

MIA Totals: WWI (3,344), WWII (72,674), Korean (7,631), Cold War (126), Vietnam (1,594), OEF, OIF (5)
Indiana WWI (104) WWII (1,499), Korean (170), Vietnam (51)

INCOMING!



January 2024 Newsletter

ROLLING THUNDER®, INC.

Indiana Chapter #1
“POW-MIA – You are not Forgotten”

<http://indianarollingthunder.com>

<https://www.facebook.com/RTINCh1>

Chapter Officers



President: Michael Clark

Vice President: David Craig

Secretary: Jessica Clark

Treasurer: Terry “Flash” Sanderson

President News

I hope everyone is doing well and in good health. Page 2 of the newsletter list our January birthday members. I wish all of you a happy birthday and hope you have many more.

2023 is now in the past and 2024 is off and running. We closed out 2023 with our Christmas Meeting and luncheon at the Veterans Center on December 17th. We were honored to have four MIA families and four HVAF guest present at the meeting. The Chapter Honor Guard Team performed the Flame of Freedom and the Missing Man Table ceremonies. The junior members performed the 13-Folds of the American Flag ceremony and did an outstanding job. The Coachman Restaurant provided a great lunch for everyone to include Fried Chicken, Mash Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans, Salad, and to top it off, the membership provided some awesome desserts. Thanks to everyone that brought in a dessert.

The planning committee did an awesome job putting the Christmas luncheon together to include setting up the room and purchasing Christmas gifts for our HVAF guest. Thanks to all that helped. Great Job!!!

The Chapter had a pretty good 2023 with 87 events counting Chapter meetings. January is the start of a new event calendar. The event calendar is a working document and changes often as events come up. We have an event planning committee meeting on the first Wednesday of each month to discuss events for the upcoming month and future events. All Chapter members are welcome and encouraged to attend the event planning meetings.

Pages 15-18 list some of the Chapter accomplishments for 2023. Pages 19-21 shows you the membership attendance at each of the events. As you can see, some of the events had a decent membership representation and other were lacking. We need to focus on improving our membership attendance at our Chapter events in 2024. The more members we have attend our Chapter events, the more attention we'll bring to the event which makes a bigger statement.

Chapter Membership dues are now due and must be paid by the **February Chapter meeting** to remain a member in good standing. The Chapter must have all dues turned into National by March 2024. Please pay your dues as soon as possible.

The next Chapter meeting is Sunday January 21, 2024

**January
2024 Birthday's**



Richard (Brian) Griffith (8)

Jeff Thatcher (9)

Patricia Wiederkehr (9)

Charles Rogers (24)

Hope you have many more

**BINGO With Our Veterans
Indiana Veterans Home
December 2, 2023**

Chapter Members drove to the Indiana Veterans Home in Lafayette Indiana to play BINGO with our Veterans. Before BINGO, the group met at the Red Bird Café in Dayton Indiana for lunch. After lunch, we headed to the Veterans Home for a fun day of BINGO with our Veterans.

Once we arrived, we help the attendance move some of the Veterans down to the BINGO room. After everyone was settled in, we started the BINGO game. Carla was briefed on the function of the BINGO board and was off and running. Carla did a great job running the board and interacting with the Veterans.

There were Veterans from all branches of Service that served in various wars. The picture to the bottom right, is Leighton Wilhite who is a 98 year old IWO JIMA survivor. Leighton told us his story on how he was pulled out of High School to serve in WWII.

We had a good time with the Veterans and made sure that they didn't leave the room without some winnings in their pocket. The Chapter distributed out \$1,910.00 in winnings to the Veterans.



Carla running the BINGO Board



**Leighton Wilhite
IWO JIMA Survivor**

Blue Light Ceremony December 5, 2023

On December 5th, Chapter members attended the annual Project Blue Light ceremony at the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy in Plainfield Indiana. The purpose of this event is to honor our fallen Indiana Police Officers and to remember the family members of these fallen officers.

In 2023, six Indiana Officers and one K9 lost their lives in the line of duty. The video of the ceremony can be seen by googling: “**remembering-fallen-officers-at-blue-light-ceremony-in-plainfield**”.

The Officers that lost their lives in the line of duty include the following:

James Bailey, Indiana State Police, **End of Watch** (E.O.W) 03/03/2023

Asson Hacker, Vanderburgh County Sheriff’s Office, E.O.W. 03/02/2023

Trooper Aaron Smith, Indiana State Police, E.O.W. 06/28/2023

Sergeant Heather Glenn, Tell City Police Department, E.O.W. 07/03/2023

Deputy John Durm, Marion County Sheriff’s Off, E.O.W. 07/10/2023

Timothy Guyer, Johnson County Sheriff’s Office, E.O.W. 08/01/2023

K9 Falco, Gary Police Department, E.O.W. 07/13/2023



Members enjoyed a good meal at the Coachman prior to the ceremony.

Red Skelton

Definition of the words in the Pledge of Allegiance

At the beginning of the Chapter meeting, before the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, President Clark read the words of the Pledge of Allegiance as defined by Red Skelton.

On January 14, 1969, Red Skelton touched the hearts of millions of Americans with his “**Pledge Of Allegiance**“, in which he explained the meaning of each and every word. Red Skelton’s recitation of the “Pledge of Allegiance” was twice read into the Congressional Record of the United States and received numerous awards.

I----meaning me, an individual, a committee of one.

Pledge----dedicate all of my worldly goods to give without self-pity.

Allegiance----my love and my devotion.

To the Flag----our standard, Old Glory, a symbol of freedom. Wherever she waves, there is respect because your loyalty has given her a dignity that shouts freedom is everybody's job.

Of the United----that means that we have all come together.

States----individual communities that have united into 50 great states. 50 individual communities with pride and dignity and purpose, all divided with imaginary boundaries, yet united to a common cause, and that's love of country.

Of America.

And to the Republic----a republic, a state in which sovereign power is invested in representatives chosen by the people to govern. And government is the people and it's from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

For which it stands!

One nation----meaning, so blessed by God.

Indivisible----incapable of being divided.

With Liberty----which is freedom and the right of power to live one's life without threats or fear or any sort of retaliation.

And justice----The principle and quality of dealing fairly with others.

For all ----which means, boys and girls, it’s as much your country as it is mine.

Pledge Allegiance

"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all,"

The Flame of Freedom Ceremony



Flame of Freedom Ceremony

The Flame of Freedom represents Light and Hope in knowing that someone is always there waiting to open the doors home.

Caring the Flame is John Wertz, Grandson of Chief Warrant Officer John William Frederick, Jr United States Marine Corps, who was held as a Prisoner of War in North Vietnam from December 7, 1965 until his death in captivity on or about July 19, 1972.

For hundreds of years the light in the distance meant hope. The flickering in the distance of the light high atop the lighthouse tells of nearing land in a heavy fog, the dim light of a front porch says come inside to the warmth of home, and let us not forget the lantern of Paul Revere riding through the streets to warn the British were coming.

There was a time long ago that our forefathers fought to provide us with freedom, then came other wars fought to preserve those freedoms.

Today, we fight to protect that freedom. This flame is also a symbol. It lights the way home for your brothers and sisters in arms. It crosses this great country to tell everyone the War-Fighter stands with pride and honor to keep us free and we keep the light burning to show the way home.

The light does not cast a shadow, for its sole purpose is to send the message of hope, to let everyone know that we will not forget. The table that sits before you, is a symbolism of faith and hope. A place waiting undisturbed until the War-Fighter returns home. The flame will light this table as long as the table sits empty.

The Missing Man Table Ceremony

The Chapter Honor Guard team performed the Missing Man Table ceremony. The Missing Man Table ceremony is our way of recognizing those who remain missing. They may be still lying on the battle field, or they may be in the hands of our enemies, we don't know, they are Unaccounted-For.

Their remains have not been recovered, their whereabouts are unknown, and their fate is yet to be determined. These American heroes are Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA).

They are not able to be with their loved ones, so we join together to pay humble tribute to them and to bear witness to their continued absence. The table is a physical symbol of the 81,000 American Service Members that are still listed as Unaccounted-For Nationwide since WWII. Indiana alone has 1,499 MIAs from WWII, 170 from the Korean War, and 51 from the Vietnam War.

The Honor Guard Team placed the covers for each branch of service on the table to symbolize their presents.



David Craig
Representing U.S Army



Larry Paynter Representing
U.S Marine CORPS



Jeff Thatcher
Representing U.S Navy



Darryle Swartzlander
Representing U.S Air Force



Greg Thompson
Representing US. Coast Guard

**The Meaning of the
13 Folds of the American Flag
Performed by Junior Members**



Our Junior Members AnnaLena, GraceLynn, and Matthew (Bones), performed the 13 Folds of the American Flag ceremony. As they made each fold of the flag, they explained the meaning of the fold. The Chapter is fortunate to have junior members willing to perform and perform this special ceremony. They did an awesome job with the ceremony. The meaning of each fold is listed on the next page.

Great job AnnaLena, GraceLynn, and Matthew.

The Meaning of the 13 Folds of the American Flag

Here is the meaning of each of those folds:

The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life

The second fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life

The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of all the veterans departing ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world

The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as Americans citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war

The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries may she always be right: but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all

The seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without boundaries of our republic

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded

The tenth fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of this country since they were first born

The eleventh fold, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in the Hebrews eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

The twelfth fold, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies in the Christian eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit

The thirteenth and final fold, when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust".

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by the comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

The next time you see a flag ceremony honoring someone that has served our country, either in the Armed Forces or in our civilian services such as the Police Force or Fire Department, keep in mind all the important reasons behind each and every movement. They have paid the ultimate sacrifice for all of us by honoring our flag and our country.

Meet our Special Family Members

The Chapter was honored to have some special family members at our December Chapter meeting. Some of them still have loved ones that are missing from past wars and still waiting for closure. The Wertz family loved one has been returned and they finally have some closure.



Starting from left to right.

Cynthia Tucker, Great Niece of Master Sergeant Joseph Lawrence McNally who went missing during the Korean War.

John Wertz with his Mother, Wife and Father, John is the grandson of Chief Warrant Officer John William Frederick, Jr United States Marine Corps, was held as a Prisoner of War in North Vietnam from December 7, 1965 until his death in captivity on or about July 19, 1972.

Tom Burns and Julie Malson, Son and Daughter of 1st LT. Forrest Steel Burns who went missing during the Korean War.

Sandra Rigdon's with her Grand Daughter, Sandra is the Daughter of Seaman First Class Eldridge Wayne Bowles, who was Lost at Sea during WWII when the Japanese sunk the USS Indianapolis.

We must never forget our families that still have loved ones missing and pray that one day, they too will have closure.

Meet our Special HVAF Guest

The Chapter was honored to have some guest from the Helping Veterans And Families (HVAF) organization to join us for lunch at our December Chapter Meeting. HVAF helps homeless veterans return to self-sufficiency and engages at-risk veterans and their families to prevent them from becoming homeless by providing supportive housing, case management, food, hygiene, and clothing; as well as other essential services. HVAF is the largest non-profit provider of comprehensive services for veterans in Indiana.



On the left is Randen who is a Rolling Thunder® member and a HVAF employee. To his right is Eric, Ritchie, Christopher, and Robert.

The Chapter provided our HVAF guest with a Christmas present and a great meal catered by the Coachman Restaurant. Everyone enjoyed the Fried Chicken, Mash Potatoes, Gravy, Green Beans, Salad, and awesome deserts provided by the membership.

We wish all of the HVAF guest a Merry Christmas and hope the new year will provide them good health and prosperity.



2024 Membership Dues

In accordance with the National constitution, the membership dues are required to be paid to National by March to remain a member in good standing.

Membership is important to keep the Chapter going so we can continue on with our important POW/MIA mission and helping our Indiana Veterans. Without members in good standing, the Chapter would not be able to do our important missions.

Please help the Chapter remain successful and pay your membership dues as soon as possible, **but no later than February 18, 2024**. We do appreciate your membership.



Membership dues can be paid at the Chapter meeting or by mailing your renewal form and check to the Chapter P.O Box listed below:

Rolling Thunder Indiana Chapter 1

P.O Box 26458

Indianapolis, IN 46226

2023 Chapter Member of the Year Award



The Rolling Thunder® Membership year runs from January 2023 to December 2023. At the January Chapter meeting we will recognize those special members that went above and beyond in support of the Chapter. The Chapter has several members that fall into this category, but unfortunately, we can only vote for one member.

Please take a few minutes and reflect back on the 2023 and think about who you would like to win the Member of the Year award. The winner will be announced at the February Chapter meeting.

Be prepared to tell the membership why you think your nominee should receive their vote.

The nominee must be a Member in Good Standing.

Eli Lilly's American Civil War Service

In 1861, a few months after the start of the American Civil War, Lilly enlisted in the Union Army and joined the 21st Indiana Infantry Regiment on July 24. Lilly was commissioned as a second lieutenant on July 29, 1861. On August 3, the 21st Indiana reached Baltimore, Maryland, where it remained for several months. Lilly resigned his commission in December 1861 and returned to Indiana to form an artillery unit.

In early 1862 Lilly actively recruited volunteers for his unit among his classmates, friends, local merchants and farmers. He had recruitment posters created and posted them around Indianapolis, promising to form the "crack battery of Indiana". His unit, the 18th Battery, Indiana Light Artillery, was known as the Lilly Battery and consisted of six, three-inch ordinance rifles and 150 men. Lilly was commissioned as a captain in the unit. The 18th Indiana mustered into service at Camp Morton in Indianapolis on August 6, 1862, and spent a brief time drilling before it was sent into battle under Major General William Rosecrans in Kentucky and Tennessee. Lilly's artillery unit was transferred to the Lightning Brigade, a mounted infantry under the command of Colonel, later General, John T. Wilder on December 16, 1862.



Lilly's war recruitment poster

Lilly was elected to serve as the commanding officer of his battery from August 1862 until the winter of 1863, when his three-year enlistment expired. His only prior military experience had been in a Lafayette, Indiana, militia unit. Several of his artillerymen considered him too young and intemperate to command; however, despite his initial inexperience, Lilly became a competent artillery officer. His battery was instrumental in several battles, including the Battle of Hoover's Gap in June 1863 and in the Second Battle of Chattanooga and the Battle of Chickamauga in August and September 1863.

In 1864, when Lilly's term of enlistment ended, he resigned his commission and left the 18th Indiana. Lilly joined the 9th Indiana Cavalry (121st Regiment Indiana Volunteers) and was promoted to major. At the Battle of Sulphur Creek Trestle in Alabama in September 1864, he was captured by Confederate troops under the command of Major General Nathan B. Forrest and held in a **prisoner-of-war** camp at Enterprise, Mississippi until his release in a prisoner exchange in January 1865.

Lilly was promoted to colonel on June 4, 1865, and was stationed at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in the spring of 1865 when the war ended. In recognition of his service, he was brevetted to the rank of lieutenant colonel and mustered out of service with the 9th Indiana Cavalry on August 25, 1865.

In later life Lilly obtained a large atlas and marked the path of his movements in the war and the location of battles and skirmishes. He often used the atlas when telling war stories. His colonel's title stayed with him for the rest of his life, and his friends and family used it as a nickname for him. Lilly served as chairman of the Grand Army of the Republic, a brotherhood of Union Civil War veterans, in 1893. During his term he helped organize an event that brought tens of thousands of Union war veterans, including Lilly's battery, together in Indianapolis for a reunion and a large parade.

2023 Chapter Accomplishments

The next few pages is a review of some of the Chapter accomplishments in 2023. The three areas we would like to see improvements in 2024 is, 1) increase our membership numbers, 2) increase our members in good standing, 3) increase our Chapter event attendance.

Membership Status as of December 31, 2023

Members currently on Roster: 93

Junior Members: 6

Honorary Members: 2

Members lost due to Resigning: 6

Members in Good Standing: 33

Members that Joined the Chapter: 5

Charter Members still with the Chapter: 3 (Don & Carol McFarland and Judy Brinkley)

Chapter Events: 87

The Chapter completed approximately 87 events in 2023 to include Chapter meetings. Some events were well attended and others would have made a bigger statement with more members in attendance. Some of the significant events included:

May 28th - Rolling Thunder® XXXV Ride for Freedom. This event took place at the Veterans National Shrine and Museum in Fort Wayne Indiana. We had approximately 36 members and 31 guest. The event went very well and we plan on returning to the Veterans National Shrine and Museum in 2024.

June 20-25 - Vietnam Veterans Memorial Traveling Wall. The Vietnam Veterans traveling wall came to Lawrence Indiana. Chapter members were involved in assisting the setup, guarding, and tearing down of the wall. The Chapter also performed our Roll Call ceremony at the opening ceremony.

July 30th - 8th Annual USS Indianapolis Honor Watch. Chapter Members were invited to read the names of the 31 Hoosier heroes who served on the USS Indianapolis, and gave the ultimate sacrifice when the USS Indianapolis was torpedoed by the Japanese on July 30th 1945. On that day, 879 men were killed in action and lost at sea.

September 7th - Michigan Trip to Escort Veterans Remains. Nine Chapter members rode to Jackson Michigan to assist in escorting the unclaimed remains of five Veterans from Jackson Michigan to Fort Custer Michigan. Upon arrival at Fort Custer, all five Veterans were buried with full Military Honors.

September 14th - Watch Fire Ceremony. Chapter Members assisted the Indianapolis POW/MIA Council with executing the Watch Fire Ceremony at the Indiana War Memorial (IWM). The ceremony started with youth groups placing 1,723 American Flags on the lawn of the IWM. After the placement of the flags, the groups moved into the IWM. The youths were broken down into groups and guided through the IWM to each historical display station. Once they arrived at each station, a docent brief the group with historical facts about the displays. When the youths arrived at the Pershing Auditorium, they would read the names of the 1723 Indiana MIAs that are still missing since WWII.

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2023 Chapter Accomplishments

- Continued -

September 15th - POW/MIA Recognition Day and Escort. The POW/MIA Recognition Day Escort and Ceremony is an annual event that occurs on the third Friday in September. The Chapter was honored this year to escort seven MIA families from the Fort Harrison Veterans Center to the Indiana War Memorial for their POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony. The keynote speaker was Porter Halyburton. Porter was Shot down North East of Hanoi Vietnam in October 1965 and was a POW until his release during Operation Homecoming in 1973. The Chapter was honored to have Porter attend our September 17th Chapter meeting to brief the membership on his Military service and time as a POW.

Sponsorship/Fund Raising - Sponsorship and Fund Raising is an important part of the financial health of the Chapter. The Chapter would not be able to do our mission without funding. Due to the hard work of Chapter members going out and getting sponsors and donations, the Chapter collected \$18,471 in monetary and in-kind donations for 2023. Special thanks to all of our Sponsors and Chapter members that helped in collecting donations.

Supporting our Veterans and their families - The Chapter worked hard in supporting our Veterans in 2023 in many ways.

1. **Indiana POW/MIA License Plate:** The Indiana POW/MIA License Plate is a special tool that has two purposes. **First**, the POW/MIA License Plate helps bring awareness to the public about our POWs and MIAs, **Secondly**, the funds generated from the plate helps our Indiana Veterans in need. As of December 31st there are **4,830** POW/MIA License plates on the streets of Indiana. In 2023, the plate has generated **\$119,600** dollars to help our Indiana Veterans through the Indiana Military Family Relief Fund. **We have sold/renewed 38 more plates in 2023 compared to 2022.** See charts on pages 24 and 25.

2. **BINGO at the Indiana Veterans Home:** Every year the Chapter plays BINGO with our Veterans at the Indiana Veterans Home in Lafayette Indiana. The Chapter made sure that every Veteran that played BINGO with the Chapter walk away with money in their pocket. In 2023, the Chapter paid out **\$1, 910** to the Veterans.

3. **Wheelchair Ramp for Mary Nicholson, Covington Indiana:** Mary is the widow of an Air National Guardsman who served for 8 year. Mary had to have her leg amputated due to an infection and is completely wheelchair bound. Mary lives with her daughter and the home doesn't have a ramp for easy access. The Chapter had a wheel chair ramp built for Many to help improve her quality of life.

4. **Wheelchair Ramp for Sandra Rigdon, Brazil Indiana:** Sandra is the Daughter of Seaman 1st Class Eldridge Wayne Bowles. Seaman Bowles reported for duty aboard the USS Indianapolis on October 8, 1943. Seaman Bowles was one of 879 men that was killed or lost at sea when the Japanese sank the USS Indianapolis on July 30th, 1945. Eldridge was 31 years old when he was lost sea.

Sandra's husband Clyde used a wheelchair to get around and had a difficult time getting in and out of their home with the wheelchair. The Chapter hired a contractor to build the wheelchair ramp for Clyde to help improve his quality of life.

- Continue on Next Page -

2023 Chapter Accomplishments

- Continued -

5. Christmas Gifts for HVAF Veterans: In 2023, the Chapter purchased Christmas Gifts for 4 HVAF Veterans. The gifts included Thermo underwear, T-shirts, Ear muffs, sock hats, Socks, Convenience kits, gloves and other needed items. The total amount for the gifts was **\$682.03**.

6. Pets Healing Vets: The Pets Healing Vets program is an important program for our Veterans that suffer from PTSD and other issues. A K9 buddy helps the Veteran to cope with daily challenges. The Chapter made a \$500 donation to the Pets Healing Vets program at the March Chapter meeting and an addition \$500 at our October Chapter meeting for a total of \$1,000.

7. Indy Honor Flights: The Chapter has participated in the Welcome Home Celebrations for the Veterans returning home after visiting their monuments in Washington DC. Chapter members greeted Veterans at the Indianapolis Airport as they debark their airplane and at the Welcome Home celebration at the Plainfield High School. The Chapter donated \$500 to the Indy Honor Flight program.

Special Ceremonies - The Chapter has been active in performing the Missing Man Table and other ceremonies throughout the year to help bring awareness to the public about our Missing. Some of these venues included:

1. **July 30th** - USS Indianapolis eight Annual Honor Watch, CA-35 Memorial (Roll Call).
2. **August 31st** - Rushville Missing Man Table Ceremony.
3. **September 15th** - POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony (Missing Man Table).
4. **November 7th** - VA Regional Office Missing Man Table Ceremony.
5. **November 10th** - Missing Man Table Ceremony Indian Waters RV Resort in Indio, Ca.
6. **December 17th** - Missing Man Table Ceremony at the December Chapter meeting.

Funerals and Processions:

March 7th - Sergeant Garrigus Escort.

March 9-10th - Sergeant Garrigus Showing and Funeral.

June 8th - PO2 Russell Williams Escort.

July 7th - Trooper Smith Escort and Funeral Services.

August 23rd - LCPL Brown Escort.

September 7th - Escort and Honor 7 unclaimed Veterans remains from Jackson, MI to Fort Custer, MI.

November 6th—Leonard Cass Funeral.

December 4th - First Sergeant Michael Benitez Escort.

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2023 Chapter Accomplishments - Continued -

Scholarships - The Chapter had two Scholarship offers in 2023.

1. **Linda Smith-Cope Scholarship.** This is a \$1,000 scholarship to be awarded to a Covington Community High School graduating senior seeking a higher education at an accredited College, University, or Trade School. The topic for the 2023 scholarship was “**The Geneva Conventions as they relate to Prisoners of War (POWs).**”. The Chapter received one application for this scholarship. Micah Stonecipher of Covington Indiana submitted her application and was awarded the \$1,000 scholarship. Micah will continue her education at to Purdue University.

2. **Chapter Scholarship.** This is a \$1,000 scholarship to be awarded to a high school graduating senior or a student receiving the GED seeking a higher education at an accredited college, university, or trade school. The topic for the scholarship is the same at the Linda Smith-Cope scholarship. The applicant for this scholarship must be a resident of Indiana, and have a verifiable family relationship to a former Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA). The purpose of this scholarship is to give back to the families that have sacrificed the lost of a loved one in war that remains unaccounted-for. The Chapter received two applications for this scholarship. Sydney Groves of Yorktown Indiana and Emily Brechenser of South Bend Indiana. Sydney is the great-niece of Michael Lautzenheiser who one of our Indiana 51 missing from the Vietnam War. Emily is the granddaughter of William Brechenser who was a POW during WWII.

Both Sydney and Emily did such a good job on the essay that the Scholarship committee awarded both students the \$1,000 scholarship. Sydney will continue her education at Ball State University and Emily will continue her education at Indiana University.

The previous pages are just a few of the Chapter accomplishments in 2023. We have many more things to accomplish in 2024 and we need your membership to continue on with our POW/MIA mission and helping our Indiana Veterans. Your membership is important, and we hope that you will continue your membership with the Chapter and help recruit new members.

2023 Chapter Event Attendance

The next three pages is the list of Chapter events for 2023 and how many members attended the events in accordance with the attendance records. The CORE events are highlighted in **RED**. The CORE events are the ones that we consider high priority and all abled-body members are expected to attend. The Chapter meetings are not considered an event, and all members should plan on attending our monthly Chapter meetings.

Date	Event	
January 1	News Year Day Brunch at MCL	7
January 4	Chapter Event Planning Meeting	5
January 7	Chapter Budget Meeting	10
January 10	Indiana Military Veterans Legislative Day (State House)	3
January 15	Chapter Meeting	33
February 1	Chapter Event Planning Meeting	6
February 3	Brian and Jackie Griffith Wedding	6
February 19	Chapter Meeting	33
February 24	Senator Mike Braun Veterans Day	7
March 1	Chapter Event Planning Meeting	4
March 7	SGT Garrigus Escort	9
March 9-10	SGT Garrigus Showing and Funeral	9
March 10-12	Indy 1500 Gun and Blade Show	15
March 16	HVAF Dedication	3
March 19	Chapter Meeting	31
March 21	National Medal of Honor Day Indianapolis	3
March 29	Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans	11
April 5	Chapter Event Planning Meeting	5
April 13	Impromptu Ride to Ft. Wayne	5
April 13	Southside HOG Meeting	1
April 15	Indy Honor Flight #38	8
April 16	Chapter Meeting	24
April 23	Support the Troops, Kokomo Indiana	3
May 3	Chapter Event Planning Meeting	8
May 6	Covington Scholarship Award	6
May 17	Chapter Event Planning	8
May 19-21	Armed Forces Day at the Track	7
May 20	INDY Honor Flight #39	8
May 21	Chapter Meeting	38
May 24	Chapter Event Planning	8
May 27	Hot Rods and Heroes American Legion Post 34	5
May 28	Rolling Thunder XXXV Ride for Freedom.	36

- Continue on next page -

2023 Chapter Events Attendance

-Continue -

June 2-4	Indy 1500 Gun and Blade Show	6
June 7	Chapter Event Plaining Meeting	5
June 8	PO2 Russell Williams Escort	2
June 10	David Brewer Annual Fling	7
June 11	Chapter Meeting	35
June 16	Covington Sponsorship Awards Ride	9
June 20	Vietnam Memorial Wall Setup	4
June 22-25	Vietnam Memorial Wall Honor Guard	4
June 24	Vietnam Memorial Wall Opening Ceremony	8
June 25	Vietnam Memorial Wall Tear Down	5
July 5	Chapter Event Plaining Meeting	7
July 7	Trooper Smith Funeral Services and Escort	4
July 16	Chapter Meeting	33
July 29	Helping Heroes Freedom Ride	4
July 30	8 th Annual USS Indianapolis Honor Watch	20
August 6	Lawrence E. Reitz Funeral	6
August 9	Chapter Event Plaining Meeting	6
August 10	Impromptu Ride to Brazil Indiana	4
August 11	Gold Star Traveling Wall	2
August 13	Impromptu Ride to Peru Indiana	1
August 16	Speedway Bike Night	1
August 18	Westside HD Bike Night	3
August 19	Corn Hole Classic	7
August 20	Chapter Meeting	31
August 23	LCPL Brown Escort	1
August 30	Assist Patriot Guard in escorting the Traveling Wall to Rushville	1
August 31	Rushville Missing Man Table Ceremony	11
September 1	Rushville Traveling Wall Closing Ceremony	1
September 6	Chapter Event Plaining Meeting	7
September 7	Honor Brick Laying Ceremony at the Solider/Sailor Monument	4
September 7	Michigan Trip to Escort Veterans Remains	9
September 11	9/11 Ride	5
September 14	Watch Fire Ceremony, IWM	12
September 15	POW/MIA Recognition Day Escort and Ceremony	21
September 16	Quaker Day Parade	9
September 17	Chapter Meeting	29
September 23	INDY Honor Flight #40	9

- Continue on next page -

2023 Chapter Events Attendance

-Continue -

October 15	Chapter Meeting	38
October 21	INDY Honor Flight #41	9
October 24	Remembering and Honoring the POWs and MIAs of Bartholomew County	4
November 2-5	Rolling Thunder National Conference	5
November 6	Leonard Cass Funeral	4
November 7	VA Regional Office Missing Man Table and COH Ceremony	4
November 10	Veterans Day Parade	10
November 10	Anderson Christian School Briefing	2
November 10	Indy Fuel Military Appreciation Night	5
November 10	Missing Man Table Ceremony Indian Waters RV Resort in Indio, Ca	2
November 11	Korean War Memorial Dedication, Fort Wayne Shrine and Museum	4
November 19	Chapter Meeting	33
December 2	Indiana Veterans Home Visit (BINGO)	9
December 5	Annual Project Blue Light Ceremony	9
December 6	Chapter Event Planning Meeting	8
December 14	ISG Michael Benitez Escort	3
December 16	Wreath Across America	7
December 17	Chapter Meeting	38

INDIANA



★ 10TH ANNUAL ★

JANUARY 16, 2024

INDIANA STATEHOUSE

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OVER 50
EXHIBITORS**

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Todd Huston, Speaker of the House

VeteransLegislativeDay.com



Upcoming Events for January and February

January 16th	Indiana Military Veterans Legislative Day (State House)
January 21st	Chapter Meeting and Annual Budget
February 7	Chapter Event Planning Meeting
February 18	Board/Chapter Meeting (Chili Cook-off)

Indiana Military Veterans Legislative Day

This is an annual event that takes place at the Indiana State House located at 200 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, Indiana 46204. The Indiana Military & Veterans Legislative Day (IMVLD) was founded in 2013 by Indiana State Representative John L Bartlett and a group of volunteers consisting of nonpartisan, not-for-profit Indiana Veteran Service Organizations and Military Associations. It is co-sponsored by a bipartisan group of Indiana Legislators. IMVLD intends to create an opportunity to enhance communications between Indiana's Military, Veterans, and State Senators and Representatives regarding Military and Veteran-specific legislation moving through the Indiana General Assembly.

January Chapter Meeting and Annual Budget

The 2024 annual budget will be presented to the membership for their review. It will be important for all members that are able to attend the Chapter meeting to review the proposed 2024 budget and approval or disapprove the budget. It's important for the membership to know how the Chapters funds will be spent.

Chapter Event Planning Meeting

Members are welcome and encouraged to attend the Chapter Event Planning Meetings. The meetings start at 18:00 using the same Zoom information as our monthly Chapter meetings.

Board/Chapter Meeting and Chili Cook-off

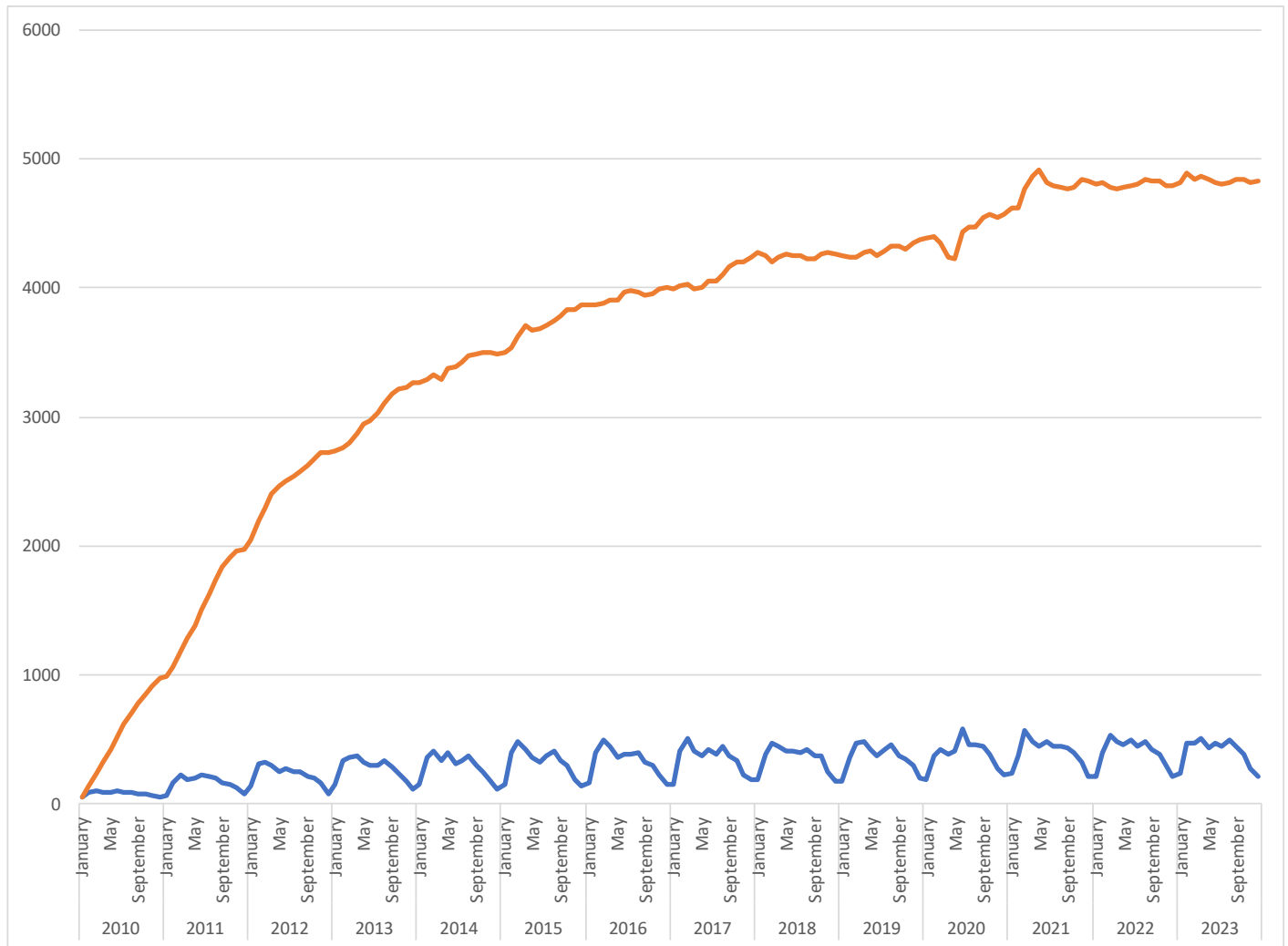
The February Chapter meeting is the time for members to bring in a pot of Chili and show off their famous Chili recipes. The best Chili will be voted on by the membership and the winner will receive a grand prize.

You have from now until the February Chapter meeting to tweak your Chili recipe.

The Board meeting will be from 11:00 to 12:45 (**Board members only**) and the Chapter meeting will start at 13:00, everyone welcome.

Indiana POW/MIA Specialty Plates on the Streets

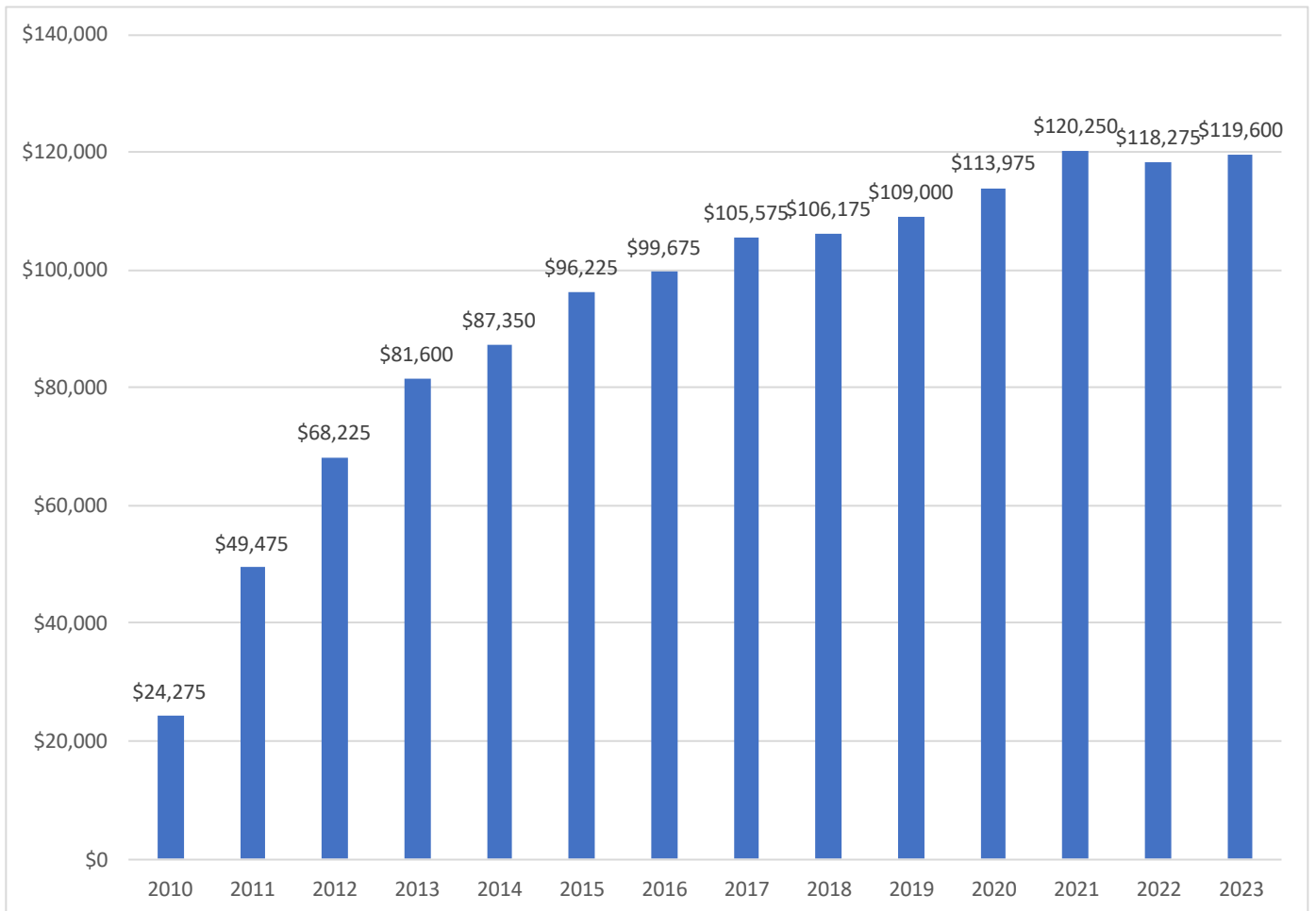
As of December 31, 2023



As of December 31, 2023, we have **4,830** POW/MIA specialty plates on the streets of Indiana helping to bring awareness to the public about our POWs, and MIAs. The funds generated from the sale of the POW/MIA Specialty plate goes towards helping our Indiana Veterans in need through the Indiana Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF). **215** plates were Renewed/Sold in December 2023. **We have sold/renewed 38 more plates in 2023 compared to 2022.**

Indiana POW/MIA Specialty Plate Fund

From 2010 to 2023



Since the introduction of the Indiana POW/MIA Specialty Plate in January 2010, the plate has generated an estimated **\$1,299,675**. 100% of the proceeds generated from the sales of the POW/MIA specialty plate goes to the Indiana Military Family Relief Fund (MFRF) to help our Indiana Veterans in need.

If you don't have a Indiana POW/MIA Specialty Plate on your vehicle, please let the Bureau Motor Vehicle (BMV) know that you would like to purchase a Rolling Thunder® sponsored POW/MIA specialty plate on your next renewal or new purchase.

With the purchase of a Indiana POW/MIA specialty plate, not only will you be instrumental in helping to bring awareness to the public about our POWs and MIAs, you will be helping our Indiana Veterans in need.

We have exceeded the 2022 plate sales by \$1,325. Keep the good work up.



Chapter Scholarship Program



The Chapter is giving back to the family members of our Indiana heroes by offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a high school senior or student receiving the GED, seeking a higher education at an accredited college, university, or trade school. This scholarship opportunity is only available to family members that are residents of Indiana and have a verifiable family relationship to a former POW or MIA.

The Chapter Scholarship started in 2021 and has helped four of our MIA families in continuing their education to better their lives. The Chapter has generously donated \$4,000 in Scholarship funds to our MIA family members since 2021.

To be eligible for this Scholarship, the applicant must be a resident of Indiana and have a verifiable familial relationship to a former Prisoner of War (POW) or Missing in Action (MIA). The student applying for the scholarship will be required to independently write an essay on a POW/MIA themed topic of their choosing. The theme of the essay should be original and based on an event, person, philosophy or ideal.

Possible topic themes might be a discussion of POWs during a particular war (Revolutionary War, Civil War, WWI, etc.), POW encampments such as in Andersonville, Georgia, Camp Atterbury, Camp Morton, internment camps of Japanese-Americans during WWII.

The deadline for application submission is **April 30, 2024**. Winner announcement and scholarship award will be made by June 30, 2024.

To learn more about the Chapter Scholarship program, go to www.indianarollingthunder.com.

Never Forget the Families that have given all

Rolling Thunder®, Inc. Membership Patches and Obligations National Constitution

The Rolling Thunder® patches are items that members strive to obtain. The Boot patch represents the members Chapter, and the Rocker and Eagle represents Rolling Thunder® National. These patches should be worn proudly and with respect. When a member is issued these patches, they have an obligation to take care of them and turn them in if they decide to quit Rolling Thunder® for whatever reason. Below is an abstract from the National Constitution on the members obligations that they agree to when they receive these patches.



The Chapter Boot Patch. All members will receive a Rolling Thunder® Membership Boot patch when they become a full member at the end of a 120-day period. If a member meets his/her obligations before the 120 days are up they are entitled to receive their Boot patch no earlier than 90 days, provided they meet all other (loyalty and conduct) requirements. A new member must make 3 meetings or events, or a combination thereof, during the 120-day trial period to become a full member. **A \$50.00 patch deposit is required before National will issue the Boot Patch.**



The Rocker and Eagle Patches. After a member completes his/her first year (from the day they receive their boot patch) as a member in good standing, they will be issued the Eagle & Rocker patches, **which is the property of National.** **A \$100.00 patch deposit is required before National will issue the Rocker and Eagle Patches.**

Membership Obligations

Retrieve Patches: It's the Chapters responsibility to retrieve all patches. If a member does not renew dues in a reasonable time, thirty days from the end of February the Chapter President or his appointed representative will collect their patches. Any Chapter that does not retrieve the members patches will be held liable for their cost. Any problems from a delinquent member to collect our property, if needed have a lawyer send a letter and take them to court (quote the constitution) that a member will pay all court and lawyers fees. **The Chapter will pay National \$150.00 per set lost and members deposit will not be refunded.**

If you mail your patches to the Chapter, make sure you send the package CERTIFIED or PRIORITY mail for tracking purposes and insure the package for \$150.00.

Please DO NOT Glue your patches on your vest. National will NOT accept damaged patches and you may lose your patch refund.

2023 DPAA MIAs Accounted-For

Total Accounted for in 2023: 71

As of December 31, 2023

Accounted-For by War

WWII (50)

Korea (17)

Vietnam/Laos (4)

Accounted-For By Service

U.S Army (35)

U.S Army Air Forces (28)

U.S Marine Corps (3)

U.S Marine Corps Reserves (0)

U.S Navy (5)

U.S Navy Reserves (0)

U.S Air Force (2)

U.S Coast Guard (0)

Indiana Heroes that have been Identified

Name	DOL	Identified	Returned	County	HOR
F3C Alferd E. Livingston	12-7-1941	2-1-2007	7-21-2007	USS Oklahoma	Worthington
1st Class Paul A. Nash	12-7-1941	4-15-2015	6-30-2016	USS Oklahoma	Carlisle
1LT Robert L. McIntosh	5-12-1944	8-1-2015	8-13-2016	Italy	Tipton
3rd Class Francis L. Hannon	12-7-1941	10-24-2017		USS Oklahoma	Indianapolis
PVT USMC Fred Freet	11-20-1943	8-6-2018	4-18-2019	Tarawa Atoll	Marion
PFC Marvin E. Dickson	11-13-1944	9-27-2018	6-8-2019	Germany	Indianapolis
MSG Charles H. McDaniel	11-1-1950	9-12-2018	10-27-2018	Korea	Greenwood
PFC Army Clifford M. Mills	9-18-1944	1-29-2019	3-30-2019	Germany	Troy
SEA1 Oris V. Brandt	12-7-1941	2-20-2019		USS Oklahoma	Kentland
TSGT Charles G. Ruble	9-17-1944	5-31-2019	3-2-2020	Netherlands	Parker City

POW/MIA Affairs Committee

Continue

Indiana Heroes that have been Identified

Name	DOL	Identified	Returned	County	HOR
PVT USMC William E. Ramboo	11-20-1943	7-13-2019		Betio Island	LaPorte
PFC USMC Marley R. Arthurholtz	12-7-1941	9-18-2019	12-7-2019	USS Oklahoma	South Bend
PFC USMC Louis Wiesshan	11-21-1943	9-23-2019	6-11-2020	Tarawa Atoll	Richmond
SEA1 Maurice V. Spangler	12-7-1941	3-27-2020		USS Oklahoma	Ft. Wayne
CPO B. James Booe	12-7-1941	9-29-2020	6-1-2021	USS Oklahoma	Veedersburg
2nd Class Harold F. Trapp	12-7-1941	11-24-2020		USS Oklahoma	LaPorte
3Rd Class Willaim H. Trapp	12-7-1941	11-24-2020		USS Oklahoma	LaPorte
PFC USMC Charles D. Miller	11-22-1943	5-19-2020		Tarawa Atoll	Albany
SGT Stanley Lee Dewitt	11-1-1950	6-5-2020	10-19-2021	Chosen Reservoir	Royal City
George Gilbert	12-7-941	8-24-2020	6-6-2022	USS Oklahoma	Indianapolis
SFC James A. Coleman	10-3-1952	5-23-2022	10-19-2022	Korea	Hillsdale
SGT Charles Garrigus	12-1-1950	8-2-2022	3-7-2023	Chosen Reservoir	Terre Haute
PFC Leonard E. Adams	1-21-1945	7-20-2022	6-13-2023	France	Dana
2LT Gene F. Walker	11-24-1944	7-21-2023		Germany	Richmond

WWII MIA 2nd Lieutenant Gene F. Walker Richmond Indiana



On July 21, 2023, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) identified the remains of Second Lieutenant Gene F. Walker, missing from World War II.

Second Lieutenant Walker entered the U.S. Army from Indiana and served in Company H, 3rd Battalion, 32nd Armored Regiment, 3rd Armored Division. This unit fought in Battle of the Hürtgen Forest, one of the bloodiest engagements of World War II. Between September 1944 and February 1945, the battle grew to involve approximately 200,000 troops, with tens of thousands of casualties on both sides. On November 24, 1944, 2LT Walker was killed when his tank was hit by enemy fire at Hüheln, Germany. According to witnesses, the vehicle caught fire, preventing recovery of his remains during the ongoing combat in the area. On December 3, an unknown set of remains was buried in an American military cemetery. Records from the time indicated that the remains belonged to a member of 2LT Walker's unit, but no recovery location was recorded. In August 2021, the Department of Defense and the American Battle Monuments Commission exhumed these remains and sent them to a DPAA laboratory for further study. The laboratory analysis and the totality of the circumstantial evidence available established that the remains were those of 2LT Walker. 2LT Walker is expected to be buried in San Diego in early 2024.

With the identification of 2LT Walker, Indiana still has 1,499 missing from WWII.

POW/MIA Education Reading

And Websites

Recommended Books

Title	Author
Leave No Man Behind	Bill Bell
Why Didn't You Get Me Out	Frank Aton
Kiss The Boys Goodbye	Monika Jensen-Stevenson & William Stevenson
Betrayed	Joseph D. Douglass, Jr
Still Waiting	Linda Cope
An Enormous Crime	Bill Hendon and Elizabeth A Stewart
Scars and Strips	Captain Eugene "RED" McDaniel USN Retired
Reflections on Captivity	Porter Alexander Halyburton
Escape from Corregidor	Edgar D. Whitcomb

Note: Books marked in RED are highly recommended reads.

Recommended Web Sites

Title	URL
Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA)	http://www.dpaa.mil/
Biographies on Prisoners of War and Missing in Action	http://www.pownetwork.org/bios.htm
Rolling Thunder National	http://www.rollingthunder1.com/
National League of POW/MIA Families	http://www.pow-miafamilies.org/
Rolling Thunder Indiana Chapter 1	http://www.indianarollingthunder.com/
Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve	http://esgr.mil/in
Veterans Support Council of Marion County	http://www.vscmc.com/
Veterans Events	http://www.veteranevents.org/
American Ex-Prisoners of War	http://www.axpow.org/default.htm

The Coachman Restaurant and Lounge



Larry Paynter is a proud Marine, Chapter Member, and along with his wife Becky, own and operate the Coachman Restaurant & Lounge in Plainfield, IN. The Coachman is famous for mouthwatering Prime Rib, Fresh cut steaks, large seafood selection, and the best Pork Tenderloin sandwich anywhere.

The Coachman offers daily lunch, and dinner food specials, with discount on appetizers, desserts, wine, liquor, and beer.

Join us for great food, and service along with our beautiful Patio for outside dining and entertainment (weather permitting). The Coachman is located at 6112 Cambridge Way, Plainfield, IN 46168

Mr. Paynter with his wife Becky. Hard to believe that a Marine could make such a catch

Visit the Coachman at <http://www.thecoachmanrestaurant.com>



The Coachman Restaurant and Lounge

10% discount with this coupon

Not available with any other discounts

Always remember our American POWs and MIAs





Ed Duam is a long time Rolling Thunder Chapter Member, and owner of the Do it Best Hardware store in Plainfield, IN. Ed has a great selection of hardware products for you do-it-yourselfers. If you are in a need of an American, POW-MIA, or State flag, see Ed. His flags are top American quality at a reasonable price.

Ed offers 10% discount to Veterans.

Web site: <http://www.plainfielddoitbest.com/>

Store Address: 1001 East Main Street, Plainfield, IN 46168 (317) 839-2353

Ed will love to see yea



This page is dedicated to our brothers and sisters that have gone on to ride the heavens

NEVER FORGET

Tookolo, Allen, Member, November 2002	Booth, Frank, Member, 2004
Walker, Bruce, Member, October 2004	Parish, Bruce "Buz", Past President, Sept 2008
Brinkley, Jon Past President, January 2009	Leck, Lou, Member, September 2009
Hall, Bruce, Member, March 2010	Gigle, Gene, Member, August 2011
Jolly, Ron Past Vice President, December 2011	Kaler, Steve, Past President, June 2012
Wilson, John, US Army WWII POW, July 2012	Loffredo, Nicholas, Member, August 2012
Freeman, James, Past Board, August 2012	Fulmer, Kenneth, Member, August 2012
Huelskamp, Glenn, Member, February 2013	Hillis, George "Sam", May 2013
Winters, Steve, Member, September 2013	Meyerrose, Timothy, Member, May 2014
Richard (Dick) Forrey, Member June 2015	Hutchinson, James Alt Board Member, Dec 2015
Mary Brodrick, Member April 2016	Van Brunt, Craig, May 2016
Gary Stanley, Member October 2017	Jimmie Earl Brown , Member August 2018
Ruth Smith, Member September 2018	Damon Gastineau , Member December 2018
Joseph Smith, Member April 2018	Linda Cope, Past Secretary June 2019
Walter "Wally" J. Dudek, Member November 2019	Joe Kernan, USN Vietnam War POW, July 2020
Melanie Bailey, Member November 25, 2021	Katherina Bean, Member December 14, 2021
Donald Leffler, Member December 20, 2021	Richard Harrington, Past COB, January 17, 2022
John Byers, Member August 27, 2022	Kaler, Shirley, Member October 13, 2022
James "Jim" Weaver, Member December 14, 2022	Joseph B. Stuart, Member July 20, 2023