

The Thunder Gazette

Published by Rolling Thunder® Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio

September, 2023

PLEASE NOTE

OUR NEXT MEMBERSHIP

MEETING WILL BE HELD ON

SUNDAY, September 17, 2023

2:00 p.m.

NO BOARD MEETING

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

To be a member in good standing, one must:

- a. Attend at least 3 meetings & 3 events per year;
- b. Pay the annual membership dues of \$40/yr;
- c. Abide by the Membership Patch rules;
- d. Remain loyal to Rolling Thunder® in word, deed and action;
- e. Conduct him/herself in a professional and courteous manner at all times.

Nominations will begin in July at the membership meeting for the positions of president (currently held by Lew Ballard), secretary (currently held by Cheryl Pilny), and 3 board positions (Bill Street, Ted Pilny & Dan Hubbard) are the 3 board members whose positions are up for nominations).

Final nominees are:

President:	Lew Ballard
Secretary:	Cheryl Pilny
Board Member:	Bill Street
	Ted Rood
	Dan Hubbard
	Ted Pilny

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 17, 2023 - Membership meeting 2:00 p.m.

Missing And Unaccounted For > 85,855
Last Seen As Prisoners-Of-War, Last
Declared Missing-In-Action

- >WWI 4,422
- >WWII 72,222
- >COLD WAR 126
- >KOREA 7,500
- >VIETNAM 1,579
- >IRAQ-PERSIAN GULF-LIBYA 6

We seek accountability - the return of living POW's and when that is not possible - the repatriation of their remains. We further advocate the same for all MIA.



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

VA VISITS –

OPEN

PRESIDENT LEW BALLARD 440-725-8157

EVENTS CHAIR

VICE-PRES PAUL WIGET 440-476-3656

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHUCK KETTLER 330-636-5315

SECRETARY CHERYL PILNY 440-543-8468

EDUCATION CHAIR DAN MCGINNIS 330-618-1720

TREASURER ANDY KLUSH 330-620-6047

Address: Rolling Thunder Chapter 1 Ohio
P. O. Box 1145
Mentor, OH 44060

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
CHUCK KETTLER 330-636-5315

Web Site Address: www.rollingthunder1ohio.org
Webmaster: CHIP KETTLER 330-472-0871
Please send any pictures you may have to Chip at
ckettler6480@yahoo.com

BOARD MEMBERS

BILL STREET
JIM ROSSI
MIKE NEILAN 440-241-2655
TED PILNY 216-346-6407
DAN HUBBARD 216-741-3992

(ALTERNATE) TED ROOD

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

CHAPLAIN DAN MCGINNIS 330-618-1720

MISSION STATEMENT

RUN COORDINATOR OPEN

**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.**

MEMBERSHIP OPEN

QUARTERMASTER
DAN HUBBARD 216-741-3992

ASST. QUARTERMASTER OPEN

SARGENT AT ARMS
TIM EXTON

NEWSLETTER STAFF
CHERYL PILNY 440-543-8468

**ROLLING THUNDER®, INC. IS A NON -PROFIT
ORGANIZATION AND EVERYONE DONATES HIS OR
HER TIME BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE IN THE POW-
MIA ISSUE.**

PLATOON LEADERS:
#1 MIKE NEILAN 440-241-2655

#2 TOM BLECHSCHMID 440-349-2470

#3 SALLY FELEAN 440-439-4914

#4 OPEN

Our Adopted MIA/POW – Wade Groth

STATE LIAISON James "Spy" Reilly – Chapter 9

WE CARE

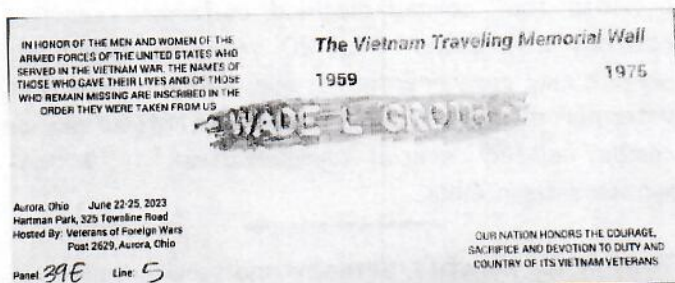
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
CHUCK KETTLER 330-636-5315



GROTH, WADE LAWRENCE

Name: Wade Lawrence Groth
Rank/Branch: E4/US Army
Unit: 50th Medical Detachment, 43rd Medical Group, 44th Medical Brigade
Date of Birth: 14 May 1947
Home City of Record: Greenville MI (joined Army in Cleveland OH)
Date of Loss: 12 February 1968
Country of Loss: South Vietnam
Loss Coordinates: 121721N 1074713E (ZU030600)
Status (in 1973): Missing In Action
Category: 4
Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: UH1H
Refno: 1046

Other Personnel In Incident: Harry W. Brown, Alan W. Gunn, Jerry L. Roe (all missing)



Government Affairs -

1. S.42 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): BUILD for Veterans Act of 2023 -
To improve the management and performance of the capital asset programs of the Department of Veterans Affairs so as to better serve veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors, and for other purposes. Has been referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/42?s=1&r=5>
Ohio Senator Brown is a co-sponsor of this bill.
Need to get Senator Vance on board.

2. S.10 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): VA Clinician Appreciation, Recruitment, Education, Expansion, and Retention Support (CAREERS) Act of 2023 -
To improve the workforce of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/10/text>
No Ohio senators have signed onto this bill yet.

3. H.R.214 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): Veterans' True Choice Act of 2023 -
To amend title 10, United States Code, to provide eligibility for TRICARE Select to veterans with service-connected disabilities, and for other purposes.
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/214/text?s=1&r=41>
No Ohio representatives have signed onto this bill yet.

4. H.R.232 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): Real Justice for Our Veterans Act of 2023 | Congress.gov | Library of Congress
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/232/text?s=1&r=29>
There are no co-sponsors to this bill yet.

5. H.R.236 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to designate a week as "Battle Buddy Check Week" for the purpose of outreach and education concerning peer wellness checks for veterans, and for other purposes. | Congress.gov | Library of Congress
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/236/text?s=1&r=27>
Sponsor: Rep. Jackson Lee, Sheila [D-TX-18] (Introduced)
There are no Ohio co-sponsors yet to this bill.

01/10/2023 - Committees: House - Veterans' Affairs
Latest Action: House - 02/08/2023 Referred to the Subcommittee on Health. (All Actions)

6. H.R.1003 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a study and clinical trials on the effects of cannabis on certain health outcomes of veterans with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder, and for other purposes. | Congress.gov | Library of Congress

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1003?overview=closed>

There are no Ohio co-sponsors yet to this bill.

7. H.R. 333 - To amend title 10, United States Code, to permit retired members of the Armed Forces who have a service-connected disability rated less than 50 percent to receive concurrent payment of both retired pay and veterans disability compensation, to extend eligibility for concurrent receipt to chapter 61 disability retirees with less than 20 years of service, and for other purposes. **Rep. Sanford Bishop (Ga.) introduced H.R. 333, the Disabled Veterans Tax Termination Act.**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/333?s=1&r=65>

(There is one co-sponsor from Ohio)

8. H.R.733 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): Vet CENTERS for Mental Health Act of 2023
To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to improve mental health care for veterans through the establishment of a minimum requirement for the number of Vet Centers per State.

(There are no co-sponsors from Ohio yet)

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/733?s=1&r=2>

9. H.R.411 - **Lead by Example Act of 2023** 118th Congress (2023-2024) |

BILL Sponsor: Rep. Davidson, Warren [R-OH-8] (Introduced 01/20/2023) Committees: House - House Administration; Veterans' Affairs

(a) Health Care Benefits.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning January 3, 2025, the only health care plan that the Federal Government may make available to Members of Congress and Congressional staff with respect to their service as a Member of Congress or Congressional staff shall be health care provided through the Department of Veterans Affairs, including at facilities of the Department and non-Department facilities pursuant to chapter 17 of title 38, United States Code, and any other provision of law authorizing the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to furnish such care to veterans, as if such Members and staff were veterans.

There are no Ohio co-sponsors currently.

(I think this is a really good one. Make sure that you contact your representatives to make sure this one happens. Maybe it will lead to some major changes in the health care of veterans.)

H.R.542 - This bill addresses home care and caregiver programs provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). There are currently 48 co-sponsors, one from Ohio.

10. S-132--Pilot Program Required.—The Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall jointly carry out a pilot program to assess the feasibility and advisability of providing the module described in subsection (b) and services under subsection (c) as part of the pre-separation transition process for members of the Armed Forces as a means of reducing the incidence of suicide among veterans.

(This bill is sponsored by Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown.)

H.R.1282 - Major Richard Star Act - This bill provides that combat-disabled uniformed services retirees with fewer than 20 years of creditable service may concurrently receive, without reduction, veterans' disability compensation and retired pay or combat-related special compensation. 9 co-sponsors from Ohio.

To apply for benefits, Veterans and survivors may visit VA.gov or call toll-free at 800-827-1000.

"UNTIL THEY ALL COME HOME"

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

Remains Identified

WWII

U.S. Navy GM3c Arnold Eugene Lyon
U.S. Army Sgt. John W. Radanovich
U.S. Army Air Forces Sgt. Donal C. Aiken
U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Alfred W. Pezzella

Korean War

U.S. Army Pfc. Albert Aaron Gosnell
U.S. Army Pvt. Alvin Dalton Thurman

Viet Nam War

USMC Capt. Ralph Jim Chipman

I was prepared to fight, prepared to die. But I was not prepared for my country to leave me behind.

PACT Act: Agent Orange Toxic Exposure

31 Aug 2023 Military.com | By Amanda Miller

When Congress created the PACT Act in 2022, it expanded the Department of Veterans Affairs health care and disability compensation available to Vietnam-era veterans who may have been exposed to the defoliant Agent Orange during the course of their service.

The PACT Act addresses illnesses that may stem from exposures to toxins during military service, particularly Agent Orange, burn pits and contaminated water on Marine Corps bases. It allows the VA to presume that a veteran's illness is service-connected if they served in a certain place at a certain time.

As a result, veterans may be newly eligible for VA health care and/or monthly disability payments. If a veteran died of one of the service-connected conditions established in the PACT Act, the veteran's surviving spouse or children may also be eligible for VA Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.

The act added two new presumptive medical conditions for Agent Orange exposure -- one of which has proven the most claimed new condition since the VA started processing PACT Act applications -- plus five new presumptive Vietnam-era locations.

New Presumptive Conditions for Agent Orange

If the veteran has, or has had, one of these conditions and served in a presumptive Agent Orange location, the PACT Act assumes it is service-connected:

- High blood pressure (also called hypertension)

- Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (a blood disorder)

As of the Aug. 18, 2023, edition of the VA PACT Act Performance Dashboard, the department reported more claims for hypertensive vascular disease, a result of high blood pressure, than any other condition since it began processing PACT Act claims. The department had granted benefits for 79% of those claims.

Altogether, the VA had completed processing 437,358 PACT Act-related claims by mid-August 2023. Across the board for all conditions, the most common reason for a claim denial was the lack of a medical diagnosis.

Prior to the PACT Act, the VA already presumed that certain cancers and other illnesses resulted from exposure to Agent Orange. They are:

- Bladder cancer
- Chronic B-cell leukemia
- Hodgkin disease
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin lymphoma
- Prostate cancer
- Respiratory cancers (including lung cancer)
- Some soft tissue sarcomas
- AL amyloidosis
- *Chloracne (or other types of acneiform disease like it)
- Diabetes mellitus type 2
- Hypothyroidism
- Ischemic heart disease
- Parkinsonism
- Parkinson's disease
- *Peripheral neuropathy, early onset
- *Porphyria cutanea tarda
- *Under VA rating regulations, this condition must be at least 10% disabling within one year of herbicide exposure.*

New Presumptive Locations for Agent Orange

The PACT Act also added five new locations where it presumes a service connection to Agent Orange exposure if a veteran has or had a presumptive medical condition:

- Military bases in Thailand, Jan. 9, 1962-June 30, 1976
- Laos, Dec. 1, 1965-Sept. 30, 1969

- Locations in Cambodia, April 16-30, 1969
- Guam or American Samoa or territorial waters off either location, Jan. 6, 1962-July 31, 1980
- Johnston Atoll or on a ship that called there, Jan. 1, 1972, through Sept. 30, 1977

Prior to the PACT Act, the VA already presumed a service connection to Agent Orange exposure for certain medical conditions if a service member served in Vietnam, nearby waters or the Korean Demilitarized Zone; engaged in certain activities to transport Agent Orange; or served in an eligible reserve location. Those activities and locations include:

- In the Republic of Vietnam
- On a U.S. military vessel in the inland waterways of Vietnam
- On a vessel not more than 12 nautical miles seaward from the demarcation line of the waters of Vietnam and Cambodia
- In or near the Korean Demilitarized Zone anytime from Sept. 1, 1967, to Aug. 31, 1971
- On Air Force active duty in a location where a C-123 aircraft with traces of Agent Orange was assigned, and had repeated contact with the aircraft
- Involvement in transporting, testing, storing or other activities associated with Agent Orange
- Assignment as a reservist to certain duties at Lockbourne/Rickenbacker Air Force Base, Ohio, 1969 to 1986; Westover Air Force Base, Mass., 1972 to 1982; and Pittsburgh International Airport, 1972 to 1982
- How to File a PACT Act Claim
- Filing a PACT ACT claim begins with VA Form 21-526EZ. VA processors will then track down the evidence of past toxic exposure and subsequent illnesses by looking up the veteran's service records and military medical treatment records, as well as records from civilian doctor's offices, if needed.
- Most patients will need a VA medical exam before receiving benefits. Those who aren't quite ready to file can instead formally declare their intent to do so and help ensure the earliest effective date once benefits are approved.

- Find out more about what to expect when filing a PACT Act claim.

Chaplain's Corner

(submitted by Dan McGinnis)

Be Still (By: Kimya Loder)

Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.
Psalm 37:7

After getting settled into the chamber, my body floating comfortably above the water, the room went dark and the gentle music that had been playing in the background went silent. I'd read that isolation tanks were therapeutic, offering relief for stress and anxiety. But this was like nothing I'd ever encountered. It felt like the chaos of the world had stopped, and I could clearly hear my innermost thoughts. I left the experience balanced and rejuvenated, reminded that there is power in stillness.

We can rest most comfortably in the stillness of the presence of God, who renews our strength and grants us the wisdom we need to tackle the challenges we face each day. When we're still, silencing the noise and removing distractions in our lives, He strengthens us so we can hear His gentle voice more clearly (Psalm 37:7).

While sensory deprivation chambers are certainly one form of stillness, God offers us a simpler way to spend uninterrupted time with Him. He says, "When you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father" (Matthew 6:6). God will guide our steps and allow His righteousness to shine brightly through us when we seek the answers to life's challenges in the stillness of His magnificent presence (Psalm 37:5-6)

A THANK YOU TO JOANN PRASNIC FOR PUTTING THIS LETTER TOGETHER

Mr. Don Boodjeh
Chief Executive Officer
Discount Drug Mart
211 Commerce Drive
Medina, Oh 44256

August 6, 2023

Dear Mr. Boodjeh:

We at Rolling Thunder, Chapter 1, Ohio cannot adequately express our gratitude for your generous donation of \$13,000 to our organization. For two years in a row, your support has been deeply appreciated by members of our chapter and the veterans who are supported by your loyalty and confidence in our mission.

With your generous support last year, we were able to install several POW/MIA commemoration chairs at public facilities and most recently, one at the Hospice of the Western Reserve Hospice in Sandusky. In addition, this year, we held POW/MIA ceremonies and provided funeral escorts for veterans to their resting places to provide a final display of honor for service to our country.

The pandemic and resulting shutdown deeply impacted our veterans and their well-being. We look forward to returning to the Louis Stokes Cleveland VA Hospital to provide social interactions via pizza parties, a Christmas party, and upcoming, a summer cookout with food, entertainment, and prizes for our veterans.

We cannot overstate the impact that your gift will have on our veterans. Know that we will continue to work for a full accounting of our missing prisoners of war and missing in action to bring them home. For our local veterans, we will work tirelessly to bring them appreciation and dignity through acts of kindness and human interaction with understanding fellow veterans and volunteers who appreciate their service. It simply would not be possible to do any of what we strive to do without our generous benefactor and true partner, Discount Drug Mart.

Very sincerely yours,

Lewis Ballard
President

Paul Widget
Vice President

Charles Kettler
Board Chairman