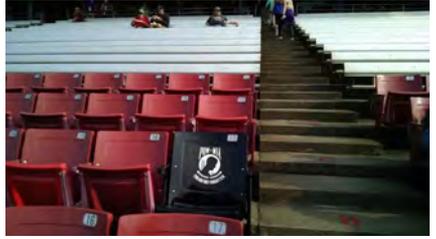
On March 25, 2015, 12 members of **Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1** attended a special memorial for Cpl. Chester Roper at the Evergreen Cemetery, Evergreen Park, IL commemorating the anniversary of his burial in March, 2012. Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1 had the largest contingent at this Memorial Service honoring Cpl. Roper. Chapter President, Bill “Hawk” Sharpness, presented Jesse White, Illinois Secretary of State, a POW flag and a Big Thunder Run program book.





## Kane County Cougars - Military Appreciation Night

Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1 participated in this year's Military Appreciation Night. As part of the pregame activities, Chapter Members presented the Remembrance Table Ceremony and helped with the opening Flag Ceremony and the National Anthem.





Rolling Thunder® Vice-President and Board Member, Col. Dominic “Hardcore” Ruggerio, U.S. Army (Ret) threw out the Opening Pitch and was honored as a Home Town Hero.





**Rolling Thunder® In Illinois Chapter #1 was invited to be a sponsor and escort for the Westchester, IL Veterans Day 5 K Run & 1 Mile Health Walk on Nov 9, 2014. Although cold, the run did help with contributing a considerable sum to the Wounded Heroes Foundation Fund ([www.woundedheroesfund.net](http://www.woundedheroesfund.net)).**





QUI NHON, 1965

AP PHOTO

# TERRORISM TAKES A TOLL

**VIETNAM  
WAR 50<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY**

It was the deadliest single terrorist attack against GIs in the Vietnam War. But the Viet Cong bombing of an Army quarters in this port city is virtually unknown today. On the 50th anniversary, it is time to remember. BY RICHARD FOURNIER

“A series of events,” occurring in February 1965, “for the first time in the three years since U.S. troops went to Vietnam in force shocked the American people into some sense of being at war,” proclaimed *Newsweek* late in that month.

Indeed, Radio Hanoi had exhorted the Viet Cong (VC) to “strike hard, very hard, at the enemy on all battlefields.” In response, the National Liberation Front’s Liberation Radio vowed GIs would soon “pay more blood debts.” That threat was realized on Feb. 10, 1965, in the coastal city of Qui Nhon.

The target: the bachelor’s enlisted men’s quarters. It was billed as the Viet Cuong (“Strength of Vietnam”) Hotel. But structurally the newly constructed four-story building was anything but that. With no reinforced concrete or reinforcing bars, it

mostly was made of hollow red bricks held together by mortar and plaster.

Nevertheless, the U.S. government leased the billet for a helicopter maintenance unit. The 140th Transportation Detachment (Cargo Helicopter Field Maintenance), nicknamed the “Phantom Regulators,” serviced the aircraft of the 117th Aviation Company (Assault Helicopter). Its 273 men in 1964 were based at the city’s airfield.

Rescue operations began the day following the Feb. 10, 1965, Viet Cong attack on the Viet Cuong Hotel. Twenty-two men of the 140th Transportation Detachment plus one Green Beret died in the blast.

The 117th's commanding officer, retired colonel James E. Rogers, was against placing the detachment in the hotel. "For both safety and security reasons, I voiced opposition to this arrangement," he said in an October 2014 interview.

## CONFRONTING THE VC

At the time of the bombing, 43 men were in their rooms or in a bar on the ground floor. Coordinated attacks on the city began at 8:05 p.m. Two VC killed the South Vietnamese guards posted outside the building while two other VC planted two satchel charges at the main door. A 100-pound plastic charge destroyed the central staircase supporting the hotel.

Four stories were immediately reduced to one as the building crumbled into a pile of rubble more than 30 feet high. Alex Brassert was a U.S. adviser who happened to be in Qui Nhon at the time. "There was a loud explosion, then a second; the lights went out in the whole town," he said. "I saw red flashes in a back window that I think was near the stairwell. Then the Viet Cuong Hotel sank out of my field of vision."

117th vet Carl Vogel recalled: "I was in a guard tower that night. At first, I heard what I thought to be machine gun fire from the downtown area. The next thing I heard was an explosion; looked again and saw the hotel that housed the 140th lift into the air and settle to the ground. It was the worst night of my life."

Just before the attack, Spec. 5 Robert K. Marshall was alerted by VC gunfire. He quickly took up a firing position at the drainage port on the balcony. "I fired at them, and as I did, two more figures jumped from behind a newsstand 30 feet to my left and fired at me with sub-machine guns," Marshall said. "I shoved another clip into my rifle and emptied it, and one more, into them. I hit them both and saw them fall." Some 60 rounds of ammo assured that.

"Then the hotel simply disintegrated beneath me," Marshall recalled. Marshall

was not the only American to engage the Communists that evening.

Special Forces Staff Sgt. Merle O. Van Alstine, a rotational replacement on his third tour, was in the bar that night. According to a vet nicknamed "Iggy" in an account given to Ray Bows in *Vietnam Military Lore*, Van Alstine pulled his sidearm. "Merle nailed them [two VC on a motorbike]. He fired his last six rounds split seconds before the blast. It took them six days to find Merle. His was the last body they found."

## RESCUING SURVIVORS, RETRIEVING THE DEAD

Rescue operations were delayed until dawn because the VC took out the local power station, causing a blackout. On duty in the flight operations center when the explosion occurred, Spec. 4 Raul D. Serrano participated in the rescue and recovery.

"When we arrived at the hotel, I couldn't believe the devastation," he says. "We could hear men yelling for help. Digging out was very slow because we did not have proper equipment. We dug for eight straight hours. Men cried out for their mothers, as some of us cried searching for them."

Rummaging through the rubble required nerve, and it was displayed by John F. Huske. His Silver Star citation says that he "immediately, and without regard for his own safety, set about the task of crawling through the twisted wreckage searching for survivors. Throughout the night and early hours of the following day [he] continued rescuing survivors from the shifting and settling wreckage."

Today, says Huske, "I have tried to put those events behind me all these years, but these events should be brought to light. I was one of the first responders as part of a quasi-search and rescue team. I spent over 12 hours digging to a man trapped under tons of debris. When I reached him, I discovered that one of his legs was mangled and I was able to free him. I assisted a Korean doctor to amputate his leg where he crawled out of a hole."

Arthur Abendschein was the last American taken out of the hotel alive

after 35 hours being trapped. As quoted in *Vietnam Military Lore*, he related: "The big blast inside the hotel blew out all of the windows in my room and made the walls shake and start to crumble. The rubble tumbled around me. It was just liked riding a fast elevator."

That the experience left a permanent psychological impact on the survivors is beyond doubt. "It was very traumatic and had a profound effect on those who offered immediate assistance to the injured in the collapsed building," said Rogers. Lasting more than a week, "the task was very difficult and emotional for those involved in the recovery effort."

## TALLYING THE TOLL

Indeed, it was. The detachment had to be reconstituted from scratch. "At the memorial service, I counted 22 pairs of empty boots," Serrano sadly remembers. "It is something that has stuck with me for 50 years."

No Viet Cong terrorist attack took a greater toll in American lives during the Vietnam War than the Viet Cuong Hotel tragedy. A total of 23 GIs died that night: All but one belonged to the 140th Transportation Detachment. The other was a Green Beret.

In addition, seven South Vietnamese women and children in the area of the explosion were killed, too. All 21 of the surviving 140th members were so badly wounded that they required evacuation stateside.

At this stage of the war, U.S. troops in country were mostly regulars. Of the 22 140th members killed, 19 had enlisted; just three were drafted. They ranged in age from 18 to 39; 55% were married.

But Qui Nhon was only a harbinger of things to come. At the funeral of Special Forces soldier Van Alstine in February

## U.S. CASUALTIES

KIA: 23 WIA: 21

UNIT: 140th Trans. Det.

1965, one of the pallbearers was most prophetic.

"It's a seven-day-a-week, 24-hour-a-day war going on over there, although a

lot of people don't seem to be aware of it yet," Master Sgt. Laurel Ward said. "I am afraid the American people are going to see a lot more funerals before it's settled."

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# A WWII TALE OF SURVIVAL

by Arthur Bishop • MOPH POW/MIA Coordinator

I WAS ASSIGNED to be the Assistant Company Clerk of the Cannon Company, 423rd Regiment, 106th Infantry Division on Sept. 1, 1944 at Camp Atterbury, Ind. The 106th Division was sent to England on Oct. 1 on the ship *Queen Elizabeth*. On Nov. 1, the division was sent to a front of 27 miles, with the 422nd and 423rd regiments on the line with the 424th in reserve. The position was a sector along the Schnee Eifel forest just northeast of the Luxembourg, Belgium, and Germany borders, near St. Vith.



Arthur Bishop, U.S. Air Force

On the night of Dec. 15, I was assigned to join a sergeant and two GIs to a house outpost about 100 yards from the Siegfried Line of the Germans. The house had two stories, with walls over 12 inches thick. Our function was to observe

any German activity. During the night, we used the field telephone to advise that we could hear the noise of tank treads. We were told to keep listening. We called again during the night, and each time we were told to keep listening.

At about 5:30 a.m., the Germans lay down an earth-shaking artillery barrage. The 422nd and 423rd bore the brunt of this fire. We were on the second floor of the outpost house and were shaken. When the artillery fire let up, German tanks passed by on both sides of the house. Suddenly, I realized that we were behind enemy lines. The Germans then sent units of about 50 soldiers to get us. My sergeant told me to go downstairs and surrender. He assured me that if they shot me, they would fight on to the end. Fortunately, they decided to take us as prisoners.

By the 17th of December, the Germans had two divisions that literally engulfed the two regiments. The 423rd regimental commander surrendered the regiment. All were either killed (as was my company commander) or captured. We were moved by box-car to a stalag at Limburg. There, the British RAF made a night raid on the camp, mistaking it for a German facility. This raid killed the officers, and knocked beams



Arthur Bishop, Luckenwalde, Germany, after he was captured by the Germans

down in our building. I was later moved to Luckenwalde, and then to a work camp at Perleberg. Since I was a PFC, the Geneva Convention allowed them to force us to work. However, we were extremely sloppy workers, probably not worth the meager rations of watery soup they gave us. I lost 50 pounds on this great diet.

During the last few weeks of captivity, the Germans kept us marching to avoid liberation. We were strafed each day by U.S. and Russian aircraft. When I reached the stage when I could barely walk, a soldier that I did not even know came forward to help me. To be unable to walk would have been fatal. We were finally liberated when the Sherman tanks of the U.S. Eighth Division showed up on May 2, 1945.

After I returned home, I learned my brother had been killed in a P-38 aircraft in Italy about a month before my liberation, for which he received a Purple Heart.

I later spent 20 years in the Air Force. \*



## CORPSMAN UP! THE MOST DANGEROUS JOB IN THE NAVY

by HMCM Ronald C. Mosbaugh

**T**HE PHRASE "CORPSMAN UP!" speaks volumes. The name "Corpsman" separates us from the rest of the Navy, especially if you were an 8404 Fleet Marine Force (FMF) Corpsman. I am proud to have been a Combat Corpsman.

In 1962 my twin brother and I joined the Naval Reserves in Joplin, Mo. We were juniors in high school. My first duty station was at the Oakland Naval Hospital, in Oakland, Calif. This was my first exposure to trauma. This facility treated veterans who had lost their arms and legs in the Vietnam War. They also fitted prostheses for these veterans, many who were my age; their lives were changed forever. I saw firsthand how these soldiers experienced the psychological, physical and emotional trauma of combat.

Seeing these wounded soldiers made me realize the seriousness of this war. I knew that within a few months I would be leaving for Vietnam; Corpsmen were in high demand. For several months at the hospital, I pondered the situation I was about to encounter. I didn't want to be one of the casualties. I felt fear, apprehension and loneliness; my whole life seemed out of control. It's weird. The thought of dying didn't bother me as much as losing a limb or becoming disfigured.

Several months later I received orders to the Fleet Marine Forces at Camp Pendleton, Calif. I remember the second day at Pendleton. I was asked to report to the of-

fice; evidently the Marines didn't think too much of the bumper sticker on my car. It said, "The Marines do have a few good men, Navy Corpsmen." I was told to take it off immediately!

During the five-week course, we were trained by Marines under battlefield conditions. The training was extensive. We were taught field medicine, field operations and how to survive in a combat situation. We take and return fire. But most importantly, we listen for the words "Corpsman Up!"

Being a Corpsman is arguably the most dangerous job in the Navy and is by far the most decorated occupation specialty. More than 20 Medals of Honor were awarded to Navy Corpsmen for actions during battles. Many Corpsmen were highly decorated. During my 13-month tour, I was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts.

I reported to the First Marine Division, Second Battalion, Hotel Company in Da Nang, Vietnam. Each company was allotted six Corpsmen, however, the most we ever had at one time were three. During the Vietnam War, we lost 690 Navy/USMC Corpsmen. Almost 5,000 received the Purple Heart.

Each time the Marines went on a patrol a Corpsman had to be with them; therefore, we were running patrols day and night.

The day I reported to our company I no sooner got settled when I was summoned to report to a 12-man squad going on a search and destroy mission. I grabbed my B-1 medical kit, 45 cal. pistol and M-14 rifle, and I was on my first patrol. My anxiety level was very high. Within the first two hours, we made contact with the Viet Cong. Then the inevitable happened: a Marine yelled, "Corpsman Up"! I ran as close to the ground as I could and stopped when I got to the squad leader. He said, "I need you to help that wounded Marine in the rice paddy. He was about 40 yards out in open ground. I thought to myself, is he kidding me! I stepped off the dike into the rice paddy. The mud was so deep each time I stepped the suction from the boot made it hard to move forward. My



HMCM Ronald C. Mosbaugh  
USNR Retired  
Da Nang, Vietnam 1966

adrenalin was running so quickly that I was worn out within the first few steps.

The fear that I felt and the chaos around me made it even more unbearable. I tried to move as fast as I could but it felt like I was moving in slow motion! I heard a bullet whiz past my head and some water splashed from a VC bullet. This was the incentive to pick up my pace. When I got to the wounded Marine, he was in bad shape. I treated him as quickly as I could and helped him back to the dike. All the while, the other Marines were giving me good fire support, as they always did. Before the day was over, I had treated three Marines. All of them were medevac'd to the Da Nang Hospital.

On Sept. 19, 1966, we were overrun by the Viet Cong. Many were engaged in hand-to-hand combat. Everywhere you looked there were dead and wounded Marines and Viet Cong. The operation started with around 90 Marines; only 26 of us walked out. I did a lot of triage that day. The phrase, "Corpsman Up!" was used several times.

I could tell you many more stories about my 13-month tour in Vietnam with the Marines. Going from blue to green (Navy/Marines) changed my life forever. I answered the call for "Corpsman Up!" over 200 times! At age 19 I witnessed atrocities that no one should witness at any age. It was a gruesome and horrifying experience. Emotionally, I was wounded for life. After my first six months in country, I received my second Purple Heart. I wondered then what was to be my fate over the next seven months. Each day I wondered if this would be my last day on Earth (1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam).

Like many combat veterans, I suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. One of the side effects of PTSD is nightmares. I relive many of my trauma events over and over. Many of these nightmares begin with, "CORPSMAN UP!"

Semper Frater (Always Brothers) \*

## KOREA: THE REAL FORGOTTEN WAR

The guns of war are silent now  
yet I can hear them still  
I see the faces of the dead  
I guess I always will

They say that time will ease the pain  
can make a man forget  
though many years have swiftly passed  
I see the carnage yet!

Korea was so long ago  
or was it yesterday?  
I hear the screams in torturous dreams  
o let me wake I pray.

The awful sounds of exploding rounds  
still ring within my ears  
so many dead and dying  
yet there's no time for tears.

Positions that are overrun  
with fighting hand to hand  
how many did I kill dear God?  
I pray you'll understand

At last the fight is over  
the endless night is through  
we won our fight for "boomerang"  
but those who lived were few.

So when it's time to judge us Lord  
and weigh just what we're worth  
forgive us all who fought and died  
we served our hell on earth

Sfc. Bob Barfield, Co. "F" 7th Inf. Regt. 3rd Inf. Div. Korea,  
6/14-15/53



# POW/MIA

## **Remembrance Table**

Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1 performs our Remembrance Table ceremony at many events.

Our Remembrance Table is set for (5). This place setting symbolizes all Prisoners of War and those men and women still listed as Missing in Action from all wars from the (5) branches of service.

*The chairs are empty.*

*They are not with us today.*

### **Remember**

*The tablecloth is white,  
symbolizing the purity of the  
soldiers as they went off  
to serve their country.*

### **Remember**

*The bread plates are sprinkled  
with salt, symbolizing the tears shed  
by the families as they await  
the fate of their loved ones.*

### **Remember**

*There is a lemon on each plate,  
indicative of the bitterness  
these soldiers must feel at  
being left behind by  
their country.*

### **Remember**

*The glasses are inverted.  
They cannot toast with us  
this season.*

### **Remember**

*The red rose, symbolizes the love the  
families and their fellow comrades  
have for these soldiers.*

### **Remember**

*The red ribbon on the vase, symbolizes  
the hope we all have. That someday  
these brave men and women will  
be returned to their families  
and their country.*

**Remember. . . .**



**14th Annual**



## **“Big Thunder” Run**

**September 13th 2015**

9:00-10:30 AM	Registration
10:00 AM	First Bike Out
10:30 AM	Vendor Setup
11:00 AM	Last Bike Out
1:00 PM- Close	Band - Jack Black Comedy
2:00 PM	Last Entry for Bike Show
2:30 PM	Door Prize Ticket is Drawn - Must be present to win
3:30 PM	<b>Remembrance Table Ceremony</b>
4:30 PM	Raffle Prizes / Winner of Bike Show Announced
5:00 PM	Bike Raffle

**Door Prize : Concealed Carry 9mm or \$400 cash**

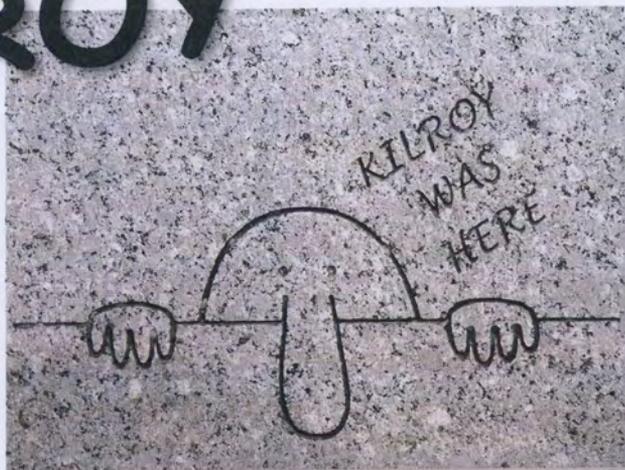
**Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1 would like to thank our friends at**

**Montgomery Memorial Post 7452  
Veterans Of Foreign Wars**

**For Allowing the use of their facilities and their kindness to us.  
Please support their efforts**

**Montgomery VFW  
121 N River Rd,  
Montgomery, IL 60538**

# KILROY WAS HERE!



Kilroy Was Here - Washington, D.C., WWII Memorial

**H**E IS ENGRAVED IN STONE in the National War Memorial in Washington, D.C., back in a small alcove where very few people have seen it. For the WWII generation, this will bring back memories. For the younger folks, it's a bit of trivia that is a part of our American history.

Anyone born in 1913 to about 1950 is familiar with Kilroy. No one knew why he was so well known, but everybody seemed to get into it. So who was Kilroy?

In 1946 the American Transit Association, through its radio program, *Speak to America*, sponsored a nation-

wide contest to find the real Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car to the person who could prove himself to be the genuine article. Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but only James Kilroy from Halifax, Mass., had evidence of his identity.

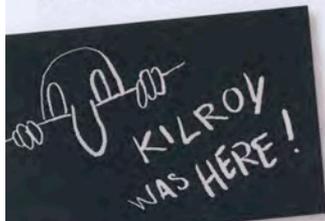
"Kilroy" was a 46-year-old shipyard worker during the war who worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy. His job was to go around and check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piecework and got paid by the rivet. He would count a block of rivets and put a checkmark in semi-waxed lum-

ber chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice.

When Kilroy went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark. Later on, an off-shift inspector would come through and count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters.

One day Kilroy's boss called him into his office. The foreman was upset about all the wages being paid to riveters, and asked him to investigate. It was then he realized what had been going on.

The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can



"Kilroy was here (re-drawn)" by J.-N. L.

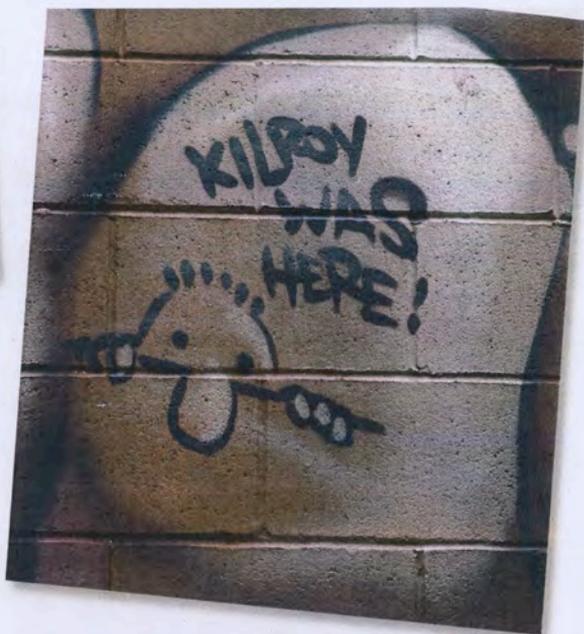


"World War II Display at 2011 Wings & Wheels" by Lee Cannon

and brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with the waxy chalk. He continued to put his check mark on each job he inspected, but added "KILROY WAS HERE" in king-sized letters next to the check, and eventually added the sketch of the chap with the long nose peering over the fence and that became part of the Kilroy message.

Once he did that, the riveters stopped trying to wipe away his marks. Ordinarily the rivets and chalk marks would have been covered up with paint. With the war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy Yard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them. As a result, Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen who boarded the troopships the yard produced.

His message apparently rang a



"Foxx Equipment Mural - Dinosaurs and Cavemen - Kilroy Was Here" by Marshall Astor from San Pedro, United States

bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe and the South Pacific.

Before war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there and everywhere on the long hauls to Berlin and Tokyo. To the troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery; all they knew for sure was that someone named Kilroy had "been there first."

As a joke, U.S. servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

Kilroy became the U.S. super-GI who had always "already been" wherever GIs went. It became a challenge to place the logo in the most unlikely places imaginable. It is said to be atop Mt. Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arc de Triomphe and even scrawled in the dust on the moon.

As the war went on, the legend grew. Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese-held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for coming invasions by U.S. troops (and thus, presumably, were the first GIs there). On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo!

In 1945, an outhouse was built for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin and Churchill at the Potsdam conference. Its first occupant was Stalin, who emerged and asked his aide (in Russian), "Who is Kilroy?"

To help prove his authenticity in 1946, James Kilroy brought along officials from the shipyard and some of the riveters. He won the trolley car, which he gave to his nine children as a Christmas gift and set up as a playhouse in the Kilroy yard in Halifax, Mass. \*

# OLDEST OVERSEAS FEMALE VET 109

More than 70 years ago, Phyllis Thompson enlisted in the Army and served on Iwo Jima. The VFW life member celebrated her 109th birthday in March 2015.

By JANIE BLANKENSHIP

On May 2, 1942, the *USS Cythera* was on its way from Norfolk, Va., to Pearl Harbor, when it was torpedoed by a German U-boat off the North Carolina coast. On board was Ensign William Logan Bunker, Jr.

Had it not been for that fateful event, Phyllis Josephine Thompson, who goes by Jo, wouldn't now be the oldest known overseas female veteran. She also happens to be a life member of VFW Post 2556 in North Boston, N.Y.

Thompson was married to Bunker at the time his ship was torpedoed. Two men survived and were taken as German prisoners. Determined to find out if her husband was one of the men, Thompson



Phyllis Josephine Thompson

enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps on Jan. 6, 1943. She was already a registered nurse, having studied at Carson Peck Memorial Hospital in Brooklyn.

In May 1945, Thompson and other nurses landed on Iwo Jima with the 232nd General Hospital. She was in charge of an orthopedic surgery unit. While there, she received confirmation that her husband had indeed been killed in the torpedo attack three years before.

Thompson returned to the U.S. in the fall of 1945 and was based at Valley Forge Hospital in Pennsylvania. That's where she met her second husband, Robert Thompson. They married in 1949.

Born in Liverpool, England, Thompson grew up on Long Island and later moved to Hamburg in western New York. There, she was a successful antique dealer.

Today, Thompson lives at Father Baker Manor in Orchard Park, N.Y., where she has resided for only a year. Before that, she lived at home, where she enjoyed tending to her flowers.

Thompson celebrated her birthday March 25, an event covered by the *Buffalo News*. She received recognition letters from the White House, as well as U.S. and state senators. She also received a proclamation from the state of New York.

An avid tea drinker who takes no daily medications, Thompson told a reporter she is an advocate of cod liver oil for maintaining good health.

In 1990, Thompson registered with the Women in Military Service for America Memorial. On her registry, she shared a searing event: "My most memorable experience was on Iwo Jima holding a dying soldier in my arms who was calling for his mother, and I acted the part. He was 15 years old and had lost both of his legs in combat." ❦

E-MAIL [jblankenship@vfw.org](mailto:jblankenship@vfw.org)

## Former WAAC is Oldest Veteran

IN DETROIT, another female veteran recently made headlines as the oldest living veteran in the country. On March 13, Emma Didlake celebrated her 110th birthday.

Married to a coal miner in Lynch, Ky., and a mother of five, Didlake enlisted in the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC) in Vendo, Ky., in 1942.

"I wanted to do different things," she told the *San Antonio News-Express*.

She never left the states, but worked as a driver. She served about seven months.

"When the WAAC became part of the Army [Women's Army Corps on July 1, 1943]," she explained to the *Detroit Free-Press*, "some were dismissed, and I was among them."

Her family moved to Detroit in 1945.

Didlake has been to almost every state, as well as the Far East and the former Yugoslavia, having traveled with a friend through tour groups.

She lives alone and relies on a walker. She only takes one pill a day for diabetes and uses eye drops for glaucoma.

She told the *News-Express* her secrets to good health include not smoking and living in moderation. She also shared that every night she soaks nine golden raisins in a pint of vodka and lets them sit overnight before eating them the following afternoon.



Emma Didlake

## WALTER AND CONNIE PAYTON FOUNDATION

2305 Marketview Drive #223  
Parkville, IL 60560  
(847) 935-0034  
www.Payton34.com



July 8, 2014

RE: WCPDF SWEETNESS RUN

Dear Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1,

On behalf of the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation (WCPDF), I want to thank you for sponsoring our 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Kendall County Sweetness 5K, 8K Run/Walk on Saturday June 7, 2014, by volunteering to be our unofficial start of the 5K and 8k. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to join us!

WCPDF is committed to improving the lives of veterans and children in need throughout the state of Illinois. By hosting charitable events such as the Sweetness Run, WCPDF is able to provide programs to assist those in need, and continue the legacy of Walter Payton. "Sweetness".

**WCPDF MISSION:** Our mission is to take an active role in helping those less fortunate to find stability while providing positive opportunities needed to live their lives with dignity and pride.

### WCPDF continues to dream big!

WCPDF would not be able to reach our goals without the generous support of our surrounding communities. We truly appreciate everyone who assisted us in making this year's run a success, either by volunteering, donating financially and/or in-kind, purchasing a flag to honor a military hero, and/or registering for the 5K or 8K.

Next year's Sweetness Run marks the 10 year anniversary, and we look forward to partnering with you for the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Sweetness Run! If you would like to sponsor the run next year, or have any ideas/suggestions, please let us know by contacting me directly, or by contacting our WCPDF Office Manager/Event Coordinator, Nancy Hewlett, via email at [Nancy@Payton34.com](mailto:Nancy@Payton34.com) or phone at 630.885.4980.

Be sure to check out our new and improved website at [www.PAYTON34.com](http://www.PAYTON34.com), and like us on Facebook to view upcoming events, purchase merchandise, and more!



Sincerely,

Connie Payton

Walter and Connie Payton Foundation  
[ConniePayton@Payton34.com](mailto:ConniePayton@Payton34.com)  
501(c)(3)- 36-4476132  
Office: 847.605.0034 / Fax: 630.552.7618  
[www.PAYTON34.com](http://www.PAYTON34.com)



"We're out of crayons ..."

## "In Flanders Fields" Remains a Classic

by Russell Smith

**I**N FLANDERS FIELDS" is the quintessential war poem. Written in WWI during the 1915 battle of Ypres Salient, it remains the standard by which all wartime prose is measured. A Canadian physician, Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, with several years of experience tending wounds with the medical technology of the day, had seen and heard enough of the horrors of the war for a thousand men.

Of the 17 days he spent in Ypres Salient, McCrae wrote, "I wish I could embody on paper some of the varied sensations of that seventeen days... Seventeen days of Hades! At the end of the first day if anyone had told us we had to spend seventeen days there, we would have folded our hands and said it could not have been done."

One death particularly affected McCrae. A former student, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer of Ottawa, was killed May 2, 1915. Lieutenant Helmer was buried that day in the cemetery near McCrae's station; McCrae performed the funeral ceremony in the absence of the chaplain.

The next day, sitting on the back of an ambulance parked near his station beside the Canal de l'Yser, a few hundred yards north of Ypres, McCrae vented his anguish by composing a poem.

In the nearby cemetery, McCrae could see the wild poppies that sprang up in the ditches and he spent 20 minutes of precious rest time scribbling 15 lines of verse in a notebook.

Cyril Allinson, a 22-year-old Sergeant Major, watched him write it. He was delivering mail when he saw Major McCrae. "His face was very tired, but calm as we wrote," Allinson recalled. "He looked around from time to time, his eyes straying to Helmer's grave."

When McCrae finished, he took his mail from Allinson and quietly handed his work to the young NCO.

SGM Allinson said, "The poem was an exact description of the scene in front of us both. He used the word



LTC John McCrae, M.D.

blow in that line because the poppies actually were being blown that morning by a gentle east wind. It never occurred to me at that time that it would ever be published. It seemed to me just an exact description of the scene."

In fact, it almost wasn't published. Displeased with it, McCrae threw it away, but a fellow officer picked it up and sent it to British newspapers. The *Spectator*, in London, rejected it, but *Punch* published it on 8 December 1915.\*

### IN FLANDERS FIELDS

In Flanders fields the poppies blow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.

#### REFERENCES:

Bassett, John (1984), *The Canadians: John McCrae, Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited, ISBN 0-88902-651-3*

Prescott, John F. (1985), *In Flanders Fields: The Story of John McCrae, Erin, Ontario: Boston Mills Press, ISBN 0-9197*

"History by the minute" vignette on the writing of the poem from the *Historica Dominion Institute of Canada* 83-07-4; [https://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/john-mccrae?media\\_type=41&](https://www.historicacanada.ca/content/heritage-minutes/john-mccrae?media_type=41&)

# WHO WAS THE FIRST UNIFORMED AMERICAN TO DIE IN WORLD WAR II?

On this 75th anniversary, it is about time Army Air Forces Capt. Robert Losey became universally known to his country.

By GARY WARD

“He was the first officer in the service of the United States government to be killed in the present European war,” is how the *New York Times* described his death on the front page of its April 23, 1940, edition. His gravestone in West Point Cemetery says simply: “Killed in performance of his duties as military attaché in Norway.”

Yet Capt. Robert M. Losey has a much more unique, albeit unwanted, claim to fame: He was the first member of the U.S. armed forces killed by enemy action in World War II. In fact, Losey was KIA by German fire one year and seven months before Pearl Harbor.

The so-called “phony war” in Europe erupted in full fury in the spring of 1940. In Norway, that took the form of a full-scale invasion on April 8-9. Hitler invaded the Scandinavian country to secure ice-free harbors and iron ore from mines in Sweden transiting through Narvik, Norway.

Stationed in neighboring Helsinki, Finland, at the time was Losey, assistant American military attaché for air. He was assigned there in January 1940 to observe Soviet aerial tactics in its brutal war against that tiny nation. Moscow’s war in Finland ended about a month

before the German invasion of Norway. Losey was then dispatched to Sweden.

A West Point graduate, Iowan and son of a Presbyterian minister, the 31-year-old was considered “the Army’s crack aeronautical meteorological expert.” As history proved, Losey also was selfless and courageous.

From Sweden, he was dispatched into Norway to escort U.S. legation members back to safety in the neutral country. Among them was Florence Harriman, U.S. minister in Norway. Prophetically, Losey told Harriman, “I certainly don’t want to be killed, but your death would be more serious as it might involve our country in all kinds of trouble...”

So on April 21, he returned to Norway to locate missing members of the U.S. legation from Oslo, not knowing they had safely passed through Dombas on their way to Sweden. Dombas, as a key rail intersection, was a prime Luftwaffe (German air force) target.

As the bombs dropped, Losey lingered about 30 feet inside the entrance to a railway tunnel where civilians sought sanctuary. The military weatherman in him compelled the air attaché to closely monitor German bombing tactics. That decision proved fatal. A bomb exploded nearby, sending fragments flying in all directions. One fragment pierced his heart, killing Losey instantly.

## NOW FORGOTTEN, ONCE REMEMBERED

Once his body was in Sweden, a memorial service was held, reported on radio by war correspondent Arthur Menken. Minister Harriman would later write of when the “sense of loss in the world was centered in that one young American.”

Losey’s sacrifice is completely forgotten today. But back then it was well remembered. In 1940, the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences created the *Robert M. Losey Award* (changed in 1975 to the *Losey Atmospheric Sciences Award*) in his honor. The following year, Losey Army Airfield was named near Ponce, Puerto Rico. The legendary film-maker Frank Capra included an account of his death in the War Department movie *Divide and Conquer*.

Nor did the people of Norway forget. Some 47 years after his death, they dedicated an eight-foot monument in Dombas in his memory. On the 50th anniversary on April 21, 1990, some 400 Norwegians turned out for a memorial service and laid a wreath at Losey’s monument.

Army Air Forces Capt. Robert M. Losey would be the first of 185,179 uniformed Americans killed by enemy action in the European Theater of World War II. His sacrifice deserves to be remembered 75 years later.

E-MAIL [rkolb@vfw.org](mailto:rkolb@vfw.org)



## Beetle Bailey (1950 - ) created by Mort Walker



**Beetle Bailey** (begun on September 4, 1950)<sup>[2]</sup> is an American comic strip created by cartoonist Mort Walker. Set in a fictional United States Army military post, it is among the oldest comic strips still being produced by the original creator.<sup>[1]</sup> Over the years, Mort Walker has been assisted by (among others) Jerry Dumas, Bob Gustafson, Frank Johnson and Walker's sons Neal, Brian and Greg Walker. The latter is currently credited on the strip.

Beetle was originally a college student at Rockview University. The characters in that early strip were modeled after Walker's fraternity brothers at the University of Missouri. On March 13, 1951, during the strip's first year, Beetle quit school and enlisted in the U.S. Army, where he has remained ever since.

Most of the humor in *Beetle Bailey* revolves around the inept characters stationed at Camp Swampy (inspired by Camp Crowder, where Walker had once been stationed while in the Army), which is located near the town of Hurleyburg.<sup>[3]</sup> at "Paris Island, S.C." <sup>[4]</sup> Private Bailey is a lazy sort who usually naps and avoids work, and thus is often the subject of verbal and physical chastising from his supervisor, Sergeant Snorkel. The characters never seem to see combat themselves, with the exception of mock battles and combat drills. In fact, they seem to be in their own version of stereotypical comic strip purgatory (initially basic training, they now appear to be stuck in time in a regular infantry division).

The uniforms of Beetle Bailey are still the uniforms of the late 1940s to early 1970s Army, with green fatigues and baseball caps as the basic uniform, and the open jeep as the basic military vehicle. Sergeant First Class Snorkel wears a green Class A Army dress uniform with heavily wrinkled garrison cap; the officers wear M1 helmet liners painted with their insignia. While Beetle Bailey's unit is Company A, one running gag is that the characters are variously seen in different branches of the Army, such as artillery, armor, infantry and paratroops.

Beetle is always seen with a hat or helmet covering his forehead and eyes. Even on leave, his "civvies" include a pork pie hat worn in the same style. He can only be seen without it once—in the original strip when he was still a college student. The strip was pulled and never ran in any newspaper. It has only been printed in various books on the strip's history. One daily strip had Sarge scare Beetle's hat off, but Beetle was wearing sunglasses.

One running gag has Sergeant Snorkel hanging helplessly from a small tree branch after having fallen off a cliff. While he is never shown falling off, or even walking close to the edge of a cliff, he always seems to hold on to that same branch, yelling for help. This gag may have spawned the segment of the children's show *Between the Lions* featuring a person named Cliff Hanger, who, like Sergeant Snorkel, is hanging from a cliff in each feature. - Wikipedia (2015)





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Described as 'a feat without parallel,' VFW waged a little-known campaign to have the *Star-Spangled Banner* officially recognized as America's national anthem in 1931. As the nation celebrates the 200th anniversary of the country's song, it is important to remember this historic effort. BY HERBERT M. MASON, JR.



# STAR-SPANGLED BANNER BECOMES NATIONAL ANTHEM

VFW vigorously took on the fight to make the *Star-Spangled Banner* this country's national anthem. In 1928, the U.S. was the only modern nation in the world without a sanctioned national ballad—a flagrant lapse VFW was determined to set right. It was Walter I. "Daddy" Joyce, director of the National Americanization Committee, who led the crusade.

The *Star-Spangled Banner* had been played and sung with varying degrees of success for some 100 years. The uplifting words came from Francis Scott Key, a 35-year-old lawyer who had watched from Chesapeake Bay, Md., the night the British bombarded Ft. McHenry in 1814.

The next morning, the sight of the tattered flag still flying over the shelled fort inspired Key to put his feelings to words. They were published as a poem in the Sept. 20, 1814, issue of the *Baltimore Patriot*.

Set to the music of an old English drinking song, *To Anacreon in Heaven*, it became an instant favorite. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed it the national anthem in 1916, but Congress had yet to legislate it as the nation's patriotic musical signature.

Joyce, with the endorsement of then-VFW Commander-in-Chief Frank T. Strayer, energetically pursued his goal of securing an overwhelming number of petition signatures with which to bombard Congress. Posts and Auxiliaries pitched in against opposition by pacifist groups that objected to the song's

alleged "militaristic" tone. But at VFW's 1929 national encampment in St. Paul, Minn., Joyce reported 4 million signatures in hand. A Gold Star mother collected 12,000 signatures; a New Jersey VFW member, 9,000; and another in Troy, N.Y., 5,000.

Musical purists said, with justifica-

D.C., to press for another version of the bill introduced by Maryland Rep. Charles Linthicum. It went before the Judiciary Committee the next day, when Joyce presented 5 million signatures and endorsements from other organizations representing another 15 million citizens. Among the signatures were those of 26 governors. *Foreign Service*, VFW's magazine during that period, proudly proclaimed it "a feat without parallel in the history of any veterans organization."

The climax came when VFW Ladies Auxiliary member Elsie Jorss Reilly stood and sang Key's words to the accompaniment of the Navy Band. The bill came out of committee by a vote of 16 to 2 but stalled on the House floor because of the objection from a Mississippi representative.

It finally passed April 21, 1930, and was sent to the Senate Library Committee, where it again lay fallow until March 2, 1931. On that date, it passed unanimously, a day before the 71st Congress adjourned. President Herbert Hoover signed the bill the following morning. The *Star-Spangled Banner* was now the nation's anthem by law, as well as in fact, thanks to the little-known campaign waged by VFW.

In recent years, it has been under assault. A campaign to replace it with something other than a "war song" was waged. Public opinion, however, appears to be on the side of tradition. ♣

**HERBERT M. MASON** authored VFW: Our First Century, 1899-1999, published in honor of VFW's 100th anniversary. He has since died.



VFW waged a determined campaign to make *The Star-Spangled Banner* the official national anthem. On Jan. 31, 1930, officials presented petitions—bearing more than 5 million signatures—to the House Judiciary Committee, urging passage of the measure. The bill was signed April 1, 1931. Left to right: Missouri Rep. Leonidas Dyer; Elsie Jorss Reilly; Maryland Rep. J.C. Linthicum, who authored the bill; and Walter I. Joyce, VFW director of Americanism. Reilly sang the anthem during the presentation of petitions.

tion, the music was in too high a register to be sung by all except operatic sopranos. The score was rewritten in the key of A-flat to bring it within reach of more American vocal cords.

Joyce persuaded New York Rep. Hamilton Fish to introduce a bill before Congress, but it never got out of committee. Nor did it during the next session. Then, on Jan. 30, 1930, representatives from more than 60 patriotic organizations gathered in Washington,



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**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

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BRUCE RAUNER  
GOVERNOR

LENARD WINNICKI  
ADMINISTRATOR

ERICA JEFFRIES  
DIRECTOR

March 16, 2015

Rolling Thunder  
P O Box 1042  
Warrenville, IL 60555



Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Illinois Veterans' Home we want to express our sincere appreciation to you for the donation of the 2014 F -250 Transport Van. This donation will enable the veterans in our care to be transported safely to their needed medical appointments. One resident stated, "It rides like a Cadillac!" We are grateful for the generous expression of your support extended to our Home.

Our goal is to provide a high quality of care and comfort to those we serve. Our veterans have given so much in defense of our country that we owe it to them to offer them the best possible care. Your generous donation will aid us in continuing in that tradition. We appreciate the thoughtfulness and generosity of friends such as you who choose to do so many wonderful things to enhance the lives of our men and women.

Thank you for remembering our veterans and for your loyal support of the Illinois Veterans' Home at LaSalle.

Sincerely,

Lenard Winnicki  
Acting Administrator

Susan Scully  
Director of Volunteer Services



GIBBLEGUTS.COM By Dan Gibson



The deep military budget cuts affected both enlisted soldiers and officers alike.

# CHARLES M. PROVINCE



Charles M. Province, a veteran of the US Army, is the sole and single Founder and President of The George S. Patton, Jr. Historical Society. He is the author of “The Unknown Patton”, “Patton’s Third Army”, and “Patton’s One-Minute Messages”

More information is available on his website, “[The Patton Society](#)” particularly on the page, “[Northeast Kansas Korean War Memorial](#)” where Province’s poem is displayed.

## IT IS THE SOLDIER

It is the Soldier, not the minister Who has given us freedom of religion.

It is the Soldier, not the reporter Who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the Soldier, not the poet Who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the Soldier, not the campus organizer Who has given us freedom to protest.

It is the Soldier, not the lawyer Who has given us the right to a fair trial.

It is the Soldier, not the politician Who has given us the right to vote.

It is the Soldier who salutes the flag, Who serves beneath the flag, And whose coffin is draped by the flag, Who allows the protester to burn the flag.

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### WCPF MISSION

Our mission is to take an active role in helping those less fortunate to find stability while providing positive opportunities needed to live their lives with dignity and pride.

WCPF has partnered with Concord Place Assisted Living Community in Northlake, IL to provide a warm safe place for homeless and in-need Veterans to live. As our Veterans needs are on-going continued support of this project is greatly needed.

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### CONTACT

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## News Release

Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (Public Affairs)  
Washington, DC 20301-2900

Phone: (703) 699-1169

Fax: (703) 602-4375

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oct. 24, 2014

### Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army Sgt. Cameron M. Flack, 18, of Union Mills, N.C. will be buried Nov. 2, in Union Mills, N.C. In November 1950, Flack was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), 7th Infantry Division, operating along the eastern banks of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. From Nov. 27 – Dec. 1, 1950, the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces overwhelmed U.S. positions and U.S. troops were forced to withdraw south to more defensible positions. Following the battle, Flack was one of many men reported missing in action.

Between 1991 and 1994, North Korea turned over to the U.S. 208 boxes of human remains believed to contain more than 400 U.S. servicemen who fought during the war. North Korean documents, turned over with some of the boxes, indicated that some of the remains were recovered from the vicinity where Flack was believed to have died.

To identify Flack's remains, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, to include mitochondrial DNA, which matched his sisters.

Today, 7,877 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously turned over by North Korean officials or recovered from North Korea by American recovery teams.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for Americans, who went missing while serving our country, visit the DPMO web site at [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo) or call (703) 699-1169.



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**Rolling Thunder® Inc., Illinois Chapter #1 is composed of a diverse bunch of individuals Veterans and Non-Veterans, male and female, wealthy and not wealthy, who would not normally come together in society but have so. Four members of our Board of Directors are not Veterans. Some Members of the Board do not have motorcycles. But they all put their time and talent to making sure all in Illinois remember their Veterans - those with us and those not i.e., the Missing in Action and the Prisoners of War.**

**Here are two stories - one a highly decorated former member of the United States Army Officer Corp and one, a non-veteran but just as dedicated. Both are on our Board of Directors.**



**Col. Dominic Ruggerio was U.S. Army Cavalry officer from head to toe**

*by* DON MOORE

After graduating with a double major in English and Psychology from Norwich University in Northfield, Vt. in 1961, Dominic Ruggerio joined the Army as a 2nd lieutenant. He went to basic at Fort Knox, Ky. the following year.

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“Because of the ‘Berlin Wall’ I went on active duty as an armored cavalry officer with a tank unit, 1st Squadron, 14th Armored Cavalry in Fulda, Germany, along the Russian border the same year,” the 75-year-old retired officer explained. “I started out as a platoon leader with five M-60 tanks, some scouts and mortar-men. For three years I did that.

“Then I came back to the U.S. and attended the Armored Officers’ Advanced Course at Fort Knox for a year. I stayed at Fort Knox while other soldiers were being sent to Vietnam and Germany,” Ruggerio said. “I trained troops to be armored cavalry scouts.

“Then I got a call from my assignment officer and told I was about to become a paratrooper. I was sent to airborne school at Fort Benning, Ga. At 27 I was one of the oldest soldiers in the training unit. After graduation I was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division. I became a member of the 3rd Brigade at Fort Campbell, Ky.

“I was made the assistant personnel officer for the outfit when I arrived at the 101st. I wanted a combat job. My new commander said he’d see what he could do for me.

“I had hardly arrived at Campbell when our brigade got word we were being sent to Vietnam. It took us six weeks to deploy the 3,500 airborne troops and their 5,180 tons of equipment overseas,” he recalled.

“We arrived at Bien Hoa, South Vietnam on Dec. 7, 1967–Pearl Harbor Day– and deployed to Phuoc Vinh, a village about 35 miles to the north. It was along the edge of War Zone-C, right where the Ho Chi Minh Trail ran through,” Ruggerio said.”

The 101st Brigade wasn’t long in Vietnam when they were engaged in the enemy’s “Tet Offensive.” Tens of thousands of North Vietnamese Army soldiers and Vietcong guerrillas overran most of South Vietnam’s major cities and military bases.

“When ‘Tet’ hit elements of the 3rd Brigade were deployed to the roof of the American Embassy in Saigon that the enemy had taken over during the early stages of the fighting. We recaptured the building from the VC room-by-room as we worked our way down to the ground floor,” he said. “It took us about three days, as I recall, to retake the building from the enemy.

“That was the 3rd Brigade’s baptism of fire with the Communists in Vietnam. Then we went back to War Zone-C and the Ho Chi Minh Trail where there was usually always something going on. I was assigned as interim platoon leader of a long range recon unit as an additional duty to my primary responsibility as he brigade adjutant.

“Then I was sent to the 58th Infantry Scout Dog Unit that worked with German Shepherds–27 handlers and 27 dogs would go out in the field. The dogs would help find enemy mines as well as NVA and VC. When the dogs perked up their ears and listened intently you knew they’d found something.

“During the time I was in Vietnam I participated in several significant rescue operations where we flew in with helicopters to pick up wounded soldiers. I recall we picked up this one young

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man in the bush and I knew he wasn't going to make it. Seven years later, after several years recovering in Walter Reed Army Hospital, I met him again in Texas. He was at Fort Hood, had gone to flight school and become an attack helicopter pilot.

"When I returned to the U.S. I became an ROTC instructor at the University of Maine and almost froze to death for the next couple of years. After that I went to Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan. By that time I was a major. After completing the course I became the second in command of an armored cavalry unit at Fort Hood.

"Then I got my first assignment to the Pentagon as Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel. This was about the time I was interviewed to become Executive Officer for the Commander and Chief of U.S. forces Korea. Nothing happened for four months and then I got a call that I had gotten the job in Korea," Ruggerio said.

"I was assigned to Korea in June of 1978 and went to work for Gen. John Vessey, who eventually became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff some years later. By this time I was a lieutenant colonel. Korea was a wonderful experience, I took my whole family.

"During the time I was in Korea there were two coups and the president of Korea was assassinated," he recalled. "After 13 months working for Gen. Vessey I was assigned to command the 1st Battalion, 72nd Armored along the DMZ (Demilitarized Zone) in Korea—54 tanks and 800 troops.

"When I returned to the U.S. I went back to the Pentagon. This was about the time I had a heart attack. After recovering from that I became the operations guy for the 2nd Armored Division at Fort Hood."

"In 1984 my assignment officer called me once more and wanted to know what I knew about Presidential Inaugurations? I told him I think they happen every four years.

"'Well,' he said, 'You are about to become Executive Director to the general in charge of the Second Inauguration of President Ronald Reagan. The Military District of Washington, D.C., the Army, runs the show.'

"It was a lot of fun and something I did for the next 1 1/2 years. Our primary job was to organize the inauguration and execute it. Once a week we would go to the White House and meet with Mike Deaver, Reagan's chief of staff, for exactly 15 minutes.

"When the inauguration was all over, 50 of us spent the last six months writing a 'How To' inauguration manual for the next election.

"I then became commander of the 12th Cavalry Regiment at Fort Knox. It was the largest tank training brigade in the army with 8,000 soldiers, tanks and the only unionized civilian maintenance section in the Army," Ruggerio recalled.

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“During my final two years in the Army I was assigned as the Director of Officer Training Command at Fort Monroe, Va.”

By then he was a full colonel with 30 years of service, but his chance of becoming a general officer was slim. He was pushing 50 and the powers that be in the Pentagon were looking for colonels in their early 40s to move up the command ladder.

“I had an opportunity to step out into civilian life at this point and took it,” he said. “I went to work for Deloitte & Touche LLC as Director of Administrative Services & Facilities. I spent the next 6 1/2 years working for them. Then I opened my own consulting business helping companies relocate and ran that for the next 17 years.

Ruggerio spends his winters in Venice, FL, and summers in the Chicago area. He has four grown children: Dominic Jr., Anne, Mary and Kathryn and 9 wonderful grandchildren - Danielle, Regan, Joe, Madeline, Steven (Buddy), Andrew, Rhett, Nash and Enzo.

On his time off he fly fishes.



This is Dom today at 75.

When asked why he joined Rolling Thunder®, he wrote:

“I joined Rolling Thunder® as a result of hearing the full Rolling Thunder® story from "Spoiled" at a Heritage Harley HOG Meeting. I had joined the Heritage Harley chapter of HOG and when I heard the story, I immediately joined Rolling Thunder® at the following monthly meeting. The POW/MIA and Veterans issues have always been one of my "causes" even before I retired from the ARMY. We have a special camaraderie that makes one want to become a member!”

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**Board Member, Dan “Cage” Thomas, a non veteran.**



“Why, as a **Non-Veteran**, and a **non-motorcycle rider**, did I join Rolling Thunder?

When I was a child, once every couple years my father and I would drive up to what was then called “Great Lakes Naval Training Base”, so my dad could buy “Government Issue” underwear. He said they wear like iron, and since he was a Veteran, was able to get them at a reasonable price.

(My Dad was a Lieutenant on a destroyer during WWII. He was the gunnery officer, #3 in command on his ship. He saw action in the Philippines and I also believe Okinawa. He served on two ships, The USS Henry W Tucker and USS Bancroft.)

At that time I really didn’t understand what a Veteran was, I knew he had been in the Navy, but that was the extent of my understanding at such an early age.

As I got older, I understood more, but Dad never talked about his service. I knew one story about how he was standing on deck, and they were shelling an island, and taking fire, when his assistant took a piece of shrapnel in his forearm, went to sick bay, got fixed up, was taken off the ship, received a purple heart and went home. Now that I think about it, I think my Dad was upset that the guy went home and he was still onboard the ship.

Growing up we would go to the local VFW for the Fish Fry. Again, not really understanding what the VFW was and why it was there, until I was much older.

After my mom passed away, and Dad was alone, I suggested he join the VFW to hang out with some guys he had some things in common with. He said no way, because he was not a fan of

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how the Vietnam Vets were treated by the WWII and Korean Vets, that they were not welcome at the VFW, because they weren't in a "war".

My Dad passed away on Feb 4 2000, just 4 days shy of 90 years old. I contacted Naval Station Great Lakes, as it is now called, to see about getting an honor guard for his funeral, but was unsuccessful. I was mortified, that a member of the Greatest Generation, would not be allowed an honor guard for his funeral.

I would occasionally go the same VFW as an adult, also to enjoy the Fish Fry. One such night, after my father had passed away, and was approached by a friend about joining a new unit of the VFW, the "Men's Auxiliary". I said sure and retrieved the paperwork that proved my eligibility to join, and the process began, and my motivation was to honor my Dad's service to this country.

I spent many days and nights volunteering at the VFW, feeling good about giving back to those that gave me my freedom, my future, and a secure free future for my children. I always felt there was more I could do to help Veterans.

Our VFW Post (Villa Park #2801) started an event called "Welcome Home all Veterans", to welcome home Veterans, to honor them and have different organizations all in one place for them to find out what benefits they are eligible for. My own brother, who is a Vietnam era Veteran from the Army, had no idea what was available to him. I asked him to come and he found out that even though he never was in country in Vietnam, he is still a Veteran, and eligible for VA benefits. During this event, Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1 performed the Remembrance Table Ceremony, and I was moved to tears, and wanted to find out more. I approached the guy that appeared to be in charge, and asked if I needed to be a Veteran or a motorcycle rider to join, and was told no, all you have to do is believe in our mission and be willing to help in that mission.

I went to the next meeting, was explained what RTILCH1 was all about and signed up that night.

That was 4 years ago, and I am an active member and have the same passion to do what I can for Veterans, and feel that I do this for my own Veterans, my dad and my brother."

**Thanks to both for their valuable contributions as Board Members of Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1.**



# Veterans on Wall Street

Veteran-owned firm commits to hire and train those who served

By Steven Wilson

**A**n institutional brokerage firm has made a commitment to hire veterans and train them for careers in finance.

Drexel Hamilton LLC currently employs 39 veterans, 21 of whom were injured or made ill as a result of military service.

Assistant Vice President Joseph S. Krulder II, an Army veteran of the Iraq War, said the performance of veterans, especially those who sacrificed or were changed in service, communicates a special message.

"The distinction of being a [service-connected] disabled veteran for our firm simply provides the general public with an understanding that veterans with disabilities are as capable as those without a disability," Krulder said.

Drexel Hamilton does more than just hire veterans. They also train other veterans from various military-related specialties for careers in the financial services sector. If those veterans do not end up working for Drexel Hamilton, the company helps them with job placement all over the country.

"In today's increasingly competitive and fast-paced environment, companies need a more highly skilled, disciplined and educated workforce," said Krulder, who became disabled while serving as an Army paratrooper.

"Veterans are a perfect fit. Accustomed to the rigors of hard duty in high-pressure environments, veterans bring that 'go' attitude, along with education and on-the-job training not available anywhere else," he said.

Lawrence K. Doll, Drexel Hamilton's founder and chairman, was twice awarded the Purple Heart for



*Jerry Majetich is a Marine and Army veteran. He is also a vice president at Drexel-Hamilton, where he has worked for four years. While deployed to Iraq, his vehicle was ambushed. Majetich suffered severe burns to his body and was shot four times while escaping the wrecked and burning vehicle. "Jerry is my battle buddy and living proof that being service-connected disabled does not mean you're unable to have a meaningful career and provide for your family," said Joseph S. Krulder, Assistant Vice President, Institutional Depository of Drexel-Hamilton.*

service as a Marine in Vietnam. He said Wall Street is a place where veterans can succeed.

"Wall Street is a very challenging street, and it's also an Ivy League street," Doll said. "[Veterans] are not [always] Ivy League, but they're already trained.

"They're team players, and they are willing to do anything. They work hard and [are] easy to get along with and very bright," said Doll.

The effort by companies like Drexel Hamilton shows the capabilities of America's veterans as they reintegrate into the civilian workforce, according to National Adjutant Marc Burgess.

"I'm very pleased that organizations like Drexel Hamilton are demonstrating just what returning veterans can bring to the table," said Burgess. "America's veterans are very capable and have a 'no mission failure' mindset, which employers are sure to find valuable.

"Many employers are recognizing the benefits of having veterans within their ranks, which we can see from our DAV/RecruitMilitary All Veteran Career Fairs. Getting more veterans in leadership positions will create more opportunities and make a difference for any employer seeking a quality workforce." ■

# History of the POW/MIA Flag

In 1970, Mrs. Michael Hoff, an MIA wife and member of the National League of Families, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida, TIMES-UNION, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice President of Annin & Company which had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the People's Republic of China (PRC), as a part of their policy to provide flags to all United Nations members states. Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he and an Annin advertising agency employee, designed a flag to represent our missing men. Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution.

On March 9, 1989, an official League flag that flew over the White House on National POW/MIA Recognition Day 1988 was installed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda as a result of legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th Congress. In a demonstration of bipartisan Congressional support, the leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony.

The League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever displayed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda where it will stand as a powerful symbol of national commitment to America's POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting has been achieved for U.S. personnel still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

On August 10, 1990, the 101st Congress passed U.S. Public Law 101-355, which recognized the League's POW/MIA flag and designated it "as the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation".

The importance of the League's POW/MIA flag lies in its continued visibility, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIAs. Other than "Old Glory", the League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever to fly over the White House, having been displayed in this place of honor on National POW/MIA Recognition Day since 1982.

Passage by the 105th Congress of Section 1082 of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act required that the League's POW/MIA flag fly six days each year: Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day and Veterans Day. It must be displayed at the White House, the U.S. Capitol, the Departments of State, Defense and Veterans Affairs, the headquarters of the Selective Service System, major military installations as designated by the Secretary of the Defense, all Federal cemeteries and all offices of the U.S. Postal Service. In addition to the specific dates stipulated, the Department of Veterans Affairs voluntarily displays our POW/MIA flag 24/7, and the National Vietnam Veterans, Korean War Veterans and World War II Memorials were all recently required by Congress to display the POW/MIA flag daily, as do many State Capitols and other locations across the country.



**Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office**  
**U.S. Unaccounted-For from the Vietnam War**  
**Prisoners of War, Missing in Action and Killed in Action/Body not Recovered**  
**Report for: Illinois**

Military Service	Country of Casualty	Name	Loss Rank	Status	Date of Incident	Home of Record
USMC	S. Vietnam	ALWAN, HAROLD JOSEPH	O4	XX	1967/02/27	PEORIA, IL
USAF	Laos	ANDERSON, GREGORY LEE	E4	BB	1970/01/28	WHEATON, IL
USAF	Laos	BEUTEL, ROBERT DONALD	O2	XX	1971/11/26	TREMONT, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	BROWN, THOMAS EDWARD	O2	BB	1968/04/29	DANVILLE, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	BROWNLEE, ROBERT WALLACE	O5	XX	1972/04/24	CHICAGO, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	BUELL, KENNETH RICHARD	O4	XX	1972/09/17	KANKAKEE, IL
USAF	Laos	BUNKER, PARK GEORGE	O3	BB	1970/12/30	HOMEWOOD, IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	BURKE, MICHAEL JOHN	E3	XX	1968/10/19	CHICAGO, IL
USAF	Laos	BYRNE, JOSEPH HENRY	O4	BB	1968/03/13	EVANSTON, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	CARLSON, JOHN WERNER	O3	BB	1968/12/07	CHICAGO, IL
USAF	N. Vietnam	CAUSEY, JOHN BERNARD	O3	BB	1968/02/25	GRANITE CITY, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	CLINTON, DEAN EDDIE	W1	XX	1967/08/11	DIX, IL
USN	S. Vietnam	COBBS, RALPH BURTON	O4	BB	1968/06/17	EAST ST LOUIS, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	COLLINS, WILLARD MARION	O3	BB	1968/03/09	QUINCY, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	CUNNINGHAM, KENNETH LEROY	E2	XX	1969/10/03	ELLERY, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	CZERWIEC, RAYMOND GEORGE	E5	XX	1969/03/27	CHICAGO, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	DAYTON, JAMES LESLIE	W1	BB	1968/05/08	GRANITE CITY, IL
USN	Laos	DEUTER, RICHARD CARL	O2	XX	1969/11/22	CHICAGO, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	EADS, DENNIS KEITH	W1	XX	1970/04/23	PROPHETSTOWN, IL
USN	S. Vietnam	FARRIS, WILLIAM F	E4	BB	1968/02/06	WEST SALEM, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	GALVIN, RONALD E	E2	XX	1967/03/08	RIVER FOREST, IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	GATEWOOD, CHARLES HUE	E3	XX	1968/05/31	CHICAGO, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	GERSTEL, DONALD ARTHUR	O4	XX	1972/09/08	MATTESON, IL
USN	Laos	GOLZ, JOHN BRYAN	O2	BB	1970/04/22	ROCK ISLAND, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	HERREID, ROBERT D	E5	XX	1968/10/10	AURORA, IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	HILL, JOSEPH ARNOLD	E3	BB	1968/05/28	TAYLORVILLE, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	HOUSH, ANTHONY F	E6	XX	1968/04/19	NEWTON, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	JABLONSKI, MICHAEL JAMES	E3	BB	1969/08/27	CHICAGO, IL
USMC	Laos	JANOUSEK, RONALD JAMES	O2	BB	1969/08/09	POSEN, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	KELLER, JACK ELMER	O4	XX	1968/04/21	CHICAGO, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	KNABB, KENNETH KEITH JR	O3	XX	1968/10/21	WHEATON, IL
USAF	Laos	LEMON, JEFFREY C	O3	XX	1971/04/25	FLOSSMOOR, IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	LEWANDOWSKI, LEONARD J JR	E2	XX	1966/10/19	DES PLAINES, IL
USAF	N. Vietnam	MADDOX, NOTLEY G	O4	XX	1967/05/20	ROCKFORD, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	MARSHALL, RICHARD CARLTON	O3	BB	1965/09/05	CHICAGO, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	MASON, JAMES PHILIP	E5	BB	1968/10/17	DE KALB, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	MCCORMICK, CARL OTTIS	O5	BB	1972/10/06	PERIOA, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	MEYERS, ROGER ALLEN	O4	BB	1969/02/09	CHICAGO, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	MOORE, WILLIAM JOHN	E4	BB	1969/05/18	MONMOUTH, IL
USAF	Laos	NEWBERRY, WAYNE ELLSWORTH	O3	BB	1968/09/29	EAST ST LOUIS, IL
CIVILIAN	S. Vietnam	NIEHOUSE, DANIEL LEE		KK	1966/11/25	IL
USN	N. Vietnam	NIGHTINGALE, RANDALL JOHN	E5	BB	1968/03/17	ONARGA, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	NOLAN, JOSEPH PAUL JR	O2	XX	1971/05/16	OAK PARK, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	OLSEN, FLOYD WARREN	O3	XX	1968/04/21	WHEATON, IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	PARTINGTON, ROGER DALE	O3	BB	1969/11/01	SPARTA, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	PERISHO, GORDON SAMUEL	O3	XX	1967/12/31	QUINCY, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	PHIPPS, JAMES L	W1	XX	1968/01/09	MATOON, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	PILKINGTON, THOMAS HOLT	O2	XX	1966/09/19	MORTON GROVE, IL
USMC	N. Vietnam	PRICE, WILLIAM MARSHALL	O2	XX	1972/10/12	KEWANEE, IL
USA	Laos	RATTIN, DENNIS M	E4	XX	1969/10/16	BRADLEY, IL

**Status Codes:** AR - AWOL/Deserter/Collaborator/Returned  
 BB - Killed in Action, Body Not Recovered  
 BR - Body Recovered  
 EE - Escapee  
 KK - Died in Captivity, Remains Not Returned  
 KR - Died in Captivity, Remains Returned  
 MM - Missing (Civilians Only)  
 NR - Remains Returned/Remains Recovered  
 PP - Prisoner (Civilians Only)  
 RR - POW Returned  
 XX - Presumptive Finding of Death

This Vietnam War missing personnel report was prepared by the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO).  
 Please visit our web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> for updates to this report and other official missing personnel reports.



Military Service	Country of Casualty	Name	Loss Rank	Status	Date of Incident	Home of Record
USAF	N. Vietnam	REXROAD, RONALD R	O3	XX	1968/04/03	RANKIN, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	RIGGINS, ROBERT PAUL	O4	BB	1968/04/22	CHAMPAIGN, IL
USAF	S. Vietnam	ROTH, BILLIE LEROY	E5	BB	1965/09/27	LACON, IL
USN	Laos	SAGE, LELAND CHARLES COOKE	O2	BB	1969/08/23	WAUKEGAN, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	SANDS, RICHARD EUGENE	E3	BB	1968/05/12	SPRINGFIELD, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	SCOTT, DAVID LEE	E4	BB	1968/04/25	CARLOCK, IL
CIVILIAN	S. Vietnam	SHIMKIN, ALEX		MM	1972/07/12	IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	SKIBBE, DAVID WILLIAM	O1	BB	1970/03/02	DES PLAINES, IL
USAF		SMITH, JOSEPH STANLEY	O1	BB	1971/04/04	ASSUMPTION, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	STORY, JAMES CLELLON	E2	BB	1969/08/13	BERWYN, IL
USAF	N. Vietnam	STPIERRE, DEAN PAUL	O3	XX	1968/05/22	KANKAKEE, IL
USAF	N. Vietnam	SWANSON, JOHN W JR	O3	XX	1967/06/15	ARLINGTON, IL
USMC	S. Vietnam	SWITZER, JERROLD ALLEN	E2	BB	1968/03/18	PARIS, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	SYKES, DERRI	E3	KK	1968/01/09	CHICAGO, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	TERRY, ORAL R	E3	XX	1968/05/03	MASCOUTAH, IL
USN	N. Vietnam	TROWBRIDGE, DUSTIN COWLES	O2	BB	1969/12/26	WAYNE, IL
USAF	Laos	WHITT, JAMES EDWARD	O4	BB	1972/03/23	PENFIELD, IL
USA	S. Vietnam	WILEY, RICHARD DENNIS	E4	BB	1972/06/12	DECATUR, IL

**Report Totals:**

Total BB - Killed in Action, Body Not Recovered:	34
Total KK - Died in Captivity, Remains Not Returned:	2
Total MM - Missing (Civilians Only):	1
Total PP - Prisoner (Civilians Only):	0
Total XX - Presumptive Finding of Death:	31
<b>Total:</b>	<b>68</b>

**End of Report**

<b>Status Codes:</b>	AR - AWOL/Deserter/Collaborator/Returnee	KK - Died in Captivity, Remains Not Returned	PP - Prisoner (Civilians Only)
	BB - Killed in Action, Body Not Recovered	KR - Died in Captivity, Remains Returned	RR - POW Returnee
	BR - Body Recovered	MM - Missing (Civilians Only)	XX - Presumptive Finding of Death
	EE - Escapee	NR - Remains Returned/Remains Recovered	

This Vietnam War missing personnel report was prepared by the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO).  
Please visit our web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> for updates to this report and other official missing personnel reports.



## **Rolling Thunder**

*by Marsha Burks Megehee*

**A thundering vigil of truth, trust and honor  
Of brothers chained, forgotten and denied  
Thank God the sounds of Rolling Thunder  
Grow louder than the presidents who lied.**

**Forgotten heroes, made to be remembered  
By a nation that sacrificed their souls to war  
This roaring fire of freedom, from just an ember  
A brother's promise - brought from near and far.**

**A parade of truth, Memorial Bridge is sighted  
Old Glory's promise flying in the wind  
Tattooed Angels, CEO's, GI Joes united  
Cry "Freedom! We have not forgotten them!"**

**The Run to The Wall where many secrets slumber  
Names, roses, gifts and loved one's tears  
On Capitol Hill they're only just a number  
Lost names no politician ever hears.**

**They thunder past the bridge at Arlington  
Phantom soldier coffins, row on row  
False tombs holding paper fathers, sons  
While secret sins of betrayal rest below.**

**Past the White House, flag of POW/MIAs  
Somber Black, head bowed, a prisoner of the past  
Rolling Thunder's promise will never go away  
Until their missing brothers - come home at last. . .**

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Ten more rooms at \$2,500 per room were donated to the Walter and Connie Payton Foundation Veteran Project at Concord Place in Northlake, IL by the members of Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter 1.

This makes a total of 14 rooms donated by RT IL 1. Fourteen formerly homeless veterans now have a warm and safe place to live including three meals a day. Some of the Veterans arrive with just a plastic shopping bag holding all their possessions. The room furnishings provided include a bed, linens, pillow, dresser, lamp, TV, easy chair, table, chair, etc., and a starter kit of personal care items.





War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight; nothing he cares about more than his own personal safety; is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.



January 14, 2015

Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1  
Attention: Jim "Snipe" Murray  
P.O. Box 1042  
Wartenville IL 60555



Dear Mr. Murray:

Thank you for your donation of \$6,000.00 (Check) on January 8, 2015 to the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans. Your generous contribution will enable us to continue to walk with our veterans, providing life-changing services that truly are bringing our heroes home.

MSHV offers an array of programs that served over 300 homeless and at-risk veterans and veteran families last year. Our Larson Program provides a structured living environment and comprehensive case management to help homeless veterans rebuild their lives. Our Miller Home offers affordable rental housing as our veterans move toward greater self-sufficiency, and our Freedom Commissary helps struggling veteran households make ends meet by providing free clothing and other basic necessities.

#### Transitional Housing

Marine (Dr. Richard) Larson Home

#### Affordable Housing

Army (Sgt Robert) Miller Home

#### Freedom Commissary

Army Captain (John) C. Lantack

2014 marked the first full year of our Supportive Services for Veteran Families Program, the expansion of our Veterans Employment Program and the introduction of our Veterans Nutrition Program. We also began taking applications for Tammy's Trace, the first local program specifically for homeless female veterans.

This dynamic pace continues in 2015, as we monitor and respond to the evolving needs of veterans in our seven-county service area. We thank you for helping us to aid these brave men and women who have served our nation so selflessly. They gave their all, and they deserve no less from us in return.

We are most grateful for your support. Your generosity makes our work possible. Your kindness is restoring hope, reuniting families and rebuilding veterans' lives.

With sincere gratitude,

Bob "Doc" Adams  
Board President

Pam Kostocki  
Executive Director

778 N. West Street  
Wheaton, IL 60707 USA

Ph: 630-671-VETS (8367)

Fax: 630-671-MSHV (6742)

info@mshv.org

The Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (Federal Tax ID #36-4357985). No goods or services were received in exchange for this contribution. Please retain this letter for tax purposes.

JIM & MARY BOB OF ROLLING THUNDER ILLINOIS CHAPTER 1,  
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR WONDERFUL CONTRIBUTION!  
SNIPES! WE PROMISE TO PUT IT TO GOOD  
USE FOR OUR VETERANS. - SEP 14/15 P.F. DE



**Item:** U.S. Army boots  
**Conflict:** World War II  
**Location:** Germany  
**Case status:** In progress

**Finding the Fallen** A mud-caked pair of size nine combat boots (above) is among the latest World War II artifacts to emerge from Germany's Hürtgen Forest, scene of a bloody battle that saw some 31,000 U.S. casualties. Found with the boots last summer were the bones of two soldiers. The task of identifying the men falls to the Joint POW-MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), established in 2003 to consolidate Pentagon efforts to find missing military personnel, including 84,711 soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines from World War II onward whose fates remain uncertain.

Every year JPAC dispatches forensic teams to long-quiet battlefields throughout Europe, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific as well as sites of plane crashes and sunken vessels. When remains are recovered, they are sent to JPAC's laboratory in Hawaii, the world's largest forensic anthropology lab. There scientists analyze bones, teeth, and DNA, which can be compared with samples from relatives of the missing. They also search for clues among personal effects. A wallet was found with the boots.

A case ends with family notification. Sharon Bannister was five years old in 1972 when the jet carrying her father, Stephen A. Rusch, crashed in Laos. At JPAC, 35 years later, she was shown two fragments of his teeth and presented with her father's dog tag, found at the crash site by a JPAC team. She accompanied his flag-draped coffin to Arlington National Cemetery. "It was just two tiny teeth," she said. "But they answered so many questions." —Peter Gwin

## THE MISSING

Since 1941 nearly 85,000 men and women from the U.S. military have been declared missing in action. The Pentagon works on some 700 active cases at any given time, solving about seven each month.

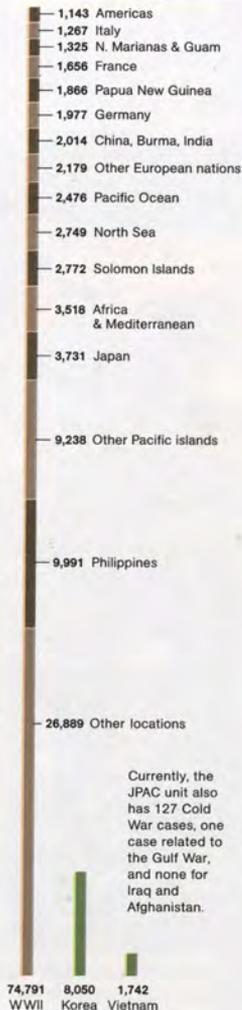


PHOTO: JONATHAN KINGSTON  
 GRAPHIC SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, MARCH 2009



*At one end of the Paul Revere Mall in Boston, MA in the shadows of the Old North Church where Paul Revere's famous lanterns hung, is this simple Memorial to the Fallen Members of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars.*



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