



# The Highground

## Veterans Memorial Park

July 2018  
Issue

HONOR, EDUCATE, HEAL... A PLACE FOR ALL



### 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of The Highground and "Fragments", The Vietnam Veteran's Tribute Yellow Ribbon Campaign & Parade



#### Volunteers Needed – How You And Your Community Can Get Involved

What started out as a day to commemorate the 30th Anniversary of The Highground and "Fragments", the Vietnam Veteran's Tribute, has become a very large event with a Yellow Ribbon campaign encompassing the whole Central Wisconsin area.



Veterans' posts, communities and individuals have been, and are now, working diligently on creating thousands of large yellow ribbons to be placed on the main thoroughfares throughout Central Wisconsin. When veterans travel to The Highground for the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event, no matter which direction they come from, they will be driving through yellow-ribbon lined corridors. Sheila Nyberg of Clark County Economic Development and Tourism has developed this massive project from the simple idea of having yellow ribbons up just near The Highground and in the neighboring towns of Neillsville for a small veterans parade prior to the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary ceremony. She has brought her endless energy and enthusiasm for the project and made it a multiple-county effort! If there are communities, organizations or individuals that would like more information on getting yellow ribbons for this event, contact Sheila at 715-255-9100.

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, these Central WI communities have joined the Yellow Ribbon Campaign: Pittsville, Pray, Loyal, Greenwood, Marshfield, Colby, Thorp, Dorchester and Neillsville. Make sure *your* community becomes involved and has Yellow Ribbons made to put up on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The ribbons should be able to withstand Mother Nature and remain up until November 12<sup>th</sup>, in honor of veterans of all eras.

The Yellow Ribbon Campaign and Parade is already having a healing effect for many different reasons. One healing effect is what was originally intended by holding the event; that Vietnam veterans and their families be honored and "Welcomed Home" as a group. Another healing effect is from the civilian point of view – a chance to honor and remember these veterans. Yet another form of healing has been happening from the preparation to the "Welcome Home". There are people that either did not welcome the Vietnam veterans home or had acted in ways that they now regret when the veterans returned home. This is their second chance to both welcome home the veterans and to make peace with themselves for actions or non-actions of the past. Loved ones of those killed in Vietnam and of those Vietnam veterans that are no longer with us will be able to feel that their pain is shared by others and that their loved one is rightfully honored and remembered. It will be a time of closure for many different types of wounds.

Continued on page 9



#### Terri Johnson — Greenwood, WI

It is with deep sadness that we relay the news of Terri's passing—July 7, 2018. Terri and her husband, Al, always worked as a team for HG and many other causes, including a great deal of outreach and projects for Clark Co. Tourism. They were very active volunteers at MANY events, baking, car parking, porch greeting and did a lot of the big volunteer activities until the last few years when Terri's cancer returned. They were a big part of the Ride to Remember. She supported her son's interest and career in the motorcycle world. She even rode into The HG last year for the Ride to Remember behind her son on his bike. Terri was an amazing lady. A special remembrance will be included in the Ride to Remember Ceremony August 18, 2018.

#### Thank you donors, for gifts to remember lost loved ones or to honor those still among us!

##### In Memory:

Abramovicz Families  
Claude Ayers  
Florence Ayers  
Robert Bertz  
Shirley Caliebe  
Stan Hutter

K9 Missy F770  
George Kiffe  
Bob Kleist  
Donald Kleist

Gladys & C.L. O'Kelly's wedding  
anniversary

Chuck Orlovski  
Stan Pekol  
Lloyd Penke  
Edward Rohland  
John Vande Castle  
Wilger Families  
Jim Yost

##### Honoring:

All Veterans for our  
Freedom

*Thank you!*



## Ted Fetting Special Memorial and Stone Dedications

A special ceremony will be held at The Highground on Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. honoring Ted Fetting as well as 22 other friends/veterans that Ted purchased Legacy Stones for before his own passing. Prior to Ted's passing he began selling items and donating the funds to The Highground's stone program. His goal... "honor all who served with me". He purchased 18 stones in full. Ted's sister Ruth picked up where he left off by purchasing 4 more stones she knew he intended on getting. Please join Ted (in spirit) to honor the 22 that Ted planned on bringing home to The Highground. All are welcome to come remember Ted and friends.



### 34th ANNUAL HIGHGROUND BICYCLE TOUR

August 3 - 5, 2018  
4 ROUTES—3 DAYS—2 NIGHTS—  
—1 GOAL!



Riding For Veterans

ADDITIONAL ROUTES ARE WELCOME!  
CONTACT THE HIGHGROUND TO JOIN THIS GREAT WISC BICYCLING EVENT!

**ROUTE CONTACTS**

**Northern Route**—Mike & Kathy—715-937-6786  
Mike.gleisner@hotmail.com  
Tom - 715-897-4661

**Western Route**—Jerry—715-246-5370  
simonsez@frontiernet.net

**Southern Route**—Andrew & Nicole—608-201-7328  
adsmith2391@yahoo.com


**Eastern Route**—Curt -920-539-5148  
karateman013184@charter.net

### Planning Farther Ahead: 2019 Heroes Ride


Tom Kingsbury, on his third decade of riding his bicycle for The Highground, will be riding another Heroes Ride in late July 2019 (ending with the 35th Annual Bicycle Tour at The Highground on August 4, 2019). Tom is working diligently to get the route and stop locations all planned. He is looking into riding into bordering states. If you would like to join Tom on his journey for part of the way, or *volunteer in any fashion*, please let us know.

Tom and his "banana" bike were recently seen training near Loyal, WI. Tom is training for the 1500+ miles—a mile for each Wisconsin KIA from Vietnam through the present. He will bring awareness to the 20 suicides that happen daily with our veterans. You can join Tom during those special miles too.

Sponsored in part by:



Fundraiser for PTSD programs.



**More Sponsors Needed!!      More Funding Needed.**

For Information on ANY Events Contact:

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park at  
www.thehighground.us    715-743-4224  
events@thehighground.us



TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial



Sponsors as of 7/9/2018 are:



Neillsville WI

Menzner Lumber & Supply Co.

Thank You!

New Moon Ski & Bike  
Hayward, WI

Sniteman Pharmacy  
Neillsville, WI


**A&B PROCESS SYSTEMS**





## Have you heard.....

... **Second Annual quilt raffle** has begun with a few initial beautiful entries. We look forward to seeing what you picked as your favorite patriotic pattern. Quilts will be gathered during the remainder of the year. Raffle drawing is December 22, 2018 at noon in the Learning Center!



.... **Sabrina Weiler is the new Gift Shop Coordinator.** I joined the gift shop staff in May 2018. I am married to Jon Weiler, the Executive Director of The Highground. We have been married for 28 years. God has blessed us with three beautiful children. Alexis is 24, Kristofer is 20, and Anna is 17 years old. We live in Merrill, WI on a hobby farm with 53 acres. We have horses, dogs, rabbits and cats. We enjoy doing outdoor activities and spending time together as a family. My family and I are excited to be a part of this incredible place. I am looking forward to meeting you and your families.

... **The Gift Shop has gone USA-made!** The Shop is on the hunt. If you know of a great item that is USA-made and would appeal to Highground visitors, please let Sabrina know the contact information. She will enjoy checking out new "Made in the USA" gems.

.... **Gift Shop ladies get smarter.** The Highground thanks the ladies- Mae, Alicia, Abby, Rebecca -in the Gift Shop for a great summer and bids them the very best with their college endeavors. They all promised to come back for events and maybe next "summer"? Stop in to say good-bye before they leave in July/August. You will all be missed!

**SAVE THE DATES - 2018 FALL CLEAN UP DAYS**  
**FRI. OCTOBER 12TH & SAT. OCTOBER 13TH**  
**FIXING THINGS, FOOD, FUN, FRIENDSHIPS**  
**OLD & NEW!**

Make plans to help  
 The Highground get ready for Winter



Fall Clean-Up Days -  
 October 12 & 13, 2018

Please RSVP by Friday,  
 October 5, 2018  
 715-743-4224  
[events@thehighground.us](mailto:events@thehighground.us)

## The Highground Comes to Life with Highground Education Days!



**October 2 - 5, 2018 9:00 am - 2:30 pm**  
 (This is an exciting combination of The Highground's  
 Diversity Days & 5th Grade Days!)

**Students in grades 5 through 9 are invited to:**

Tour The Highground with a knowledgeable tour guide to discover the **history and unexpected stories** about The Highground Veterans Memorial Park, the Tributes and veterans' military service.

In addition, there will be **fun & educational exhibits** and presentations along the tour ... including the cultures involved in WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Iraq, & Afghanistan; History of the US Flag & Liberty Bell; stories from military working dog handlers...& more!

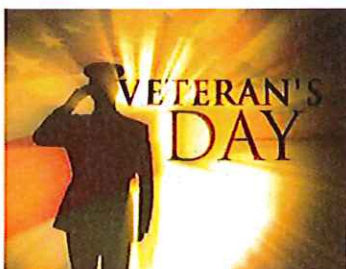
Call to book your students' day. Cost: \$3.00 per person  
 Contact: 715-743-4224 [events@thehighground.us](mailto:events@thehighground.us)

Bring your own sack lunch and use our picnic areas.



## Veterans Day at The Highground November 11, 2018

**10:30am: Reading the names of WI KIAs/  
 MIAs from Korean War, Vietnam War, Iraq,  
 Afghanistan through present day.**  
**Volunteers needed.**



**1:00pm Ceremony**





The other day, I was asked to describe the Learning Center to someone that has never been here. My first thought was .... What if I had never had the opportunity to see it? What if I had never been to The Highground? So I responded with this, "The Learning Center is made up of a gallery and museum on the first floor and a 4000+ book library, video viewing room and registry book room (everyone who has an Honor Stone placed at The Highground has the honoree's name put in the registry



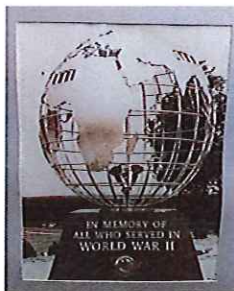
books for future generations to read "the rest of the story") all in the lower level. Currently in the museum are displays from WWI through the present war, it's one room at this time but I have hopes for future expansion.

The Highground is unique in that we are not a *war* memorial, but a *veterans* memorial, manned year round. Our grounds are open to the public 24/7 and our Gift Shop and Learning Center are open 9 - 5 daily, 361 days a year. Another amazing note about The Highground is that we are non-profit and thrive due to the overwhelming support of our donors and volunteers. If you ever are able to visit The Highground, you will be able to feel the healing nature of this place. There aren't words to describe it, it's just such a profound feeling."



June / July -  
Currently showing -  
"U.S. Flag History",  
interesting facts about  
our flag. This exhibit  
will be available to go  
out on loan to schools  
after July.

### Learning Center Exhibits



August features  
"WWII Pacific  
Theater/ Iwo  
Jima"



A special delivery arrived which will be part of the August exhibit in the Learning Center/ Museum, An Imperial Japanese Naval Battle flag taken from a burned out village on Iwo Jima during the fight for the island by combat surgeon James Vetter, who served with the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines Div. in March 1945. See this flag and learn more about WWII.

If there is something you would like to see on exhibit in the future, give us a call, 715-743-4224, email: [learningcenter@thehighground.us](mailto:learningcenter@thehighground.us), or send us a note.

### **Museum News!!**

On display are uniforms, personnel equipment, artifacts, personal mementos, and documents from many different eras. Please visit us to see the founder's vision which is now a reality. The exhibit for September/November is "Highground History" -The museum will focus on Vietnam.

### Korean Reunion 2018

On June 16<sup>th</sup> the Korean Reunion/Education afternoon was held in the Learning Center Museum. After watching a film on the Korean War, everyone in attendance was invited to share their service experiences. Many stories were passed around and those who were not Korean War Veterans were able to learn from these vets. A good time was had by all in attendance.



### **Veterans Day**

#### **2018 Honor Tree Recipients & Sponsors**

Ken Smith – Your Family

To my Hero, Roshier "Bill" Watts Jr. – with love from your lady Pat

Roy R. & Gerald G. Schmidt – Thanks, Donald & Noreen Schmidt

John, Hazel, Belinda & Kyrie Novotny, Brenda Evans & Zoey Johansen  
- John & Hazel

Tommy Collinson – Family & Friends

In Memory of Colleen (Fry) Ristau & All Veterans Spouses  
– Wayne Ristau

Luke Zimmerman – Tom Doan

There is still time to honor your hero for Veterans Day & Christmas!  
Honor Tree prices are \$25 per session or \$100 for the year.

Honor Trees may be reserved by calling The Highground  
@ 715-743-4224 or by sending a \$25 check with a note of the Honor  
Tree's recipients name, who is sponsoring the tree for them.

**Memorial Day, Independence Day, Veterans Day, & Christmas**





**Art meets Business**

Thank you, exhibitors your items are beautiful!!



**1st Annual Veterans Business Expo & Art Exhibit**

June 16th was the first Veterans Art and Business Expo & Exhibit, in an effort to both support our veterans in business and provide assistance to any veteran interested in starting a business. We will be doing this again next year so if you are a veteran that likes to create something or know of another veteran that may be interested, give us a call at 715-743-4224, we would love to sign you up!



**Notices/Information—Bulletin Board**

**Important Resources for Veterans & Their Families**

**Veterans Crisis Line**

1-800-273-8255



**PTSD Assistance**

Tomah VA  
608-372-1651

**VetCenter of LaCrosse**

20 Copeland Ave  
LaCrosse, WI 54603  
608-782-4403  
877-927-8387

**VetCenter of Wausau**

605 S 24th Ave Ste 24  
Wausau, WI 54401  
715-842-1724  
877-927-8387



**Wisconsin Vet Benefits Resource Center**

1-800-947-8387  
wisvets.com

**Vets4Warriors**

Personalized Peer Support 24/7  
vets4warriors.com  
855-838-8255



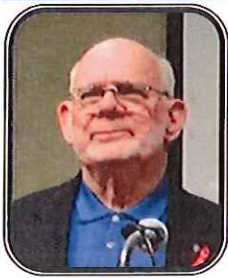
**Tomah VA Residential Combat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) program.**

**The Recovery Village**, an organization with locations across the country dedicated to helping those struggling with substance abuse into recovery. Many men and women who have bravely served our country are sadly left with painful memories they wish they didn't have. In many cases, veterans turn to drugs and alcohol as a way to deal with these thoughts, which is especially common if they have PTSD. Luckily, there are resources available to help. The organization is Addiction Resource, which raises awareness of the dangers of addiction among our fellow Veterans:

<https://addictionresource.com/addiction/veterans-and-substance-abuse/>

*DISCLAIMER: The links and contact information are provided in this [newsletter/ website] as a courtesy to outside organizations whose efforts align with ours, the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project, Inc. ("The Highground"), in supporting veterans; Information provided on this site to support those efforts should not be seen as an endorsement of any organization or their activities by The Highground and/or its staff.*





**CW King,  
Board Chair**

Greetings to all who read this newsletter, I hope you are enjoying summer. The Highground Board has taken the step of purchasing three properties on Ridge Road, making everything from the corner as part of The Highground except for the property on the corner. We bought one because the price was right and one because we need storage space. The third one because it is for sale and it will fit into our long term plans, if the offer is accepted. The Highground Board is looking at the long term plan, and a series of things came together to make it the right time to move forward. It did require some borrowing on our part, but the Board is hopeful that we will be able to raise the money necessary.

It is hard to believe, but come this fall, we will be having the 30th anniversary of the dedication of The Highground. As one who was present at the original dedication, I am truly amazed at the growth we have experienced, all because of the support of time and money from you. The Highground has become a true treasure in Wisconsin, and in the entire country. I am hopeful that it will continue to grow and provide a place for learning and healing for all who come. I want to thank all of you reading for the support, and I hope that you will continue that support looking forward. --CW



**Jon Weiler,  
Executive Director**

Well summer is in full swing and everyone is busy making sure that we get everything in before the weather starts to change. The Highground, with all of our events, is also in full swing. We have been extremely busy with all of the events that we do.

Our annual Freedom Celebration Fireworks had to be cancelled due to weather, however, the day was not totally a wasted day. The Volunteer Picnic, although very hot, was a great time. The outdoor concert was modified into a garage band concert and I think it was a great success. All three performers did an amazing job considering the situation. We hope to get them all back really soon.

The canceling of the fireworks turned out to be a huge blessing for our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. We have been trying to figure out how to end this event and now we have a great opportunity...we are going to cap-off a great day with the fireworks. We have a lot of things planned for that and it will be a day of great family fun. Make sure you plan on bringing all of your family, children, grandkids and friends. Our goal for

this event is to ensure that every Vietnam Veteran within our reach is honored and finally Welcomed Home.

If you can help with the planning and setting up of this very important event, or any of our other events that we are doing throughout the summer and fall, please give us a call or stop in. We could not accomplish any of the things that we do without our volunteers. You all are the heart and soul of who and what this place represents.

2018 is shaping up to be an incredible year for The Highground. As CW mentioned in his article, we have acquired some property and we are actively working on a plan as to how we are going to utilize these properties in the future. We will provide details in upcoming newsletters.

Enjoy the rest of the summer with family and friends and remember to always say "Thank you and Welcome Home" to every Veteran you meet. See you all real soon! -Blessings, Jon



**Find us on Facebook!**  
[www.facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial](http://www.facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial)  
 Website: [www.thehighground.us](http://www.thehighground.us)

**Board of Directors**

- CW King, Chair (Chippewa Falls, WI)
- Beth E. Martin, Vice-Chair (WI Rapids)
- Scott Kissinger, Sec. (WI Rapids, WI)
- Don Quicker, Treasurer (Neillsville, WI)
- Bob Barth (Neillsville, WI)
- Jim Fox (Elk Mound, WI)
- Leonard Frye (Richland Center, WI)
- Al Lamovec (Chippewa Falls, WI)
- Bill Lobeck (Viola, WI)
- Steve Maddox (Chippewa Falls, WI)
- Bob Solberg (Neillsville, WI)
- Gary Weirauch (Neillsville, WI)

**For More Information Contact**

W7031 Ridge Rd.  
 PO Box 457 Phone: 715-743-4224  
 Neillsville, WI 54456 Fax: 715-743-4228  
 Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial](http://www.facebook.com/TheHighgroundVeteransMemorial)  
 Web: [www.thehighground.us](http://www.thehighground.us)  
 On US Hwy 10, 4 miles west of Neillsville, WI  
 Or 30 miles east of Osseo from the junction  
 of I-94 and US Hwy 10

**The Highground Staff**

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| Executive Director    | Jon Weiler      |
| Gift Shop Coordinator | Sabrina Weiler  |
| Event/Volunteer Coord | Theresa Hebert  |
| Donation Coordinator  | Kay Anason      |
| Learning Center Coord | Julie Dallman   |
| Maintenance           | Mike Purgett    |
| Gift Shop             | Mae Bautch      |
| Gift Shop             | Alicia Elgersma |
| Gift Shop             | Rebecca Anason  |
| Gift Shop             | Abby Meshnick   |

We have established an Endowment Fund for the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project, Inc. a/k/a The Highground. We would appreciate your consideration in your future financial planning. Contact us for more information.



## 2018 Memorial Day Honor Ride Raises Over \$12,000!

The Memorial Day Honor Ride Motorcycle Rally was an amazing success, both in the people that it brought together and the money raised for The Highground. At last count, the Honor Ride brought in over \$12,000! We thank ALL those who gave us their time and efforts to make the event happen. Many volunteer hours were spent leading up to the event by the Route leaders and others, to ensure an enjoyable ride. The Neillsville American Legion #73 opened its doors and let the Honor Ride take over their parking lot for the day. Brew Pub Pizza donated and served the riders pizza at The Highground, along with additional food prepared and served by Highground volunteers.

The Honor Ride brought new people to the Highground, which will go a long way in providing healing and education to veterans, their families and all who visit! **Save the Date for the 2019 Memorial Day Honor Ride - Monday, May 27, 2019!**

### Route Leaders

Mark Dawson - Neillsville  
 Bill Flemal - Tomah  
 Bob Frazee - Minneapolis  
 Dean Hommel - Medford  
 Shane Gurney - Eau Claire  
 Russ Wohlrabe - Waupaca  
 Ron Comer & Leon Meidam- Appleton  
 Del Scanlon - Reedsburg



### Thank you to these Police & Sheriff's Depts for Their Assistance with the Memorial Day Honor Ride!

Clark Co. Sheriff's Dept	Neillsville Police Dept
Black River Falls Police Dept	Jackson Co Sheriff's Dept
West Salem Police Dept	Monroe Co. Sheriff's Dept
Tomah Police Dept	Medford Police Dept
Taylor Co. Sheriff's Dept	Wood Co. Sheriff's Dept

### Sponsors:

Central WI Broadcasting WCCN/WPKG  
 Brew Pub Pizza / Lottza Motzza  
 Hansen's IGA  
 Wagner's Lanes  
 American Legion Post #73-Neillsville  
 Damn Yankees Watering Hole  
 United VFW Post #6856 - Milltown  
 Throttle Crue RC  
 Zach's - Chippewa Falls  
 Sport Rider - Altoona, WI  
 Scheels - Eau Claire, WI  
 Marc-On Shooting - Chippewa Falls, WI  
 DAV #53 Waupaca County (Manawa)  
 Bar BK Leatherworks  
 Murphy's Skunk Hill Bar - Freedom, WI  
 Mobil Travel Plaza-3 Squares Restaurant  
 - Waupaca

Spiegelberg Concrete & Implement  
 - Weyauwega  
 Harley Davidson of Appleton, WI  
 Family Roots  
 Heroes Fire-Military-Police - Hortonville  
 Mark's Made4U  
 United Country Real Estate, Lori Verhalen  
 Sport Motors  
 Mulligan's Bar & Grill - Augusta  
 Hardee's  
 Marshfield Fraternal Order of Eagles #624  
 The Chain O' Lakes Bar & Grill-King  
 - Waupaca  
 Doc's Harley Davidson of Shawano County  
 Loose Wheel - Hortonville  
 Gross Motors  
 JBC Screenprinting—Neillsville  
 Prince Building Systems  
 Hardtails Saloon - Hortonville

DAT Bar - Merrill  
 Wishing Well Bar & Grill on A  
 - Center Valley  
 Russell's of Neillsville  
 Chicken Chasers Bar & Grill - Fall Creek  
 Sav-Rite - Neillsville  
 Battlefield Paintball  
 Drescher Oil / BP-Neillsville  
 Kwik Trip - Tomah  
 First Strike Paintball  
 Melrose Express  
 Stanley Correctional SCOPES  
 VFW #1866 - Marshfield  
 VFW #10262 - Plover  
 River Rail Bar & Grill - Shiocton, WI  
 Mobil Station - Taylor, WI  
 Kwik Trip - Wisconsin Rapids  
 Cenex - Fairchild



## Honor, Heal, Remember



The Highground Memorial Day ceremony took place on Monday, May 28th. Several hundred people, including over 300 riders of the 8th Annual Honor Ride Motorcycle Rally, gathered for the afternoon program. At 11:30 volunteers read the over 2,000 names of those from Wisconsin who were KIA from the Korean War to present day. The Highground Memorial Day ceremony began at 3pm with a presentation by the Color Guard of the Loyal American Legion Post #175. Highground Executive Director, Jon Weiler, welcomed everyone to the ceremony and Tom Barten led the crowd in the singing of The National Anthem. The first guest speaker was Joel Brockman, Gold Star Father of Andrew Wallace, who was killed in action in Iraq on September 26, 2005. Joel spoke of Andrew's dedication to serving his country. Major General Donald P. Dunbar, Adjutant General of Wisconsin, was the keynote speaker and helped all remember the service and sacrifices of Wisconsin men and women in combat from the Civil War through today. The program concluded with a rifle salute by the Loyal American Legion Post #175 and "Taps" performed by Judy Zettler.





# 18TH ANNUAL RIDE TO REMEMBER MOTORCYCLE RALLY

## August 17 & 18, 2018

Annual Ride Honoring POW/MIAs/KIAs  
Special Recognition in 2018 to  
Merchant Marine History

### Friday, August 17 **OPENING CEREMONY**

5:30 PM - THE HIGHGROUND VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK  
W7031 Ridge Rd, Neillsville WI

### Saturday, August 18 **RIDE TO REMEMBER**

AMERICAN LEGION #73, 6 BOON BLVD, NEILLSVILLE  
(8:30AM - 11AM: BREAKFAST AVAILABLE AT THE LEGION)  
10 AM - REGISTRATION - GUIDED RIDES BEGIN AT 11 AM

**Sign up for 107.5 Bud Bike 25!**

Silent Auction, 50/50 Raffle, Games and Prizes !! Bike Show (for fun!)  
**3pm Procession into the Highground**  
**Followed by Group Photo, Rally Ceremony & Picnic!**

**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO THE HIGHGROUND  
AND ITS MISSION OF HEALING & EDUCATION  
FOR VETERANS, FAMILIES & ALL WHO VISIT!**

**Registration \$25**

- get patch or rocker, rides, lunch -  
Incentives for getting pledges  
over \$150!

FOR INFO: 715-743-4224  
[www.thehighground.us](http://www.thehighground.us)



*Sponsors as of 4/9/2018 for the 2018 Ride to Remember:*

Waupaca VFW      Office Outfitters      ABATE 4C  
In Memory of Tracey Rueth      In Memory of Bill Watts  
Neillsville American Legion #73







**Central Wisconsin Remembers  
Those Who Served in Vietnam  
"Welcome Home" Parade, Ceremony & Exhibits  
SEPTEMBER 22, 2018**



**30th Anniversary of The Highground & "Fragments"  
The Tribute to those who served in the Vietnam War**

**Big Map of the Vietnam War**  
for Veterans to Sign



**NOON - Yellow Ribbon Parade - Neillsville**

**2PM - Vietnam Veteran's Ceremony**

**Vietnam Era UH-1H Helicopter Landing**

**Rolling Thunder #3 - Missing Man Table Ceremony**

**Speakers      Tours  
Exhibits      Music**



**Continued from page 1**

The 30th Anniversary event will kick off on Friday, September 21st with exhibits and presentations at The Highground. Steve Conto will present his "Final Bridge" continuing project in which he locates and cares for the gravesites of WI Vietnam KIAs. His mission has taken him far away from WI as he continues this meaningful program. Steve will have an exhibit on the "Final Bridge" and he will also have a Vietnam memorial that he has constructed based on the Vietnam Wall in D.C., which shows the names of the Wisconsin KIAs in the places they are listed on the D.C. memorial.

Wisconsin Public Television's "A Face for Every Name" Vietnam KIA display / memorial will be at The Highground's Learning Center. Bryce Kelley, originator of the idea of this display will give a presentation on Friday or Saturday on the history of the exhibit.

There will be other exhibits throughout the weekend including a static display of a UH-1H Huey helicopter trailered by VVA #331; Lao Hmong history; Vietnam War book signings; Vet Center; VA PTSD & Addiction Recovery information; and more. There will also be family events at the Learning Center to make it an enjoyable day for the youngest visitors.

Saturday, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>, will be a day of public recognition of Vietnam Veterans. A Yellow Ribbon Veterans Parade (in vehicles, not walking) will take place through Neillsville, bringing veterans to The Highground Veterans Memorial Park. Veterans and posts interested in joining the parade need to contact Theresa at The Highground to register. It is encouraged that veterans travel together in busses if at all possible, due to the logistics and parking at the park. The parade is scheduled to begin at the Neillsville Fairgrounds at Noon. Military vehicles are welcome to join the parade, just register with The Highground. [events@thehighground.us](mailto:events@thehighground.us) or contact Theresa at 715-743-4224.

Reading of the names of all WI Vietnam War KIAs at 9am Saturday, Sept 22<sup>nd</sup>, volunteers needed.

On Saturday, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>, there will be many things happening at The Highground after the Yellow Ribbon Parade enters:

- ⇒ Fly-in of a UH-1H Huey helicopter at The Highground
- ⇒ Rolling Thunder Chapter 3 Missing Man Table Ceremony
- ⇒ Famous Kokosz Family Annual Highground Raffle (approximately 12 tables of raffle baskets— all proceeds go to support The Highground)
- ⇒ Highground cookout by Kokosz Family
- ⇒ The Highground's Big Map of the Vietnam War for veterans to sign.
- ⇒ LARGE fireworks display at dusk!



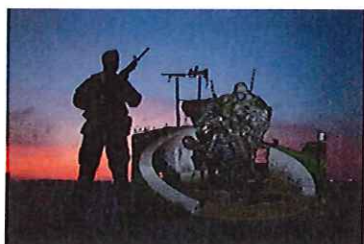
Volunteer teams are needed for:



- ⇒ Set up and tear down of tents, exhibits and ceremony (Friday, Saturday and Sunday)
- ⇒ Car Parking & Golf Cart Driving (Saturday)
- ⇒ Parade planning, line-up, logistics of veteran arrivals (planning team needed now)
- ⇒ Flag Line Welcome at The Highground – secure your post or individual spot now!
- ⇒ Reading of the names of all WI Vietnam War KIAs – 9am Saturday



Veterans' posts and volunteers are needed to do a "night watch" of the outdoor exhibits and honorary watch over "Fragments" the nights of Friday, Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> and Saturday, Sept. 22<sup>nd</sup>.



For information and to sign up for volunteering / night watch, contact Theresa at The Highground [events@thehighground.us](mailto:events@thehighground.us) 715-743-4224.





**Open Letter**

Dear Area Veterans:

I wanted to personally thank you for such a great job in completing The Highground Veteran's Memorial Park. Recently the members of the Third Marine Division held our Wisconsin state chapter meeting there in Neillsville and I took the advantage of visiting the site myself. Keep up the great work! I shall pass the word to visit for sure to all area veterans down here in Illinois.

Semper Fi/Thank you again

Mr. Gene T. Spanos

Illinois Marine Vietnam Combat Veteran



Farm Tech Days in Marshfield, WI  
Exec Director, Jon, spent three days in a tent talking to many people about The Highground and welcoming Veterans. Let us know when Jon can visit YOUR venue



Hardees of Neillsville, Colby and Medford  
**Thank you** Dave for the share nights to raise funds for the fireworks—they will go off in September!

**The 2018 Honor Stone ceremonies are coming to a close! October has a few openings left!**

Honor stones are a tremendous gift of appreciation, honor and respect. All honor stones and the different locations of the granite stones are available for all veterans, non-veterans, organizations and groups.

**Reminder: The public is invited to ALL ceremonies & events! Your support is appreciated.**

**There are six areas/styles of Honor Stones to consider at The Highground:**

**Legacy Stones** (\$475) are placed on our plaza walkways. We are still filling the center walkway with stones.

**Meditation Stones** (\$500) The Meditation Shelter's floor is almost complete. September 15, 2018 will be the last stone placement in the Meditation Shelter.

**Korean Honor Stones** (\$575) The inside walkway wall will be completed June 16, 2018—another "rice paddy" is being designed for upcoming stones in 2019 and beyond—be the first to honor a Korean Vet in the new paddy in 2019.

**Persian Gulf Honor Stones** (\$550) are placed in *The Bootprint* of the Wisconsin Persian Gulf Tribute. A new type of stone will be used with current stones being replaced (at no additional cost to you) with sand-colored granite stones. Your original stones are available for you to take home.

**Military Working Dog Tribute Stones** (\$525) are placed around the Tribute's base or one-line plaques (\$150) are placed upright on the tribute.

**United In Service (UIS) Stones** around the large Wisconsin Map with the counties will be occupied by VVAs, VFWs, DAVs. Chapters, Posts, etc. Please call for more details if interested in this special area.

Call 715-743-4224 Email: [info@thehighground.us](mailto:info@thehighground.us)

**2018 Honoring Our Veterans Raffle**

Size: 41"long 19"deep 21"high



**Hickory Wooden Chest with cedar lining Value \$475.00**  
Donated by the Ryan Larson American Legion Post #65

Size 3' diameter



**Fire Pit Ring Value \$250.00**  
Donated by Bill and Kathy Flemal

Size 20" x 16"



**Eagle on Canvas Value \$125.00**  
Donated by Phil and Carol Cler

Size 33"x18"



**Handcrafted Wooden Coat Rack with Shelf and Eagle Picture Value \$75**  
Donated by Tim and Julie Dallman



**Tickets: \$2 each, 6 for \$10, 12 for \$20**

**Drawing will be November 11, 2018 after the Veterans Day Ceremony**



## Dedication of the Military Working Dog Tribute Saturday, June 2, 2018



A day to enjoy veterans, working dogs, dog handlers and celebrate the hard work of a committee that learned to interview sculptors, raise funds, dig earth, lay pavers and more to bring us to this celebration. After many Quilts of Valor were presented to Military Dog Handlers and the landscaping was completed (sod arriving three days prior) the tribute was ready to be unveiled to many, many visitors.

Thank you Veterans Posts from Bloomer, WI of American Legion #295, AMVETS #6440 and VFW #6175. Thank you speakers Mike Voorhees, David Backstrom, Mary Backstrom, Mike Olson, Al Laughlin, Steve Maddox, Trooper David McCarthy & K9 Capo (speaker and demonstrators).

"That's my dog," stated a Vietnam veteran when he heard his dog's name being called as part of the KIA dogs names. "This is the first time I have ever felt closure for me AND my dog."

It was a time when dog handlers met many other dog handlers; Mike Voorhees met Erling Anderson's widow for the first time during the ceremony. Mike and Erling were, at different times, both handlers of the MWD, Satan 4A16, Mike returned home, Erling was KIA. The MWD tribute was inspired by their story.

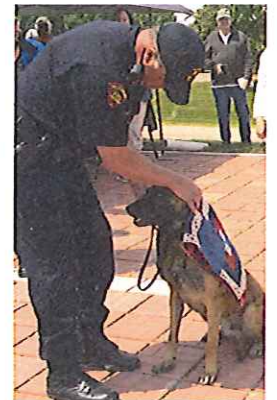


### This is read at each military canine's Memorial Service

#### GUARDIANS OF THE NIGHT

Trust in me my friend, for I am your comrade.  
I will protect you with my last breath  
when all others have left you.  
The loneliness of night closes in,  
I will be at your side.  
Together we will conquer  
all obstacles and search out  
those who might harm others.  
All I ask of you is compassion  
and the caring touch of your hands.  
It is for you that I will unselfishly give my life.  
Although our days together may be  
marked by the passing of seasons,  
I know that each day at your side is my reward.  
My days are measured by your footsteps.  
I anticipate at every opening of the door.  
You are the voice of caring when I am ill.  
The voice of authority when I am wrong.  
Together we shall experience a bond  
only others like us will understand.  
Outsiders see us with envy.  
I will quietly listen and pass no judgment,  
nor repeat your spoken word.  
I will remain silent and ever loyal.  
When our time is done, you move on in the world.  
Remember me with kindness and that nothing  
passed among us undetected.  
If we should meet again on another street,  
I will gladly take up your fight.  
I am a Military Working Dog.  
We are the guardians of the night.

(Author Unknown)



Thank you  
Sponsors of  
the Dedication  
Ceremony:

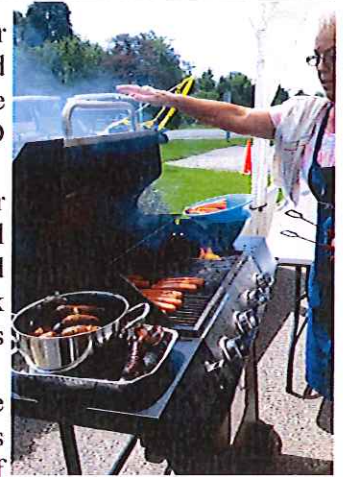
**TRAVEL**  
**WISCONSIN**  
**.COM**  
**SAV-RITE**  
**BUILDING CENTER**





An extraordinary number of volunteers (117 at last count!) attended The Highground Volunteer Appreciation Picnic on Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup>. The temperature was sweltering outside, but that did not stop the volunteers from enjoying each other's company, the delicious food prepared by Bonnie Henchen, many homemade desserts and the Crazy Auction...held inside the AIR CONDITIONED Learning Center!

As part of the get-together, The Highground staff presented Highground volunteer awards for volunteers who logged over 50 volunteer hours throughout 2017 at the Highground & Presidential Volunteer Service Awards for those who volunteered over 100 hours. Sixty-three volunteers had logged between 50 and 500 volunteer hours in 2017. Ike Rebout, Jess Rebout, Don Quicker, Kirk Rodman and Nancy Rodman each had over 500 hours, but had done SO MANY volunteer hours daily for much of 2017, that the hours would be nearly impossible to count!



Ken and Wanda Jennings were selected by The Highground staff as the 2017 Highground Volunteers of the Year. Ken and Wanda not only lend us their 10 x 20 tent several times each year, but they help on an almost weekly basis in many diverse areas. They are the first people that are called when tents need to be set up for an event; when work needs to be done on the Korean Tribute; trees need to be trimmed or cut down; large jobs need to be done at a moment's notice; repair work on landscaping burlap, tarps, tents; painting; whatever work is required during our Spring and Fall Work Weeks; they are

long-time Porch Greeters; car parkers and shuttle drivers during events and many, many other things! (Mike has them on his speed dial!)

Many volunteers brought non-perishable items to the picnic to be donated to the Clark Co. Dept of Aging and also items to be used for the picnic's Crazy Auction. The total from the Crazy Auction was over \$1,600! Half of the proceeds from the Crazy Auction will also be donated to the Dept of Aging.

2017 and the early part of this year had many challenges for The Highground, but the volunteers with their amazing talents and hard work, made miracles happen and projects were seen through to completion. The work and public service that the volunteers do at the park is *priceless*. Indeed, it is almost certain that lives have been changed for the better and most likely saved because of the personal touch, porch greeting and the maintenance that keeps The Highground a healing place for the thousands of veterans that visit.



**Thank you Mike Parrott** of Magadance - Parrott Insurance from Eau Claire for a \$400 donation towards the food for the Volunteer Picnic.  
**Everyone enjoyed it!!**





# THE HIGHGROUND'S FREEDOM CELEBRATION DAY!!!

On Saturday, June 30<sup>th</sup>, Mother Nature tried to scorch us out during the Volunteer Picnic at 1pm and she failed. She tried to storm us out during the concerts at 5pm and she almost won...however, our three wonderful music acts quickly decided that the show must go on and played great music in the garage. It was a lot of fun for both the performers and the crowd. A concert to remember! Thank you, Keith Pulvermacher; the Promise Quartet; and Red Higgins & Freedom Train. We can't wait to see each of these groups here again!



Thank you, Troy Buddenhagen and crew for the WWII Living History. This year was a US 1st. Infantry Division display of D-Day June 6th, 1944 gear, weapons and tents.



The fireworks display was cancelled, so Mother Nature *DID* have the last laugh for that day. The fireworks will become a very welcome and appropriate addition to The Highground 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Vietnam Welcome Home on Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mark your calendars and bring your lawn chairs for that evening!

## Independence Day — July 4, 2018

A memorable day for all who came to honor our country's birthdate. Thank you to: Colby VFW #2227 for the presentation of colors; Pastor Doug Bjerke for the invocation; and Michael Modawell, Fort McCoy, the guest speaker.

A warm day kept all of us in the shade of the trees.



**Helicopter & Military Vehicle Expo  
May 19, 2018**



Thank you, veterans for bringing your vehicles and allowing visitors to explore them.





# Gift Shop

Open all year round:

Monday—Sunday

9:00am—5:00pm

Visit our website at

[www.thehighground.us](http://www.thehighground.us)

Call us for help in ordering or shipping at

715-743-4224



**Sale**  
Camp Mugs \$11.21

Men's, Women's, and Children's shirts Available in many different sizes



**Sale**  
Belt Buckles \$11.21



**Sale**  
USA Made Ornaments \$21.95



Decorative Art Book Boxes  
10.25" X 6.5" X 1.75"  
8.5" X 5.5" X 1"  
\$12.95 - \$17.95

Variety of Willow Tree Designs



**Sale**  
Music Boxes  
\$17.95 - \$19.95



**Sale**  
Glass Globes different Sizes and shapes  
\$18.41 - \$21.48

Outdoor Balancers \$36.95





**Wish Lists — Donations Needed—Can you help?**

Thank you to everyone who views our list and considers a donation to help The Highground. Without **you** we couldn't do all we do!

**30th Anniversary Needs:**

- Funds for volunteer food
- Advertising
- Funds for in-house printing costs
- Tent rental funds

**URGENT Immediate Needs:**

- Gas Powered Pressure Washer: *Thanks!!*
- Light box for photography: \$150
- Does your work place offer grants or matching funds?  
Please call to let us know!
- Funds for re-usable signs for Event Sandwich Boards: \$200
- Funds to obtain ribbon for Yellow Ribbon Campaign
- 1 or 2 more used/new 4 or 6 passenger golf carts for visitors:
- The Highground Education Days: \$800
- Compact Utility Tractor: \$25,000 (*thanks for \$200 so far*)
- Endowment Fund Donors
- Memorials: Honor your loved ones
- Persian Gulf Tribute Jersey Barriers: 7 more @ \$4000/each
- Highway road sign needs solar charger or digital sign: \$2600

**Learning Center wish list**

- Sony HDR-CX405/B Full HD 60p Camcorder w/tri-pod: \$260
- 6 Gallons interior paint: *Thanks*

Thanks to generous donors, The Highground is able to continue its mission of healing and education by offering books to those veterans and families that feel they are dealing with PTSD. With a handshake & a promise, we would like to help you take a further step towards understanding and healing. **Please visit us.**



**Check out the website!!**  
Updated with new features.

Want to be part of the new email hotline? —on the home page, enter your email and you will get updates on Highground happenings right in your inbox. (We will not share your email address or information.)

Click the Donate button on the top by the logo and see all the ways to do just that—donate!

[Website](#)

[E-mail](#)

**Friends of The Highground**

The Highground is a grass-roots, non-profit, 501(c)3 organization that does not receive any ongoing federal or state funding. We have a very small operating budget and only exist because of the hearts and hands of thousands of volunteers and contributors who continue to give generously of their time, talents and personal/financial resources.

Please accept my donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_.  
I would like the gift to be used for:

\_\_\_\_\_ And/or  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter subscription: \$25  
 \_\_\_\_\_ The Highground, W7031 Ridge Rd,  
 Neillsville, WI 54456 715-743-4224 July 2018

**Please send me information about:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Upcoming Events & Fundraising Calendar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Honor Stones on The Highground
- \_\_\_\_\_ Add someone to the newsletter mailing list  
(please send name and address of whom you would like to give a gift subscription)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Endowment Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ Booking information for “My War” exhibit or  
“Remembering Our Fallen” exhibit
- \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer opportunities on site
- \_\_\_\_\_ Please add me to the Work Week mailings  
(I am available to help)
- \_\_\_\_\_ I would like your newsletter emailed

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Questions or Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thanks!**

**Rhapsody in Olive Drab by Steve Maddox**

“Rhapsody In Olive Drab” Writer/Poet/Vietnam Veteran Steve Maddox wrote “Reveille” and “Taps”, the two books which make up the “Rhapsody” collection. Steve asks for a minimum donation of \$26 payable to The Highground Veterans Memorial for BOTH books. All contributions are earmarked to help support The Highground’s PTSD program.

Your support is greatly appreciated. Enjoy the poetry. Steve is available to read or do a book-signing event at YOUR venue. Meet the poet by inviting him to your town.

“Make a meaningful contribution to a very worthwhile cause and enjoy your books!”



Volume 1

Volume 2



# The Highground

W7031 Ridge Rd.  
Neillsville, WI 54456



**Ken & Wanda Jennings  
2017 Volunteers of the Year**

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Eau Claire, WI  
PERMIT No. 366

**LET THEM NOT GO IN SILENCE**

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park staff, visitors, and all supporters remember and honor all who have served, in times of combat and in times of peace. All veterans of every era, at one point in their life, have written a blank check made payable to "The United States of America," for an amount up to and including their life.

As we recognize those among us who are veterans, we recognize that they and their families have in many different ways been affected by their service. Many positive qualities and sometimes hardships result from signing that blank check. Over 26,000 Wisconsin men and women have given their lives in service to our country. As a tangible reminder of ALL of them, we will remember a selection of names that will change for each future ceremony and newsletter. (This is not a list of ALL that have given their lives in these combat areas.)

Let us remember and honor those who perished during their service and let them not go in silence.

We ring the replica liberty bell in their honor at each ceremony. We hope you will ring it every time you are here.

<b>(WWII)</b>	Kenneth J Whalen	James F Hackett Jr	Randolph L Larson	Benjamin C Edinger	Grant A Dampier
Urban H Klister	Elwin I Whaley	Peter O Hajman	Peter G Lechnir	Ryan J Cantafio	Jamie Jaenke
Edward S Klopotic	Rudolph A White	Michael A Harvey	Michael T Ledebur	Brent T Vroman	Patrick L Lybert
Joseph P Klubertanz	Owen C Wiederhold	Patrick J Hayes	Donald H Lederhaus	Richard D Warner	Stephen Castner
Albert J Kogoske	Theodore W Wieseke	Carl W Heiden		Todd D Olson	Ryan D Jopek
Ernest F Kollath	Douglas C Wilson	Duane A Helmick	<b>Desert Storm, Iraq, Afghan—Present Day)</b>	Travis M Wichlasz	Adam P Servais
Carl L Kottke	Leroy H Winans	Joseph J Hernandez Jr	Rachel K Bosveld	Donald W Eacho	Shaun A Novak
Norman C Kreuter	Howard S Wirth	Donald A Hierlmeier	Warren S Hansen	Andrew L Bossert	Kenneth M Cross
Kenneth E Kroening	Bruce J Woda	Alfred J Holtz Jr	Jeremy L Wolfe	Mark A Maida	Merideth Howard
Lester F Krumpus	Siegfred A Wolf	Ruben L Horton	Eugene A Uhl III	Joshua M Scott	Luke J Zimmerman
Ransom Kuchenbecker	Donald C Wolff	Timothy L Hren	Christopher J Splinter	Kyle M Hemauer	Rhett W Schiller
<b>(Korea)</b>	<b>(Vietnam)</b>	Larry S Jensen	Robert J Cook	Eric J Poelman	Jesse D Tillery
Richard Dodmead	David B Fitzgerald	Randolph L Johnson	Nichole M Frye	John J Mattek Jr	Kevin M Kryst
Dillon E Warthan	Roger J Flynn	Ross A Johnson Jr	Bert E Hoyer	Charles A Kaufman	Evan A Bixler
Melvin G Washburn	Thomas H Foley	Timothy H Johnson	John F Kurth	John O Tollefson	Joshua M Schmitz
Leroy Waskiewicz	Joseph P Foran	Randall W Kelpine	Sean M Schneider	Ben D Jansky	Matthew T Grimm
Clifton N Watson	Paul R Frazier	James A Ketterer	Jesse L Thiry	Chad J Simon	Andrew G Matus
Albert G Weber	William Fuchs Jr	Patrick J Kihl	Ryan M Jerabek	Trevor J Diesing	Jon B St John II
Raymond H Weiland	Larry F Geiger	Norman C Kissinger	Michelle M Witmer	Ryan J Nass	Harry H Timberman
Clarence H Weiss	Randall H Geis	Kenneth T Kleppin	Michael A McGlothlin	Michael J Wendling	Robert J Basham
Jack Weister	Francis G Gercz Jr	Mark E Klever	Charles A Kiser	Andrew P Wallace	Nicholas E Riehl
Wilbert W Wendricks	James A Gerou	Nick Kokalis	Stephen G Martin	Matthew R Kading	Jesse B Albrecht
Roman L Weninger	Alexander Giejc	Douglas L Kramer	Adrian V Soltau	Benjamin A Smith	Tyler J Kritz
Frank J Wenzel	Michael E Giese	John W Kreckel	Andrew Halverson	Anthony Gaunky	Patrick L Wade
Rodney D Wenzel	Ricky M Gilbertson	Eugene R Kritz	Daniel R Wyatt	Andy A Stevens	Matthew R Zindars
Alan R Werndl	Frank Gomez	Raymond H Krug Jr	Shane K O'Donnell	Adam J Van Alstine	Alun R Howells
Melvin P Wester	Wilfredo L Gonzalez	Leo F Krumbine	Robert P Warns II	Nicholas R Anderson	Derek A Dobogai
William R Westwood	Glenn R Gradecki	William R Kuczewski	Todd R Cornell	Eric A Palmisano	Rachael Hugo
Raymond Wewason	Donald L Greiger	Sidney A Kurz	Brian P Prening	Nathan J Vacho	Anthony R
Delbert J Whalen	Michael A Gruber	Michael W Langer	Isaiah R Hunt	Eric D Clark	Wasielowski