

The Thunder Gazette

Published by Rolling Thunder® Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio

July, 2024

PLEASE NOTE

OUR NEXT MEMBERSHIP

MEETING WILL BE HELD ON

SUNDAY, July 21, 2024

1:00 p.m.

**Roundup Lake Camp Grounds
3392 State Route 82
Mantua, Ohio, 44255**

If you can, please arrive about 1:00 PM as we will be packing the gift bags for the Veterans picnic at Wade Park to be held on August 3, 2024.

Chapter picnic immediately following the meeting

BRING A COVERED DISH TO SHARE. The chapter will provide hotdogs, hamburgers, buns, condiments, and drinks

Let Lew know if you will attend 440-725-8157

Many thanks to Ron Dinger for setting this up for the chapter!

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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, July 21, 2024 - Membership meeting and chapter picnic. 1:00 p.m. - Roundup Lake

Camp Grounds - BRING A COVERED DISH TO SHARE - Let Lew know if you will attend 440-725-8157

Saturday, August 3, 2024 - Picnic at VA hospital - More details at meeting

Nominations will begin in July at the membership meeting for the positions of vice-president (currently held by Paul Wiget), treasurer (currently held by Andy Klush), Chairman of the Board (currently held by Chuck Kettler) and 2 board positions (Mike Neilan & Jim Rossi are the 2 Board members whose positions are up for nominations). Nominations will again be taken at the August meeting.

To be eligible for the position of chapter president, a member must have held a chapter executive officer position or been a member of the Board of Directors for 12 months prior to being nominated. To be nominated and/or elected for any other officer position, a Chapter member must be a member in good standing for a period of one (1) year or longer. The person must be a full member at the time of the nomination and have earned their patches. The member must also have attended six (6) meetings prior to nominations in the past twelve (12) months. You must be present at time of nomination to accept the nomination. Elections will be held at the September membership meeting. If you have someone in mind to nominate for any of these positions, please discuss with that person before nominating them.

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**

PRESIDENT LEW BALLARD 440-725-8157
VICE-PRES PAUL WIGET 440-476-3656
SECRETARY CHERYL PILNY 440-543-8468
TREASURER ANDY KLUSH 330-620-6047
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
CHUCK KETTLER 330-636-5315

BOARD MEMBERS

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

CHAPLAIN DAN MCGINNIS 330-618-1720

RUN COORDINATOR OPEN

MEMBERSHIP OPEN

QUARTERMASTER
DAN HUBBARD 216-741-3992

ASST. QUARTERMASTER OPEN

SARGENT AT ARMS
TIM EXTON 216-789-9272

NEWSLETTER STAFF
CHERYL PILNY 440-543-8468

PLATOON LEADERS:
#1 MIKE NEILAN 440-241-2655
#2 TOM BLECHSCHMID 440-349-2470
#3 SALLY FELEAN 440-439-4914
#4 OPEN

STATE LIAISON James "Spy" Reilly – Chapter 9

WE CARE

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
CHUCK KETTLER 330-636-5315

VA VISITS – OPEN

EVENTS CHAIR OPEN

PUBLIC RELATIONS CHUCK KETTLER 330-636-5315

EDUCATION CHAIR DAN MCGINNIS 330-618-1720

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

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.

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

The advocacy group Rolling Thunder®, Inc. /
Rolling Thunder® Charities, Inc. supports
U.S. Military Active Duty, Veterans,
Prisoners Of War, and Personnel Missing In
Action from past wars.

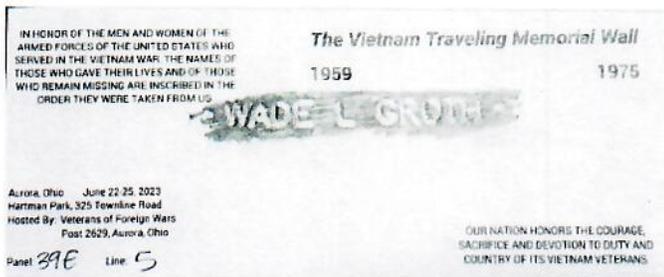
Our Adopted MIA/POW – Wade Groth



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>
Status: 1/24/23: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.
Action By: Senate

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>
Status 2/16/23: *Committee on Veterans' Affairs. Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.*
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>
Status: 1/9/2023: *Referred to the Committee on Armed Services, and in addition to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.*
Action By: House of Representatives
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>
Status 1/10/23; *Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.*
Action By: House of Representatives
There are 2 co-sponsors for this bill. None from Ohio.

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

Status 2/8/23: *Referred to the Sub-committee on Health.*

Action By: *Committee on Veterans' Affairs*

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

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
Status: *This bill requires the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to study the effects of cannabis on veterans who are enrolled in the VA health care system and have been diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or chronic pain (i.e., eligible veterans).*

First, the bill requires the VA to conduct an observational, 18-month study on the effects of cannabis on the health outcomes of eligible veterans. The VA must report on the study and address whether it is able to meet criteria necessary to conduct clinical trials.

Then, if the VA determines that it is able to proceed, it must carry out a series of clinical trials on the effects of cannabis appropriate for investigational use, as determined by the Food and Drug Administration, on the outcomes of eligible veterans. The VA must carry out a long-term observational study of the clinical trial participants.

The VA may terminate the trials if it is unable to meet clinical guideline requirements or the trials would create excessive risk to participants.

The VA must ensure that the study and trials are representative of the demographics of veterans in the United States, as determined by the most recent data from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census.

The study and trials must include mechanisms to ensure data preservation and registration as necessary (in an anonymous form).

<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.****

Status 2/9/23: *Referred to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs.*

Action By: *Committee on Veterans' Affairs*

<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.

Status 2/1/23: *Referred to the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.*

Action By: *House of Representatives*

(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.

Status 2/8/23: *Referred to the Subcommittee on Health.*

Action By: Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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 72 co-sponsors, one from Ohio.

Status 12/6/23: *Passed in the House and sent to the Senate.*

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.

Status 2/16/23: *Committee on Veterans' Affairs.*

Ordered to be reported with an amendment in the nature of a substitute favorably.

(This bill is sponsored by Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown. To date, there are 8 co-sponsors.)

H.R. 3722 (This is connected to S. 132, the senate bill)

Status 12/3/23: *Ordered to be Reported (Amended) by Voice Vote.*

Action By: Committee on Veterans' Affairs

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.**

Status 7/18/23: *Placed on the Union Calendar, Calendar No. 117.*

Action By: House of Representatives

H. Con. Res. 64 (IH) - Expressing the sense of Congress that all trade agreements the United States enters into, should provide reasonable access and collaboration of each nation involved in such an agreement, for the purpose of search and recovery activities relating to members of the United States Armed Forces still missing and unaccounted for from prior wars or military conflicts.

No further action to date.

H.R. 1774 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): VA Emergency Transportation Act | [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) | Library of Congress. To amend title 38, United States Code, to reimburse veterans for the cost of emergency medical transportation to a Federal facility, and for other purposes. Introduced to the House on 3/24/23.

07/18/2023 Subcommittee Consideration and Markup Session Held

H.R. 3670- National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum Act 118th Congress 2023-2024. To designate the POW/MIA Memorial and Museum in Jacksonville, Florida, as a National POW/MIA Memorial and Museum.

Status 6/9/23: *Referred to the Subcommittee on Federal Lands.*

Action By: Committee on Natural Resources

There are no sponsors from Ohio.

To apply for benefits, Veterans and survivors may visit [VA.gov](https://www.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. Army Pvt. Robert L. Skaar
U.S. Army Air Forces S/Sgt. Hubert Yeary
U.S. Army 1st Lt. Herman J. Sunstad
U.S. Army Air Forces Ralph L. Mourer
U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Joe A. Dejarnette
U.S. Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Robert D. McKee

Korean War

U.S. Army Sgt. Clayton Millard Pierce
U.S. Army M/Sgt. Wallace Simmons
U.S. Army Pfc. Joseph Raymond Travers

Viet Nam War

U.S. Air Force David Stanley Price

On May 22, 2024, Rolling Thunder Chapter 1 Ohio presented a \$500 scholarship to Mary Grace Hendershot, a nursing student from the Auburn Career Center.



Two years ago on July 16, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Veterans Crisis Line launched "Dial 988 then press 1" to make it easier for veterans and their loved ones to access lifesaving support. According to the VA, since 988's launch, more than 10 million total calls, texts, and chats to 988 have been answered.



DOD Updates Families of Vietnam War Missing June 28, 2024 | By David Vergun, DOD News

The Defense Department has a steadfast and sacred commitment to finding, recovering, identifying and repatriating the remains of its heroes who are unaccounted for, said Kelly K. McKeague, director of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.

McKeague spoke yesterday to family members of missing service members who fought in the Vietnam War. Today, agency personnel will continue to provide family members with individual updates on the searches for their loved ones at meetings in Washington.

While DPAA has been searching for service members from all wars dating to World War II, the agency has prioritized finding the missing from the Vietnam War since firsthand witnesses in several nations where operations took place are aging and dying, he said.

Senior Defense Department officials have visited Southeast Asian leaders to lay the groundwork for sending DPAA teams to investigate and excavate sites for possible remains, he said, adding that talks with officials in Vietnam, Cambodia, China and Thailand have been fruitful.

Everyone in DOD, not just at DPAA, believes the agency's mission is a sacred obligation and a moral imperative, McKeague said.

"These are world renowned individuals, whether historians, scientists, archaeologists or anthropologists. And as renowned as they are, what sets them apart is not their professionalism, which is eye-watering, [but] what sets them apart is their passion, their dedication, and their commitment to you," he said.

"Your loved ones made the supreme sacrifice on behalf of their nation. The nation — and we're just an instrument of the nation — is obliged morally to do everything humanly possible to give you these answers," he said, referring to finding the missing and returning them home. While Vietnam is an agency priority, DPAA teams are at work in dozens of other nations outside Southeast Asia, searching for remains from World War II, the Korean War and other periods.





Chaplain's Corner

(submitted by Dan McGinnis)

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good rewards of the manifold grace of God.
I Peter 4:10

Inspiration

How do we serve God? Sometimes, we make this question harder than it needs to be. We serve God by serving others in whatever way we are able to do so. Whatever skill, talent, or gift God has given us, He has given us to use for His glory. Whatever people God has placed in our midst are the people with whom we are called to share His grace.

Prayer

God, thank You for claiming me as Your own and for filling me with Your Holy Spirit. Please give me wisdom to understand how You've equipped me to serve You in simple ways. Give me eyes to see the opportunities that I have to share Your love and grace with others, and give me the strength to use my gifts and talents to carry out the tasks You've placed before me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

This National I Love Horses Day presents an opportunity to share the story of one of Ohio's most famous military horses: Blacksmith. On June 6, 1918, legendary Buffalo Soldier Charles Young saddled his black Kentucky mare Blacksmith, packed his saddlebags, put on his colonel's uniform, and set out from Wilberforce on his famous 497-mile protest ride to Washington, D.C. Young rode Blacksmith and a second horse - Dolly - to prove that he was physically fit to serve and command troops in World War I. Young covered the distance in 16 days, stopping in small towns along the way to sleep and quarter his horse. In some places, he found no accommodations for blacks and had to sleep near the stable with his Blacksmith.

When Colonel Young arrived on horseback in Washington on June 22, 1918, he pled his case to the Secretary of War, Newton Baker. It would take the War Department more than a year to recall Colonel Young to active duty, and by that time, the war was nearly over. On November 6, 1918, just five days before the signing of the armistice, the War Department ordered Colonel Young to report to Camp Grant, Ill., to take command of the Development Unit, which comprised a group of black development battalions training for labor or stevedore work. Young passed away in 1922. One hundred years later, he was posthumously promoted to Brigadier General and inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame.

