

The Thunder Gazette

Published by Rolling Thunder® Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio

September, 2024

PLEASE NOTE

**OUR NEXT MEMBERSHIP
MEETING WILL BE HELD ON
SUNDAY, September 15, 2024**

2:00 p.m.

***Board Meeting
1:00 p.m.***

**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.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, September 15, 2024 - Board/
Membership meeting - 1:00 p.m./2:00 p.m.

Nominations began at the July 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 are:

Vice President Paul Wiget (accepted)
Chairman of the Board Chuck Kettler (accepted)
Treasurer Andy Klush (accepted)
Board member Jim Rossi (not present)
Mike Nielan (accepted)

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 IRA "SHREK" SKEEBY 937-541-5927

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.

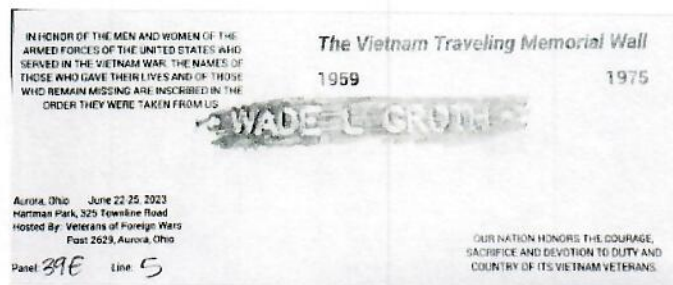
Our Adopted MIA/POW – Wade Groth



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 | 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 Mark-up 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 Air Forces Pfc. David C. Hansen
U.S. Army Air Forces 1st Lt. Wylie W. Leverett
U.S. Army Air Forces Pvt. Willard D. Merrill
U.S. Navy CEMP John Judson Campbell
U.S. Army TEC5 William E. Eby
U.S. Army TSgt. Thomas O. Moss

Korean War

U.S. Army Pfc. Jack McWilliam Cash
U.S. Army Cpl. Waymon Slaten

Viet Nam War

None listed

Service members killed in Afghanistan honored in Congressional Gold Medal ceremony

Washington — The 13 U.S. service members killed in a suicide bombing in Kabul in 2021 were honored posthumously Tuesday, 9/10/24, in a Congressional Gold Medal ceremony at the Capitol that came three years after the chaotic U.S. military withdrawal from Afghanistan.

House Speaker Mike Johnson hosted the ceremony and was joined by House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, along with family members of those killed in the attack, which took place at the Kabul airport. The Congressional Gold Medal is the highest award Congress can bestow.

"Their names are etched into our hearts and now into the history of our nation," Johnson said of the 13 service members before reading aloud each of their names. "Our nation owes a profound debt of gratitude to these service members and those here today who were with them in Kabul."

Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Taylor Hoover
Marine Corps Sgt. Johanny Pichardo
Marine Corps Sgt. Nicole Gee
Marine Corps Cpl. Hunter Lopez
Marine Corps Cpl. Daegan Page
Marine Corps Cpl. Humberto Sanchez
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. David Espinoza
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Jared Schmitz
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Rylee McCollum
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Dylan Merola
Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Kareem Nikoui
U.S. Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Maxton Soviak
U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Knauss

Jeffries said no award can repay the sacrifices made by the service members, but praised them for defending freedom and democracy "until their last breath."

"With this Congressional Gold Medal, we reverently honor 13 patriots who have fallen in a war zone with tremendous valor," he said. "The 13 heroes we are honoring here today represent the best of America. They were beloved sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, spouses and friends who knew the dangers of the mission but nevertheless answered the call to service, risking their own safety for that of our fellow Americans, our allies and our Afghan partners." Schumer called the service members "heroes, guardians, saviors."

"They were fighting for a cause far bigger than themselves to deliver freedom to those who otherwise might never, never have known it again," he said.

Sen. Steve Daines, a Montana Republican, and Rep. Lisa McClain, a Michigan Republican, introduced legislation shortly after the attack to award the service members with Congressional Gold Medals. It passed both chambers in the fall of 2021 and was signed by Mr. Biden that December. Both Daines and McClain participated in the ceremony and delivered brief remarks.

"It is our duty to remember the service, the sacrifice, and the faithfulness of the 13 brave men and women who fell that day but is also our duty to remember their loved ones as well, because in remembering and honoring the memory of the fallen we provide their families comfort," Daines said. "Today is an important step on that journey."

Coral Doolittle, mother of Marine Cpl. Humberto Sanchez, said in a speech at the ceremony in which she occasionally had to pause to fight back tears, "The blank check they signed when they enlisted was cashed in full."

"As Gold Star parents, our grief never truly ends," she added. "It changes, it transforms, but remains with us always. A big part of us died with our children on Aug. 26, 2021. But we want everybody to know that ceremonies like this provide a small but meaningful breath of relief in our ongoing journey of grief, reminding us that we raised the best and brightest for this country."

Chaplain's Corner (submitted by Dan McGinnis) Spiritual Royalty

To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. --[John 1:12](#)

When Jay Speights of Rockville, Maryland, took a DNA test, nothing could have prepared him for the results he received. They contained a big surprise—he was a prince of the West African nation of Benin! Soon he boarded a plane and visited the country. When he arrived, the royal family greeted and showered him with a festive homecoming—dancing, singing, banners, and a parade.

Jesus came to earth as God's good news announcement. He went to His own people, the nation of Israel, to give them the good news and to show them the way out of darkness. Many received the message with apathy, rejecting the "true light" ([John 1:9](#)) and refusing to accept Him as Messiah (v. 11). But unbelief and apathy weren't universal among the people. Some people humbly and gladly received Christ's invitation, accepted Him as God's eventual sacrifice for sin, and believed in His name. A surprise awaited this faithful remnant. He "gave [them] the right to become children of God" (v. 12)—to be royal children of His through spiritual rebirth.

When we turn from sin and darkness, receive Jesus, and believe in His name, we discover we're children of God, adopted as royalty into His family. May we enjoy the blessings as we live up to the responsibilities of being the King's kids.

By: [Marvin Williams](#)