

# The Thunder Gazette

Published by Rolling Thunder® Inc. Chapter 1 Ohio

October, 2024

## PLEASE NOTE

**OUR NEXT MEMBERSHIP  
MEETING WILL BE HELD ON  
SUNDAY, October 20, 2024  
2:00 p.m.**

***No Board Meeting***

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

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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.

*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.*



**Agent Orange—The Silent Serial Killer -  
October is Agent Orange Awareness Month**

October brings visions of cider, warm sweaters, shorter days and time with our families. The colors of foliage quickly turn to yellows, reds, and orange. For people suffering the long-lasting effects of the herbicide Agent Orange, which was sprayed as a part of Operation Ranch Hand during the Vietnam War, October is a yearly reminder of the need for continued Agent Orange education. October is Agent Orange Awareness Month.

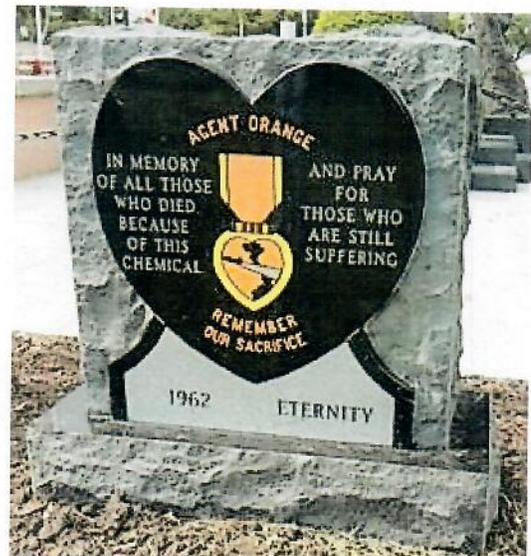
## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Sunday, October 20, 2024 - Membership meeting - 2:00 p.m.**

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**Results of the 2024 election:**

Vice President	Paul Wiget
Chairman of the Board	Chuck Kettler
Treasurer	Andy Klush
Board member	Mike Nielan



**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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Please send any pictures you may have to Chip at  
ckettler6480@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.

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

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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.

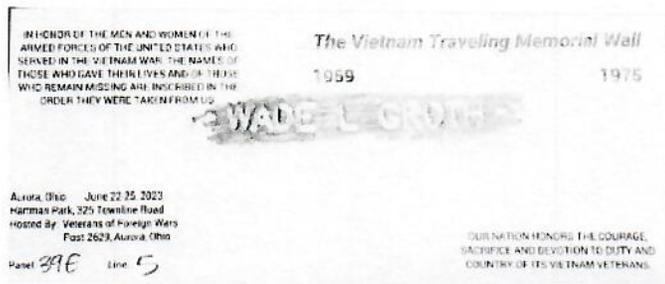
**Our Adopted MIA/POW – Wade Groth**



## 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)



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### 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 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.

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#### Remains Identified

##### WWII

None listed

##### Korean War

None listed

##### Viet Nam War

None listed

### Soldier Accounted for from Korean War (Ryhter, John P.)

*On September 20, 2024, Chapter 1 Ohio, along with Chapters 2 and 8, and the Patriot Guard, had the honor and privilege of participating in the funeral ceremony of U.S. Army Sgt. John P. Ryhter, who had been missing from the Korean War for 71 years. We had also previously participated in the escort from Cleveland Hopkins Airport to the funeral home. Welcome home, Sgt. Rhyter.*



The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) announced today that U.S. Army Sgt. John P. Ryhter, 22, of Bedford, Ohio, killed during the Korean War, was accounted for Apr. 8, 2024.

In Dec. 1950, Ryhter was a member of Battery A, 82nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division. He was reported missing in action after his unit engaged in intensive combat actions against the Chinese People's Volunteer Army in the vicinity of Kunu-ri, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, during the Battle of Ch'ongch'on River. At the time the circumstances for Ryhter's loss were not immediately known, and there was never any evidence that he was a prisoner of war. The Army issued a presumptive finding of death on Dec. 31, 1953.

Following the war, in 1954, the opposing nations reached an agreement to exchange war dead, the execution of which was known as Operation GLORY. One set of Unknown remains, designated X-14632 OP GLORY, was reportedly recovered

from Camp 5 Prisoner of War Cemetery, Pyoktong, North Korea. Definitive proof could not be found between X-14632 and Ryhter, and the remains were determined to be unidentifiable. They were then sent to Hawaii where they were buried as an Unknown in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii, known as the Punchbowl. In Sept. 2019, DPAA personnel exhumed Unknown X-14632 from the Punchbowl and sent the remains to the DPAA laboratory, for analysis.

To identify Ryhter's remains, scientists from DPAA used dental and anthropological analysis, as well as chest radiograph comparison and circumstantial evidence. Additionally, scientists from the [Armed Forces Medical Examiner System](#) used mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) analysis.

Ryhter's name is recorded on the Courts of the Missing at the Punchbowl, along with the others who are still missing from the Korean War. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for. Ryhter will be buried in Bedford, Ohio, on a date to be determined.

Sgt Ryhter has been awarded the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Korean Service Medal, the United Nations Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation and the Republic of Korea War Service Medal. His name is permanently inscribed on the "Courts of the Missing" at the Honolulu Memorial. A rosette will be placed next to his name on the Court of the Missing to indicate he has been accounted for and now rests in a known gravesite.

Prior to the Army, John did a stint in the Marine Corps from 1946-1948. Prior to the Marines, John obtained a "Merchant Seaman's

Certificate of Identification" in NYC in April 1945, and was hired onto the MV Esso Bolivar, an oil tanker, as a utilityman. He sailed on the Esso Bolivar from Apr 25th - May 19th ; a journey from NYC to Aruba and back. John was just shy of 17 years old.



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### Chaplain's Corner

(submitted by Dan McGinnis)

#### Shelter from the Storm

As the story goes, in 1763, a young minister, traveling on a cliffside road in Somerset, England, ducked into a cave to escape the flashes of lightning and pounding rain. As he looked out at Cheddar Gorge, he pondered the gift of finding shelter and peace in God. Waiting there, he began to write a hymn, "Rock of Ages," with its memorable opening lines: "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee."

We don't know if Augustus Toplady thought about Moses's experience in the cleft of a rock while writing the hymn (Exodus 33:22), but perhaps he did. The Exodus account tells of Moses seeking God's reassurance and God's response. When Moses asked God to reveal His glory to him, God answered graciously, knowing that "no one may see me and live" (v. 20). He tucked Moses into the rocks when He passed by, letting Moses only see His back. And Moses knew that God was with him.

We can trust that just as God said to Moses, "My Presence will go with you" (v. 14), so too we can find refuge in Him. We may experience many storms in our lives, as did Moses and the English minister in the story, but when we cry out to Him, He will give us the peace of His presence.