

# The Thunder Gazette

Published by Rolling Thunder® Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio

February, 2017

## PLEASE NOTE

### OUR NEXT MEMBERSHIP

### MEETING WILL BE HELD AT

V.F.W. POST #6768  
8584 Olde Eight Rd.  
Northfield, OH

SUNDAY, February 19, 2017  
2:00 p.m.

**Pot luck meal to follow the meeting. Please join us and celebrate the 20 year anniversary of Chapter 1 Ohio**

To be a member in good standing, one must:

- Attend at least 3 meetings & 3 events per year;
- Pay the annual membership dues of \$30/yr;
- Abide by the Membership Patch rules;
- Remain loyal to Rolling Thunder® in word, deed and action;
- Conduct him/herself in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, February 19, 2017 - Membership Meeting  
- 2:00 p.m. - Pot luck meal to follow

Sunday, February 26, 2017 - 10:00 a.m. -  
Shoot & Scoot - 10:00 a.m. - Point Blank  
Range - Mentor, OH Lunch to follow.

Sunday, March 12, 2017 -  
Board/Membership meeting - 1:00/2:00 p.m.

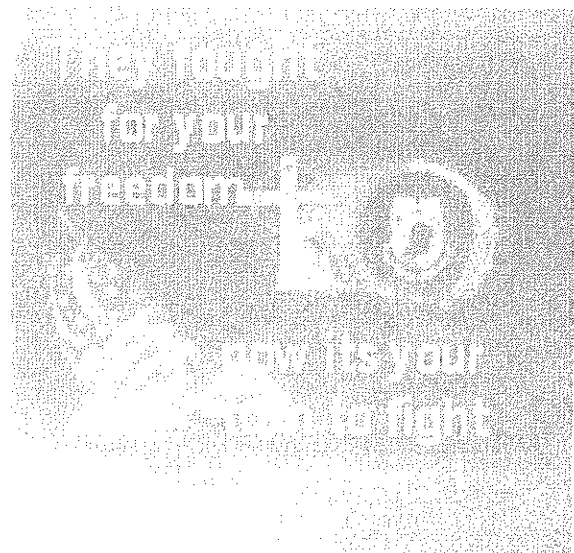
Friday, March 17, 2017 - St. Patrick's Day  
Parade - Details to follow.

Friday, March 17 - Sunday, March 19, 2017  
- Piston & Power Show at the IX Center  
Saturday, March 25, 2017 - VOA Pizza Party  
- Details given at membership meeting.

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## OUR VETERANS NEED STUFF

Socks. Our veterans in the hospitals can always use socks. Since we collect items at our Walmart fundraisers and use money collected from our 50/50 raffles to buy toiletries, we are asking that members bring in socks for men and women. These can be regular crew socks or diabetic socks.



**CHAPTER OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS  
AND PLATOON LEADERS**

**PRESIDENT** WINSTON BAILEY 440-639-2222  
**VICE-PRES** DAVE BUSH 216-408-2639  
**SECRETARY** CHERYL PILNY 440-543-8468  
**TREASURER** ANDY KLUSH 330-620-6047  
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LEW BALLARD 440-942-1688

**BOARD MEMBERS**

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LARRY FELEAN 440-439-4914  
CHUCK KETTLER 216-401-4984  
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(ALTERNATE) JEFF BRADY 440-669-1794  
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**ASST. QUARTERMASTER**

LEW BALLARD 440-942-1688

**SARGENT AT ARMS**

OPEN

**NEWSLETTER STAFF**

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#2 RONNIE DINGER 216-799-5535  
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#5 TOM TROJAN 440-384-0744  
#6 VIKKI CARROLL 440-283-7766  
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[arphersfolks@windstream.net](mailto:arphersfolks@windstream.net)

**GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

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VICKI CARROLL 440-283-7766

**EVENTS CHAIR** JEFF BRADY 440-669-1794

**PUBLIC RELATIONS** CHUCK KETTLER 216-401-4984

**EDUCATION CHAIR** DAN MCGINNIS 330-618-1720

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Please send any pictures you may have to Chip at  
[ckkettler@yahoo.com](mailto:ckkettler@yahoo.com)

**Check us out on Facebook: Rolling Thunder  
Chapter1 Ohio**

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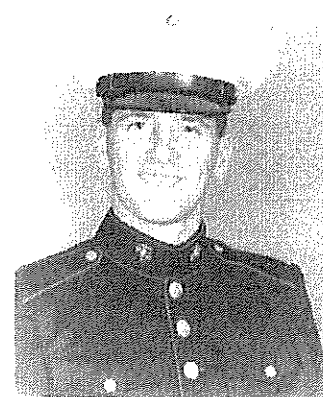
**MISSION STATEMENT**

THE MAJOR FUNCTION OF ROLLING THUNDER®  
INC. IS TO PUBLICIZE THE POW-MIA ISSUE: 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.  
WE ARE ALSO COMMITTED TO HELPING  
AMERICAN VETERANS FROM ALL WARS.

EACH AND EVERY INDIVIDUAL DONATES HIS OR  
HER TIME BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE IN THE ISSUES  
AT HAND.

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**Our Adopted MIA/POW – Gregory Harris**



## Remains Identified

### WWII Remains Identified:

U.S. Army Air Forces 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. William J. Gray  
U.S. Army Air Forces 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Charles E. Carlson  
U.S. Army Air Forces 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. John D. Mumford  
U.S. Navy Fireman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Robert N. Walkowiak  
U.S. Navy Fireman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Michael Galajdik  
U.S. Navy Gunner's Mate 1<sup>st</sup> Class Arthur C.  
Neuenschwander  
U.S. Navy Fireman 1<sup>st</sup> Class William H. Kennedy  
U.S. Navy Storekeeper 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Glenn G. Cyriak  
U.S. Navy Seaman 2<sup>nd</sup> Class George T. George  
U.S. Navy Musician 1<sup>st</sup> Class Elliot D. Larsen  
U.S. Navy Fire Controlman 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Robert L.  
Pribble

### Korean War Remains Identified:

U.S. Army Sgt. James W. Sharp  
U.S. Army Sgt. Donald D. Noehren

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**Government Affairs by Gus Dante** (Federal Legislative & Government Affairs for National chapter)

The 115th Congress has begun January 3, 2017. All legislation that was introduced in the 114th congress will have to be reintroduced with ALL new bill numbers. Gus contacted Rep. Leonard Lance's (R-NJ 7) office on reintroducing H.R. 4910. This is now H.R. 504. The Bill reads as follows: "To Amend Title 36 US Code to require that the POW/MIA Flag to be displayed ALL DAYS that the US Flag is Displayed, especially over the US White House and the US Capitol."

Gus is working on a companion bill in the Senate and has contacted New Jersey Senator Cory Booker's office in which he spoke to Michael Songer, a Military Advisor who will work with Rep. Lance's office. ALL Chapters of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. throughout the country will be notified to help make this legislation Law. We must continue to pressure our representatives to promote and pass legislation that pertain to the POW/MIA and Veteran related issues.

Gus is also working with the AOC (Architect of the Capitol) on the placement of the POW/MIA Chair of Honor Memorial. The manufacturing and cost of the plaque is the only obstacle and this obstacle is expected to be resolved soon.

## Remember: You are the voice of our POW and MIAs.

Below is a listing of the Ohio representatives.

| District | Name                 | Room   | Phone        |
|----------|----------------------|--|--------------|
| 1        | Chabot, Steve        | 2371 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-2216 |
| 2        | Wenstrup, Brad       | 2419 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-3164 |
| 3        | Beatty, Joyce        | 133 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515     | 202-225-4324 |
| 4        | Jordan, Jim          | 2056 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-2676 |
| 5        | Latta, Robert E.     | 2448 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-6405 |
| 6        | <u>Johnson, Bill</u> | 1710 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 | 202-225-5705 |
| 7        | Gibbs, Bob           | 2446 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-6265 |
| 8        | Davidson, Warren     | 1004 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 | 202-225-6205 |
| 9        | Kaptur, Marcy        | 2186 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-4146 |
| 10       | Turner, Michael      | 2368 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-6465 |
| 11       | Fudge, Marcia L.     | 2344 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515   | 202-225-7032 |
| 12       | Tiberi, Pat          | 1203 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 | 202-225-5355 |
| 13       | Ryan, Tim            | 1126 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 | 202-225-5261 |
| 14       | Joyce, David         | 1124 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 | 202-225-5731 |
| 15       | Stivers, Steve       | 1022 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515 | 202-225-2015 |
| 16       | Renacci, Jim         | 328 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515     | 202-225-3876 |

### Contacting Representatives by phone

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm calling today from Rolling Thunder® Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio. I would like to speak with the Staffer who handles Military/Veterans Affairs.

Make sure you make clear why you are calling:  
If you make contact with the MA (Military Affairs) staffer, tell them you would like for their boss Congressman/woman \_\_\_\_\_ to cosponsor: H.R. 504- To amend title 36, US Code, to require that the POW/MIA flag be displayed on ALL DAYS that the flag of the United States is displayed.

If you don't make contact, leave Voice Mail message Why you are calling and have them call you back.

More than likely they will want you to email them, but leave Voice Mail and also email them. Get the spelling of the MA. House emails are usually. [john.doe@mail.house.gov](mailto:john.doe@mail.house.gov)

After your email, and speaking with the MA, give them about a week. If you don't hear back from them, then call back to see if they are going to cosponsor H.R. 504.

To contact by mail or email:

To:

Subject: Cosponsoring H.R.504

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ member of Rolling Thunder®, Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio. I am emailing you to have your Boss, Rep. \_\_\_\_\_ to cosponsor

H.R.504- To amend title 36, United States Code, to require that the POW/MIA flag be displayed on all days that the flag of the United States is displayed on certain Federal property.

This is a bipartisan issue and a 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." This will be a reminder that the families of our missing and the public that our government has not forgotten those that did not come home.

I appreciate your time in this matter.

I look forward hearing from you.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Book review submitted by Chuck Kettler.

TITLE : ALL THE GALLANT MEN  
AUTHOR : DONALD STRATTON  
THE FIRST MEMOIR FROM A USS ARIZONA SURVIVOR

DONALD STRATTON IS ONE OF SIX LIVING SURVIVORS FROM THE USS ARIZONA AS OF THIS WRITING.

THIS IS A FAST MOVING AND EXCELLENT READ. AVAILABLE THROUGH AMAZON OR ANY FINE BOOK STORE. WELL WORTH THE READ AND EMOTIONAL FEELINGS THE STORY WILL GENERATE. BE PREPARED!!

FROM THE INNER BOOK JACKET:

At 8:06 A.M. on December 7, 1941, Seaman First Class Donald Stratton was consumed by an inferno. A million pounds of explosives had detonated beneath his battle station aboard the USS Arizona, barely 15 minutes into Japan's surprise attack on American forces at Pearl Harbor. Near death, and burned across two thirds of his body, Don, a nineteen-year-old Nebraskan who had been steeled by the Great Depression and Dust Bowl, summoned the will to haul himself hand over hand across a rope tethered to a neighboring vessel. Forty-five feet below, the harbor's flaming, oil-slick water boiled with enemy bullets; all around him, the world tore itself apart.

In this extraordinary, never-before-told eyewitness account of the Pearl Harbor attack - the only memoir ever written by a survivor of the USS Arizona - a ninety-four-year-old Donald Stratton finally shares his unforgettable personal tale of bravery and survival on December 7, 1941, his harrowing recovery, and his inspiring determination to return to the fight.

Don and four other sailors made it safely across the same line that morning, a small miracle on a day that claimed 1,177 of their shipmates - approximately half the American fatalities at Pearl Harbor. Sent to military hospitals for a year, Don refused doctors' advice to amputate his limbs and battled to relearn how to walk. The U.S. Navy gave him a medical discharge, believing he would never again be fit for service, but Don had unfinished business. In June 1944, he sailed back into the teeth of the Pacific

War on a destroyer, the USS Stack, destined for combat in the critical battles of Leyte Gulf, Luzon, and Okinawa, thus earning the distinction of having been present for the opening shots and the final major battle of America's Second World War.

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### Chaplain's Corner

(Submitted by Winston Bailey)

## HIGHWAY LANDMARKS: HIS "CROSSES OF MERCY" DOT THE EAST

Bernard Coffindaffer likes to slam his hand on his knee when he makes a point during conversation. And he slams with particular assertion when the point concerns religion.

Yes sir, (slam), when the Holy Spirit tapped him on the shoulder:

"I said, 'Is that you, Lord?' But it wasn't like he was standing there or anything. I just felt his presence. 'Then he said, 'Bernard, I want you to do something for me. I want you to go out across this great country and erect crosses in my name'."

"I said: 'Crosses, Lord?'"

"He said: 'Yes, Bernard, crosses.' (slam) 'Crosses of Mercy.'"

And that is how it all started.

Coffindaffer is the man who is planting groups of crosses throughout the reaches of eastern America. He calls them "Crosses of Mercy," there are three of them in each cluster. And they have become a familiar phenomenon from the Great Lakes to the Everglades.

He erected the first group in 1984 after his bedside vision—high up the side of a West Virginia mountain. The symbols have since been raised "whenever God commands me to go." Coffindaffer says he's now built 1,121 of the clusters, in 16 states and the District of Columbia:

"I ain't trying to get any glory from it. And I for sure don't get paid or anything like that. The only purpose I got is to do what the Lord tells me, which is to remind people that Jesus was crucified on a cross, for our sins and that is the whole truth," (slam)

Coffindaffer is a large gentleman. He is over six feet tall. At 62, he looks like an aging middle guard. He says he is the son of a coal miner, he was orphaned in his teens, and he then went on to become a millionaire manufacturer of a substance (magnetite) that is used in the coal washing industry.

But forget that, he claims the only thing important about his part is that he was born again to Christianity at 11:59 a.m., Oct. 16, 1967. He says he's been an evangelist from then on—not a reverend, he explains: "I've never been ordained at nothing, I am an evangelist for the King."

Certainly he has an evangelistic enthusiasm. Coffindaffer has traveled 200,000 miles to erect the "Crosses of Mercy."

He says he wants to put the cluster in every town in the nation that carries a biblical name, Antioch, Va., for example, or Bethlehem, Pa.; and he notes there is a long list in the category.

Coffindaffer has hired crews of men to help him. He says he sold his business early this decade and is using the profits to pay for the labor. He says he had seven crews on the job last year, 21 workers in all; they were equipped with all the large tools they needed and given from \$6 to \$8 an hour.

The evangelist says his crews erect the crosses on private land only. The states will not allow religious enterprise on public property. He says many of the people who donate are religious in one way or another, even if "many others are not there are no legal formalities involved."

Coffindaffer says the clusters are always the same. They are made of weather resistant poles. There is a 25 foot cross in each group, painted "Jerusalem gold" for Jesus, and there are a pair of smaller rods painted "heavenly blue," for the thieves who were crucified with Christ.

Coffindaffer says the crosses are constructed at the sites. The holes are dug with gas-operated drills, the poles are notched to fit together snugly, and the results are finished with 60-penny nails left protruding. The clusters are then consecrated, the evangelist adds, "and it is a very lovely thing."

It's not lovely for everyone, however. "The Crosses of Mercy" have their predictable critics. Some people charge that the clusters are inappropriate, standing as they often do with the billboards and other roadside trivia: Others who disapprove think there are just too many of them.

One man who has a home about 30 miles northeast of Charleston, says he believes in God, but not in overdoing it, and he laments the fact that I-79, which runs in front of his land, is so lined with clusters that it is now called "The Highway of Crosses."

Ah, well. Coffindaffer says he can't please everyone. Though God knows he's tried. And he's also spent a lot of money doing it. He says the clustered crosses cost anywhere from \$300 to \$4,000 to put up, and average \$1,200, he also says he has spent "in the neighborhood of \$2 million" on the project.

That's some neighborhood. And the ebullient evangelist promises that it will get bigger. He says he is going to erect 10,000 clusters before gets through: "I want everyone to know — the bad folks and the good folks — JESUS IS GOING TO COME BACK AGAIN." (slam)

The article appeared a few years ago written by Tom Tiede of the Newspaper Enterprise Assn.

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**Thank a Veteran:** A veteran — whether active duty, retired or national guard or reserve — is someone who, at one point in their life, wrote a blank check made payable to The United States of America & its citizenry for an amount of "up to and including my life."



**POW-MIA**  
**"WE WILL NEVER FORGET"**

**ROLLING THUNDER<sup>®</sup>, INC.**  
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 PO BOX 216  
 NESHANIC STATION, NJ 08853  
 908-369-5439 FAX: 908-369-2072  
[rollingthunder1.com](http://rollingthunder1.com)

December 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

I hope everyone is well and looking forward to Rolling Thunder XXX, "Ride for Freedom" on May 28, 2017 in Washington, D.C. Believe it or not 30 years have passed by since we started this demonstration! I wish to thank all our supporters, organizations and clubs for the loyalty and commitment they have given to this issue over the years. Without your help and dedication, the POW/MIA issue would have been swept under the carpet long ago.

What have we gained in the past years? Together we have passed legislation for our Troops and our Veterans. We continued to put pressure on our Government to do something about the POW/MIAs that were left behind and never returned. The Government and Legislators in Washington know Rolling Thunder and our Mission. But much more has to be done, we still need answers as to what happened to the live POWs left behind. During the Vietnam War Hanoi publicized live captured American POWs on film, being marched through the streets of Hanoi. What happened to those captured Americans seen alive and shown on national media? We know that they never returned home. Why has our government not demanded answers on those left behind? The propoganda films were proof that live American prisoners were left behind.

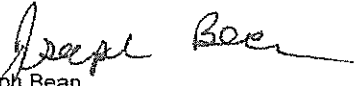
Since the beginning of Rolling Thunder many remains from WWII, Korea and Vietnam have been recovered, identified and buried on America soil. Six remains from WWI have also been recovered and returned, from a war that took place almost one hundred years ago. I believe that through the influence of Rolling Thunder and our supporters the remains recovery process has increased over the years. We have not forgotten those that have fought the good fight for our Country and will bring them home to rest.

Cambodia and Laos have not returned any live POWs to us. Hanoi has given us nothing since operation Home Coming. There is nothing to gain by holding our Troops. There is a good chance that there are live POWs being held by countries involved in the past Wars. Keep the pressure on our government and maybe, just maybe our Government will wake up and do their job. Talk is cheap when our Government states they will do everything possible to bring all live POWs/MIAs home, we need to see some action taken.

When will this happen, maybe during Congress and the Senate vacation or maybe when they vote themselves another pay raise!! Remember our POWs/MIAs, our Troops serving and God Bless the United States of America! Hope to see you at our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary "Ride for Freedom" Demonstration.

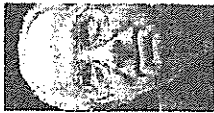
Sincerely

  
 Sgt. Artie Muller  
 National Executive Director

  
 Joseph Bean  
 National President

# Veterans, help keep Women's Memorial open

## CARL ASSZONY ON VETERANS



Almost 20 years ago, on Oct. 18, 1997, tens of thousands of people gathered to attend the dedication of The Women in Military Service for America Memorial and Museum, better known as the "Women's Memorial," in Washington, D.C. This combination memorial and museum was built to honor and recognize the millions of women who have served this nation since the Revolutionary War. It was open to the public on Oct. 20, 1997 and visited by over 100,000 people each year. It is now on the verge of closing its doors for lack of funding.

The Women's Memorial is located at the entrance to Arlington National Cemetery. Inside the building is 35,000 square feet of permanent and temporary displays and irreplaceable artifacts. The Hall of Honor room contains exhibits and panels honoring those women

service members who were taken prisoners of war, killed in the line of duty or earned high military awards for bravery.

This memorial/museum has also recorded the names and personal stories of over 300,000 service women. The Women's Memorial President, Major Gen. Dee Ann McWilliams, believes it is "an important physical tribute to these women and for our citizens to see and learn about the impact and contributions that women have made in service to our military and nation." It is the only major national memorial that honors all servicewomen. President Emeritus of the Women's Memorial, retired Brig. General Wilma L. Vaught, has stated, "The mission of the memorial is to tell the story of women's service and history of women in the military." It is dedicated to those women who answered the call to preserve this nation's freedom from the Revolutionary War to the present day conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Admission to the memorial/museum is free.

Initially Congress earmarked money

for the Women's Memorial, but, in 2010 the funding stopped and the memorial/museum now relies on private donations to cover its operating costs. It would be a dishonor to those women serving, or and those who have served, to have this memorial/museum closed because of insufficient funding. For every \$1.5 million collected the doors will remain open for one year. \$7.5 million for five years and \$30 million for another 20 years. All veterans service organizations across the country should make a generous donation as well as individual men and women veterans. Whether it's \$2 or \$25, every little bit helps, every dollar matters.

The military and veterans organizations should also encourage the public to make a tax deductible contribution. Contributions to The Women in Military Service for America (The Women's Memorial) can be made in the following manner: to donate by credit card visit on line [www.womensmemorial.org](http://www.womensmemorial.org) and click onto the 'donate' box for a credit card donation form, or send a check to Women's Memorial Foundation, Dept.

560, Washington, D.C. 20012-456, or call 1-800-222-2294 for more information.

Throughout American history these women have voluntarily served America courageously and honorably, now it is time for us to show our appreciation by donating just a few dollars to keep open the memorial/museum that tells their stories. If every individual veteran, male and female, in New Jersey, and across this vast country, contributed just \$2, and every veteran's organization in New Jersey, and across the nation, contributed \$100-\$200, then the Women's Memorial could reach its monetary goals and stay open for another 20 years.

They served us, and are still serving us. They have made their contributions to keeping America free. Let us show our gratitude and serve them by making our contributions through a tax deductible donation to this worthy cause.

Carl J. Asszony of Piscataway is a member of the Veterans Advisory Council at the VA Medical Center, Lyons. [rveteran30@gmail.com](mailto:rveteran30@gmail.com)

You can help support the Vietnam Women's Memorial

The Vietnam Women's Memorial continues the effort to educate the country about the vital services provided by over 265,000 women, military and civilian, during the Vietnam war and to provide a network of healing and hope. Your donation, large or small, will help ensure that an important chapter in America's history continues to be told.

Mail your tax deductible donation to:

Vietnam Women's Memorial Fund

c/o Vietnam National

470 Woodland Dr., Suite 1

Fort Washington, PA 19074

1-800-368-3637