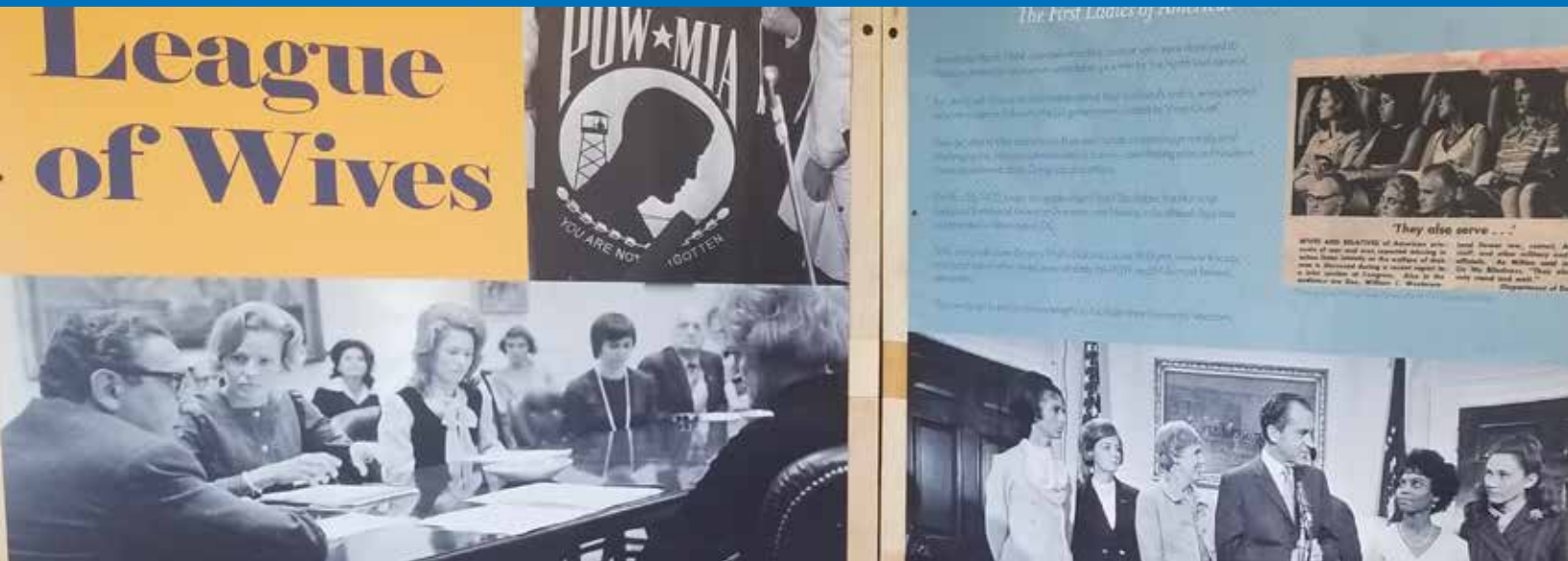


# The Highground NEWSLETTER

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

June 2021



## The Highground Presents the "League of Wives" Exhibit

The "League of Wives" exhibit, on loan from the Robert J. Dole Institute – University of Kansas, is an amazing study of how the wives of American POWs in the Vietnam War banded together to bring their husbands home, defying the U.S. government and cultural norms along the way; coalescing the nation behind them in their mission. The exhibit will be at The Highground until Sept 28th and includes many original items from the women's lives and their courageous story. The exhibit was curated by Heath Hardage Lee, the author of "The League of Wives – the Untold Story of the Women who Took on the U.S. Government to Bring Their Husbands Home".

ARTICLE CONT. PAGE 6



## The Highground Rising

*Expanding the Promise*

HONOR, EDUCATE AND HEAL

For more information about the campaign, turn to pages 8-9.

## Helping to lay the foundation

### DIVISION SOCIETY

**\$250,000-\$499,999**

### Marguerite Listeman Foundation

### REGIMENT SOCIETY

**\$100,000-\$249,999**

### Wuethrich Foundation

**Contributors: Thank you for a gift to remember lost loved ones or to honor those still with us.**

### IN MEMORY OF

George Asher  
Marvin Borths  
Lenore F Boulden  
James Catlin  
Phil Cler  
Jack Csuy  
Gary Daines  
Russ Edlund  
John D Endsley  
Ted Fetting  
CSM Raymond Franecki

Jerome Gallenberg  
Gerald "Jerry" Galston  
Dale M Heiman  
Carl Homann (WI Nat'l Guard)  
Peter A Jecovicus  
Bill Kuhn (Vietnam Vet)  
Willett S. Lehner  
Tom Lletz  
Irv Marg  
Mr. Martin (Korean Vet)  
Theodore Meyer  
Gregory Michelkemp

Roger Millard (Navy)  
Richard Poehnelt  
Hubert "Snick" Quicker, Jr.  
Craig Raatz  
Lyell Sandford Jr.  
Mel Shea  
Marjorie Short  
David Smukowski  
Jack Swender  
Bud Ward  
Ken Weis  
James Yost

Sgt. Wayne L Zywicki  
Gladys & C.L. O'Kelly's  
Wedding Anniversary 7/18  
Herman Preuss

### IN HONOR OF

Citizens State Bank of Loyal  
Randy Hummer's Birthday  
Robin Warden's Birthday  
Marine Corps Veteran  
Harold Schmitt's 80th Birthday

# FRIENDS DINNER RECAP



This is the 17th year The Highground has formally recognized the supporters who reached the \$1,000 minimum donation. Over 130 Highground donors joined us for the annual “Friends of The Highground” dinner held on March 13, 2021, at Castle Hill Supper Club near Merrilan, Wisconsin. Donors and board members from all around Wisconsin and Illinois were able to attend. Given the financial and emotional challenges of 2020, these supporters and many others helped The Highground through a very difficult year. This annual dinner is a way of thanking those generous donors who support The Highground and Camp Victory

through cumulative annual donations in excess of \$1,000. Attendees enjoyed a wonderful meal, camaraderie and an entertaining program emceed by Chris Pettis, Executive Director. Board members were in attendance to thank the donors as each donor was presented with a certificate depicting the National Native American Vietnam Veterans Memorial. 2020 was the 25th anniversary of the memorial. Three of our supporters have received all 17 plaques—**Thank you Central WI Broadcasting-WCCN/WPKG, Donald Quicker and Dr. John and Rebecca Scaletta**. They have not missed a single year of support to The Highground since this recognition was implemented.

***From the 2020 donor calculations, the following received recognition for their continued support of The Highground and its mission. Thank you for your dedicated support.***

**17th Year Recognition:** Central WI Broadcasting, Don Quicker, Dr. John & Rebecca Scaletta **16th Year Recognition:** Joan Jungwirth **15th Year Recognition:** Randy Meyer, Jerry Simon, Jerry & Alice Smith **14th Year Recognition:** Joan Cervenka, Marjorie Short **13th Year Recognition:** Marguerite Listeman Foundation, Walter Tollefson, Tom & Anita Werthman **12th Year Recognition:** City of Neillsville, Jim & Susan Fox, Jakel Plumbing, Heating & Electrical, Gary Karczewski, Mar-Lin VFW Post #10203 **11th Year Recognition:** Jim Braatz, Hardee's Cougar Enterprise, Michael & Joyce Huebsch, CW & Mary Ann King, Wes Waterman **10th Year Recognition:** Dennis & Sharon Herzberg, Joyce Hoffman, Steve & Karen Maddox, Dave Sharretts, Lucinda Zimmer **9th Year Recognition:** Citizens State Bank of Loyal, Michael & Kathy Gleisner, Skip & Deb Klabon, Mike Olson, Steve Swanson, Gary & Kay Weirauch **8th Year Recognition:** Robert & Gloria Beyer, Curt Braatz, James Feneli, Bill & Kathy Flemal, Kathy & Bernie Heit, Verla Lysy, Cole Peterson, Joel & Marla Raine-BP Drescher Oil **7th Year Recognition:** Michele Benson, Chilson Automotive Group, Julie Diesing, Kimberly Knudsen, Paul Kokosz, Nick & Janet Lesar **6th Year Recognition:** Lee & Kathy Anderson, John Blank, Roy & Ginny Franz, Bonnie Hennen, Lorraine Short **5th Year Recognition:** Fred & Kim Berg, George & Betty Blauvelt, Bohl Associates, Inc., The Cummins Foundation, Mark & Lori Dawson, Joel & Heidi Hazzard, Kokosz Family, Jim Ottman, Stanley Correctional Institute (SCORE) **4th Year Recognition:** Vernon & Gwendolyn Beloit, Jay Froh, Al & Kay Lamovec, Neillsville Dept of Public Works, Duane Schwab **3rd Year Recognition:** Andrew & Renee Bernard, Combat Parts/Dale Hammel, Scott & Lori Daentl, Larry & Pat Dessner, Kathy Houzner, John & Donna Koutre, Julie McNealy, Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT), Bonnie Wiater **2nd Year Recognition:** Dan & Susan Berger, James & Diana Buechner, Linda Czapinski, Eagle Tire Center/Russell & Nancy Young, Forward Bank, Ray & Pat Maertens, Michael W Stinson Nam Knights-Tundra Chapter, Ralph & Peg Ottum, James Rice, Harold Schmitt, Terri Stott, VFW Dr Mueller Post #10452, Wisconsin Humanities **1st Year Recognition:** Kenneth Baillargeon, Diane Becker, Donald Bonack, BS of Wisconsin, LLC, Chili Implement Co, Inc., Mark & Angela Delvecchio, Mike & Marilyn Derpinghaus, Ernest Erickson, Faber Electric/ Bob Faber, Kristin Frame, Guy Metals, Marjorie Hansen, Joseph & Connie Havlovick, Pamela Ironside, Kenneth Kasper, Jim Kitchen, Kuhl Equipment, LLC, Loopy's Inc./William Kleich, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Lynn Brothers Farm, Lunda Foundation, Inc., Master Carts, LLC, Janice Mayer, Randy Mess, Tiffany Miller, Graphic Designs/Susie & Jay Nolet, Michael Platt, Tom & Mary Randall, Robert Schueller Family, Cynthia Schultz, Robert Seidl, Carol Shea, Trees from Home, Inc./ Julie Stuhlmacher, Michael R. Swansby, Veterans Center of Menomonie/Terry Miland, VFW Oregon-Brooklyn Memorial Post #10272, VFW Auxiliary Post #8478, VFW Post #8478, Vortex Optics/Ken Calhun, Kenneth Walz, Weber's Farm Store/Ken & Joellen Heiman, Phil Wilder, Wisconsin Lift Truck, Corp., Ned Zuelsdorff

# EVENT UPDATES

For the most current information, be sure to visit our website at [thehighground.us](http://thehighground.us). The Park is open 24/7/365 and the Gift Shop and Museum are open 10am-5pm daily during the summer.

## Basket Babes Raffle & Lunch JUNE 12

**WINNER WINNER** – Take a chance or two at 70+ raffle baskets and a grand prize with all proceeds supporting The Highground and Camp Victory. Come on out to The Highground hungry for hotdogs and walking tacos. *Thank you sponsors: Target, Walmart, Pick 'N Save, Woodfield Inn & Suites, Lumberyard Bar & Grill, Marshfield Country Club, Sam's Club, Gordons Food Services.*

## Fireworks at dusk JUNE 26

Don't miss The Highground's patriotic fireworks display celebrating the United States of America's Independence Day. Bring your blanket or chairs and watch the sky light up!

## 37th Annual Heroes Ride JULY 30 – AUG 1

Join one of 5 different bicycle routes for the 2-3 day ride that supports our Veterans and our mission. Join a ride or help us welcome riders to the Park on August 1 at 11:30 with a short ceremony and lunch. For questions or more information, email Bonnie at [events@thehighground.us](mailto:events@thehighground.us) or call 715-743-4224.

## 21st Annual Ride to Remember AUG 21

Kicking off at 9am at the American Legion Post #73 in Neillsville, motorcyclists will come together to enjoy guided rides, concessions, raffles and more. A ceremony will follow the 3pm procession to The Highground. Visit [thehighground.us/events/21st-annual-ride-to-remember](http://thehighground.us/events/21st-annual-ride-to-remember) for more information.

## 2021 International Day of Peace SEPT 21

The Highground will recognize the International Day of Peace on September 21 at the Dove Mound tribute. We invite poets and musicians who would like to participate to contact us now. Call Theresa at 715-743-5224 or email [museum@thehighground.us](mailto:museum@thehighground.us).

## 2021 Calendar of Events

**JAN 31** 8th Annual Winter Bowl

**APR or MAY** Maggie Mae Benefit Concert **CANCELED**

**MAY 12–15** Spring Work Week

**MAY 22** Legacy Stone Ceremonies; Vietnam Reunion; Spring Bake Sale

**MAY 31** The Honor Ride; Memorial Day Ceremony; "Lost 74" Dedication

**JUNE 5** Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

**JUNE 12** Korean and Legacy Stone Ceremonies; Korean War Reunion

**JUNE 26** Freedom Celebration Fireworks at Dusk

**JULY 9–11** 5th Annual Men's Veterans Retreat

**JULY 17** Persian Gulf and Legacy Stone Ceremonies

**JULY 30–Aug 1** 37th Annual Heroes Ride Bike Tour (ceremony Aug 1)

**JULY 31** Legacy Stone Ceremonies

**AUG 20–21** Veterans Freedom Fest **CANCELED**

**AUG 21** 21st Annual Ride to Remember™ Motorcycle Ride & Rally

**SEPT 10–12** 3rd Annual Women's Veterans Retreat

**SEPT 18** Military Working Dog and Legacy Stone Ceremonies

**SEPT 21** The Highground International Day of Peace Event

**OCT 2** Legacy Stone Ceremonies; Fall Bake Sale

**OCT 5–8** The Highground Education Days

**OCT 9** Bowling for The Highground

**OCT 15–16** Fall Cleanup Days

**NOV 11** Veterans Day Ceremony; Honoring Our Veterans Raffle Drawing

**NOV 15, 2021–MAR 1, 2022** The Highground Holiday Lights

**NOV 30** Season of Giving – Pledge your support for The Highground

**DEC 4** The Highground Christmas Concert **TENTATIVE**

**DEC 18** Patriotic Quilt Raffle Drawing

## Museum Exhibits

**FEB 6** Opening of "WWI" Museum Exhibit (exhibit: 2/6–3/29)

**APR 3** Opening of "POW/MIA & Memorial Day" Exhibit (exhibit: 4/3–7/15)

**JUL 24** Opening of "PTSD" Exhibit (7/24–9/28)

**OCT 2** Opening of "Women in the Military" Exhibit (10/2–11/30)

**DEC 4** Opening of "Pacific Theater WWII" Exhibit (12/4–2/1/22)

**DEC 1–31** Patriotic Quilt Display

*Note: All events, dates and times are subject to change*

Stay tuned for additional events at The Museum and Camp Victory. For timely updates, visit our website and sign up for our email newsletter!

For information about events and sponsorship opportunities, please call Bonnie at 715-743-4224 or send an email to [events@thehighground.us](mailto:events@thehighground.us)

To volunteer, visit [thehighground.us/about-us/get-involved](http://thehighground.us/about-us/get-involved)



# 2021 SPRING WORK WEEK RECAP

---

A huge thank you to everyone who came out to help! A lot was accomplished by many people who are professionals, or at least, worked liked it. The skid steers that were brought in by **Wes Waterman** and **Don Anibas** saved many backs, I'm sure. Thank you both. **Many thanks to our lunch sponsors: Hardee's, Subway, Pizza Hut, Schmitt's on Main, BP/Drescher Oil.** The food was great!

The staff enjoyed working with everyone during work week. If you have any suggestions for the future, please send them to Randy by email to [ops@thehighground.us](mailto:ops@thehighground.us).

## ***A note from Randy Buchholz, Operations Manager:***

*The Highground is an exceptional place to visit and I have been blessed to be able to be a part of this organization. I find working with Veterans here a rewarding experience. My aim is to do the very best I can to keep The Highground a premier, manned memorial park. I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and sharing some stories about your experiences.*



# 2021 SPRING INTO THE ARTS RECAP

---

We are very happy to report that our first-time participation in the Clark County Spring Into the Arts annual event was a success! During the weekend of April 24 and 25, The Highground welcomed a lot of visitors to enjoy the craftsmanship and purchase the products of Veteran artists. Veteran Ashley Spangberg, owner of Patriot Beads and Brass, and Veteran Merle Retzlaff, creator of very unique birdhouses, displayed their works and shared the weekend with staff, volunteers and guests. Dave Petenpol and his wife displayed hand-carved and pieced wooden bowls and quilted crafts and explained how to create them. Poetry by Steve Maddox and art prints by Tom Miller, both Vietnam Veterans, were also on display for purchase.

A very special part of The Highground's Spring Into the Arts weekend were the "Try It" bags of art supplies and instructions that were given out. Art is a very important tool that can help bring mental satisfaction and has been proven successful in helping Veterans and non-veterans who are dealing with PTSD to find focus and healing. These bags contained art supplies to get individuals started in charcoal drawing, watercolor, adult coloring books and Zentangle. They were free for Veterans and non-veterans were asked to give a small donation. Guided Tours of The Highground were given to guests by volunteer tour guides and food and beverages were available for all. Exciting bonus: The event drew many new visitors to The Highground! We will continue to support Veteran artists and craftspeople and look forward to another event.

**\$40**  
gift is all it takes

The Highground Newsletter is sent to over 18,000 households four times a year. If half of all households would donate \$40, we would be able to fund so many of the Park improvements that are identified every year! Will you help us continue the mission by pledging \$40?

# 2021 HONOR STONE PLACEMENTS

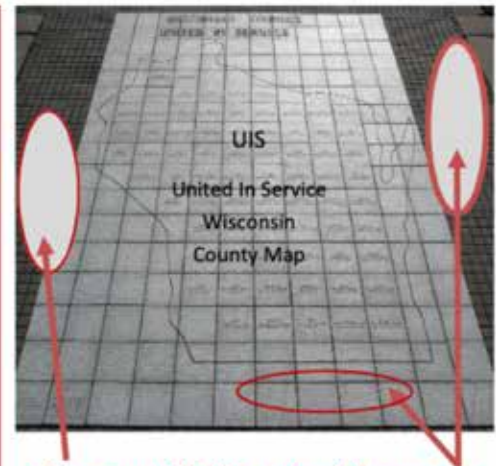
**The 2021 Honor Stone Season started with a frenzy—thank you!** The Plaza is a wonderful place to be able to visit with friends and family as you honor your loved ones. Or, have that special Veteran organization stand up to support Veterans with a stone around the United In Service Wisconsin Map. The United In Service tribute is meant to remind all of us how important our communities and families are when our Veterans come home. Our first ceremonies on May 22 were full in the morning and afternoon with many smiling faces and stories to tell. Please visit the Museum to view the Registry Books and read the “rest of the story”. In June, there will be the annual Korean Honor Stone ceremony and another Legacy stone ceremony. Both are full and a surprise to some. We have room available for the July 17 Persian Gulf stones in the bootprint, with applications due now. There are also plenty of openings for the September Military Working Dog honor stones and one-liners. Please consider honoring our four-legged Veterans with their name in granite along with their handler. To wrap up the 2021 Legacy Honor stone ceremonies, September 18 at 2pm and October 2 at 11am or 2pm are still available. Let us know which works best for you. Contact Kay at [donations@thehighground.us](mailto:donations@thehighground.us) for more details or visit our website at [thehighground.us](http://thehighground.us) to submit your application online.

Veterans come to The Highground alone or with their families and friends. They laugh, cry, and sometimes curse. They stand on the point and take long, slow breaths, allowing the door on their pain to open just a little bit. They leave some of the bitterness behind and take with them a small seed of hope.

This tribute is meant to remind all of us how important our communities and families are when our veterans come home. We are all united because the human cost of war is shared by everyone.

The stones are 12” by 12” by 2”, cut from granite, and allow for three (3) engraved lines of twenty (20) spaces each. Wording is chosen by the organization that best describes their involvement with their veterans.

*Anyone can step forward to support a group.*



**Stones available around the map.**

## Thank you to the sponsors of the 11th Annual Honor Ride on Memorial Day!



*Munson Bridge Winery, Bar BK Leatherworks,  
In Memory of Charles Wengen & Wilbur McKeegan*



# REMEMBERING OUR POW/MIAs—FEATURING “THE LEAGUE OF WIVES” EXHIBIT

(Currently on display)

**This exhibition is composed of several exhibits all tied into different facets of our nation’s POW/MIA experience.**

These exhibits honor those who were POW/MIAs, the families that helped bring them home, and the families still waiting for closure. The exhibition officially opened to the public on May 1 with a 1pm outdoor gathering at the Dove Effigy Mound tribute, which was created to remember our POW/MIAs. **Betty Sitler, whose late husband Harold “Red” Sitler was a POW during the Korean War for 1,009 days, was our honored guest speaker.** Betty told of Red’s experiences and how he returned home and continued to be a strong patriot for the rest of his life. Red, who was among those POWs known as “Tiger Survivors” in Korea, being under the control of a particularly cruel North Korean major, nicknamed “Tiger”, is among the several POW/MIAs who have their stories told in The Highground Museum.



**The “League of Wives” exhibit** on loan from the Robert J. Dole Institute – University of Kansas, is an amazing study of how the wives of American POWs in the Vietnam War banded together to bring their husbands home, defying the U.S. government and cultural norms along the way; coalescing the nation behind them in their mission. The exhibit (*highlighted on page 1*), will be at The Highground until September 28 and includes many original items from the women’s lives and their courageous story. The exhibit was curated by Heath Hardage Lee, the author of “The League of Wives – the Untold Story of the Women who Took on the U.S. Government to Bring Their Husbands Home”. It has drawn visitors to The Highground to see it and is truly one of the most unique and exciting exhibits that we have hosted! **Thank you to Gary and Rita Karcewski for arranging the transportation of the exhibit from the Robert J Dole Institute.**

“Wisconsin Remembers – A Face for Every Name” banner exhibit, on loan from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, remembers those from Wisconsin that were killed in action or missing in action during the Vietnam War. Documented by county, the names are paired with their photograph showing the personal young lives that were lost. The Highground Museum has created an exhibit of the history of the American POW experience from WWII - the Vietnam War, including a very special display of the Wisconsin men who still remain MIA from the Vietnam War. Several families of those still missing in action took part in creating this exhibit. **Volunteers Barb Shain and Walt Wesenberg created a replica POW bamboo cage based on measurements and description told by American POWs that were housed in such cages during the Vietnam War.** This is on display along with the personal stories of some of these men.

At The Highground until June is a unique banner display, from the Reedsburg Area Historical Society, telling the tale of the many WWII POW camps that were in Wisconsin! This almost forgotten part of Wisconsin history is an intriguing look at how German and Japanese prisoners were housed in POW camps around the state. Visitors will learn where these camps were located, how the German POWs filled a critical need for labor, and the interesting relationship these prisoners had with the surrounding citizenry.

**Thank you Lunda Charitable Fund for supporting this exhibition.**



## EXPLORING PTSD (Upcoming exhibit)

July 24 – September 26, 2021

**The Highground Museum exhibition “Exploring PTSD” will not only trace how PTSD was acknowledged and managed in the past, but what is currently available for Veterans, others who have endured trauma and their families.** Based on input from Veterans working their way through their personal PTSD story, The Highground Museum will display information and actual “take home” items on activities that have proven helpful to Veterans, many of them “art-based”, for Veterans and others with PTSD to experience. A large part of healing is communication – bonding with others that are going through a similar circumstance. Displaying artworks – drawing, painting, photography, poetry, writing, etc. – created by Veterans as part of their PTSD healing journey is an important part of this exhibit. If you or someone you know would like to be part of The Highground Museum’s PTSD Healing Through Art exhibit, please email Theresa at [museum@thehighground.us](mailto:museum@thehighground.us) or call 715-743-4224. “Exploring PTSD” will be on display July 24 – Sept 26, 2021.



## 2021 VETERAN RETREATS

An Abundance of Activities, Food, Fun and Camaraderie

Many Veterans are looking for solutions to issues such as PTSD, that are making it difficult for them to achieve the quality of life and relationships that they seek. The goal of The Highground Veterans Weekend is to offer new ideas, workshops and information to Veterans in an atmosphere of camaraderie, peace, relaxation and a bit of fun. **The Highground is working with long-standing successful local programs including: The Vet Center; The Heartbeat Center; The CART Center; The National Eagle Center; Wilderness Pursuit; Healing Oak Forest Therapy; Henry Smith Woodcarving; Franciscan Retreat leader Fr. Conrad Targonski and many other businesses and individuals.** Veterans will be introduced to many things that they can continue in their lives after the Veterans Weekend to help realize the goals of peace and fulfillment that they may be lacking presently. They will leave the Retreat with actual items related to the workshops and new-found camaraderie from friendships formed with other Veterans during the Retreat.

In addition to activities and great food, Veterans will have time to relax at The Highground and at Camp Victory (18 miles north of the Park). There are separate retreats for men and women Veterans. **The Men’s Retreat, July 9-11, 2021, includes lodging and will be based at Camp Victory. The Female Retreat, September 10-12, 2021, includes lodging at the Moraine Motel next to The Highground.**

Veterans from any era and branch of service are welcome. **Space is limited and Veterans must call The Highground to register.** A \$30 reservation fee, refunded in full upon arrival, is required.

**Thank you sponsors! Alliance Bank, Gauger Ventures LLC, American Legion Post #354, Marshfield Professional Police Association, American Legion Phaneuf-Vanasse #111, Citizens State Bank of Loyal, Milwaukee Brewers, Cathy Lawrence-Scentsy, Festival Foods, Wisconsin Timber Rattlers, Central WI Broadcasting, WWIS, Skip and Debbie Klabon, SCOPE Dept of Corrections, Marshfield Acupuncture & Precision Armament LLC, Green Bay Packers, The Vet Center, The Heartbeat Center for Arts & Literature**

## **The Mission Continues...**

### **The Highground Rising has received pledges exceeding \$1 Million**

The focus of The Highground over the last six months has been to plan and initiate a capital campaign to raise \$4 Million. The purpose of the campaign is to build a new welcome center, improve parking including ADA access to the Park, and extinguish the remaining \$450,000 of outstanding debt incurred for previous expansion and improvement projects. The official launch of the campaign took place on April 8th at The Condensery in Osseo, Wisconsin. You can view the launch program by visiting our website ([thehighground.us](http://thehighground.us)) and clicking on "Expansion Plans".

We are still a long way from our goal and we need contributions from Veterans and people, like you, who support Veterans and their causes. Each day we lose 300 WWII, 400 Korean and 500 Vietnam Era Veterans, not to mention those who served in the Persian Gulf or the 20 or so who commit suicide. If not us, who is going to honor their very personal sacrifice? Who will honor their bravery and service? With your help, The Highground has and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future.

The Highground Veterans Park and Camp Victory exist to honor the hundreds of thousands of men and women who have served our country. Our mission must continue so their memories are never lost and their sacrifice has meaning. We are here to educate the public, not about the honor of war, but about its terrible cost. We are also committed to healing those Veterans who suffer from both physical and psychological injuries. To carry out this mission, we require your help in making this capital campaign a success.

Please see the pledge form to the right (page 9), which gives you an opportunity to make an immediate contribution or to give over a five-year period, if desired. Would it be possible for you to give one of your COVID checks to The Highground in celebrating the sacrifices of so many who have served? Please clip the form and send it with your contribution today.

**Thank you. Every dollar is needed and every dollar counts.**

Remember, details about the project are available online at [campaign.thehighground.us](http://campaign.thehighground.us).

**We are exceedingly grateful for the many behind-the-scenes supporters of The Highground Rising Launch that happened on April 8.**

Thank you **Nels Gunderson and family** for gifting us the use of The Condensery for our event. Thank you **Kwest Media411** for managing the live streaming portion of the program, **Audio Adrenalin** for providing sound support, **KP Katering** for the amazing food, **Pattycakes** for the most delicious gourmet brownies, **The Nickel** for the coffee that perfectly complimented the food and desserts and **Sweet Retreats** for the patriotic cupcakes.



Please see the Pledge Card to the right and consider making an immediate contribution or give over a five-year period. Would it be possible for you to give one of your COVID relief checks to The Highground to honor the sacrifices of so many who have served? Please consider a gift today. Complete the Pledge Card and send it with your contribution today.

*Contributors may choose to have particular areas of the complex named to honor or memorialize individuals or organizations they choose. Suggested opportunities are as follows:*

#### Naming Rights

Item(s) to be named:	Suggested Gift Amount
Welcome Center Building	\$1 Million
Museum	\$500,000
Exhibit Area	\$500,000
Building Art (outdoor)	\$250,000
Eternal Flame	Reserved
Visitor Welcome Area/Foyer	\$200,000
Outdoor Observation Deck	\$150,000
Gift Shop	\$100,000
Theatre Room	Reserved
Chapel	Reserved
Conference Room	\$50,000
Landscape Garden on West Side of Building	\$50,000
Doughboy Relocation and Garden	Reserved
Main Level Parking Area	\$50,000
Upper Level Parking Area	\$50,000
Reconfigured Lower Level Parking	Reserved
All Access Path	Reserved
Eternal Flame Path	Reserved
Service Organization Display Wall	Reserved
Exhibit Display Pod	Reserved

**Thank you.  
Every dollar is needed  
and every dollar counts.**

*Details about the project are  
available on the campaign site at  
[campaign.thehighground.us](http://campaign.thehighground.us).*

## The Highground Rising Pledge Form

☒ **I would like to become a founding member of The Highground Giving Societies.**

### **Squad Giving Society**

\$1,000/yr x 5 Years **HONORING LEVEL**—Aid expansion efforts and improve accessibility

### **Platoon & Company Giving Societies**

\$2,500 to \$10,000/yr x 5 Years **EDUCATING LEVEL**—Bolster mental health outreach and referral services

### **Regiment & Division Societies**

\$25,000 to \$50,000/yr x 5 years **HEALING LEVEL**—Expand Veterans programs

     I would like to support the campaign with a different amount.

     I (we) pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year for \_\_\_\_\_ years

     One-time contribution \$\_\_\_\_\_

     My check is enclosed made payable to:

The Highground Rising

     My company will match my gift. Please contact me.

I would like to help. Please contact me:

     Volunteer           IRA—Minimum Distribution

     Real Estate           Stock

     Stock           Other In-Kind Gift

***Please contact us to arrange your pledge payment.***

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_



# AROUND THE CAMPFIRE CAMP VICTORY NEWS

PONDVIEW LANE  
SPRUCE LANE



## EVENTS

For the first time, Camp Victory held a Spring Turkey Hunt. Three Purple Heart Veterans enjoyed the beautiful spring weather and got some time in the woods. Mike Anderson, who served in Iraq from 2004-2005 and in 2008 as a Marine, volunteered to guide and call turkey for the Veterans. The action was good in the morning as turkeys were gobbling, but none of them were willing to come in and show themselves. That didn't matter, as the Veterans told stories and had a good time! Plans are already underway for the 2022 spring turkey season. The dates and seasons for 2022 will be Period C for management Zone 4. Please contact Al Lamovec at 715-225-0154 or send an email to [campvictory@thehighground.us](mailto:campvictory@thehighground.us)

On June 11, 2021, "Supporting our Veterans with Resilience God Style!" presented by Major General Robert Dees (Ret.) as the guest speaker, was held at 29 Pines in Chippewa Falls. It was an evening designed to recognize and honor local Veterans and the businesses and organizations that support them.

On Saturday, June 12, Major General Robert Dees (Ret.) will be speaking at Camp Victory. Major General Dees had a very successful and distinguished Army career. He will be speaking about his involvement with the National Centers for Healthy Veterans, located in Altavista, Virginia, that focuses on helping Veterans alleviate behavioral and mental health challenges. Their purpose is to "Return Healthy Veterans to America." Their mission goes hand-in-hand with the mission of Camp Victory and will be a great resource to help us continue to heal Veterans and families at Camp Victory.

## FUNDRAISING

Our 2nd Annual Raffle and Open House will be **Saturday, August 14 from 11-3**. Prizes include seven firearms, Roamer kayak, two Vortex Binoculars and a Stihl Chainsaw. Over 15 additional bucket raffle prizes will be available and funds raised will be used to make improvements to Camp Victory. Please contact Al Lamovec or visit The Highground Gift shop to purchase any raffle tickets.

*Wish list item: Aerator for the bluegill pond*

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer opportunities include: Archery hunting guides plus camp and trail maintenance to include other small jobs throughout the year.

## IMPROVEMENTS

The sanitary improvement for the campground has begun. Materials have been purchased and are awaiting delivery. Hopefully, we can have it up and running for this camping season. Two mini cabins have been ordered and are being donated by a local donor to be installed late fall.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR Chris Pettis

---



The Highground means different things to different people. I have had the privilege of meeting hundreds of people from all over the country, and they have used words like amazing, beautiful, healing, relaxing, spiritual, reflection, remembrance, load lifting and my favorite, "In all my travels, I've never seen a place so beautiful with so much meaning, I cannot thank you enough for what it did for me today." All of the praise and thank you's belong to all who have donated their precious time, money, materials, sweat, passion and stories to The Highground and its mission. Through your kindness of volunteering and giving we are making a positive difference in the lives of those who visit.

The Highground Rising Campaign is in full swing; to date, we have secured a little over \$1 Million in pledges and contributions. I am asked by many people, "When do we hope to start the new building?" Answer:

Our Goal is to have raised \$2.5 Million in pledges and contributions by Sept 2021. At that point, we will work with Excel Engineering to finalize the interior of the building, file required permitting and open up contractor bidding through the winter with the intent to start construction in the spring of 2022.

This, I believe, is an attainable and realistic goal with the help of many hands and voices. I am passionate about this project and I feel it is essential. I would encourage you to visit, share our vision with others and connect with us. If you or someone you know would be interested in being a part of something so wonderful, meaningful and committed to all Veterans and their families, regardless of branch, years or conflict served, please contact me at 715-937-3392.

**A quote from a volunteer during this year's spring work week:** "I get a lot of therapy working at The Highground because of the people that we have as well as the people I know we are helping." Jim (Veteran)

## FEATURED VETERAN

---

**Our Featured Veteran for this newsletter is Don Beseler.** Don served in American POW camps that housed German POWs in Europe during WWII. When the German POWs were to be released or sent to other camps, the shoulder boards from their uniforms would many times be removed. Don was able to keep a number of these along with other memorabilia from his WWII service. Using these items, he created a wall hanging that is historically very significant and unique. After Don's passing, his family generously donated the display to The Highground.

A few years had gone by when The Highground received an exciting email from Don's family that a person in Europe had located Don's military footlocker and was going to send it to the U.S.!

**For more information about Don, the wall hanging and the incredible footlocker story, please visit the "NEWS" section of our website at [thehighground.us](http://thehighground.us).**



# DONATION HIGHLIGHTS

**Neillsville Tourism motel tax dollars** were granted to The Highground for this year's Spring Into the Arts Tour. Ever wonder where the taxes on your motel bill go? This is one place the Neillsville Tourism Committee agreed to send a portion of the funds. This grant allowed The Highground to bring in talented Veterans to display and sell their projects during the event. It also helped cover advertising expenses outside the Neillsville area and supplies for a public, hands-on project. Thank you, Neillsville Tourism, Committee for granting our grant request.

**Taking on the Capital Campaign Donor Challenge**, Julie Diesing presented another check to Chris Pettis, Executive Director, helping us get closer to the \$400,000 matching challenge goal by June 8. Julie moved closer to Neillsville in order to volunteer more for the Veterans and The Highground. Thank you, Julie, for all you have done and continue to do.

**You will be able to hear us now!** Thank you, Lorraine S., for coming forward with your generous gift towards the new speaker system for the Plaza and to an anonymous donor for the remaining funds. The speakers are now in place. Andy with Audio Architects in Chippewa Falls completed the installation. Thank you donors and Andy for getting the job done in time for event season.

**Memorial Donation** – In remembrance of her husband Mel Shea, a memorial donation from Carol arrived at the perfect time. With donations coming in for The Highground Rising campaign, Carol's donation for the general fund to keep the lights on and pay other bills was appreciated. Reminder, you can choose how you would like to see your donation used. Thank you Carol, Mel will always be remembered at The Highground.

**Camp Victory Donation** – Cummins Veteran Employees raised funds through the sale of an employee (Amanda H.) designed shirt/sweatshirt. Through the sale of these shirts, they raised \$411 for Camp Victory. They also gave us a few extra shirts for upcoming events. Thank you Neillsville Cummins' employees.

**Documenting Veterans Stories** – Thanks to the Clark County Community Foundation, Inc., The Highground will continue to record Veteran stories to preserve them so future generations can remember and learn. With more lessons being taught via Zoom, YouTube and other online platforms, these funds came at a crucial time for The Highground to get this information out to schools and other organizations that typically attend The Highground's annual Educational Days.

**Music for Veterans on Palm Sunday** – Mike Weigel hosted a community music program in Marshfield. "Who better to remember than those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country as our Lord paid for all," Mike said. Thank you for your gift to The Highground.



*Thank you all!*

# FEATURED ITEMS

**GIFT SHOP SUMMER HOURS ARE 10AM TO 5PM DAILY**  
**NEW CUSTOMERS: GET 15% OFF YOUR FIRST ONLINE PURCHASE!**

We carry a variety of products for all, designed with those you love in mind. Check out our hats, t-shirts, metal art, home decor, books and jewelry in-store and online.

**THEHIGHGROUND.SHOP**

The store that supports the mission.



JUNE - AUGUST 2021



**"Love You Dad" Frame** **3132**  
 Wooden picture frame with "Love you dad". Perfect for Father's Day or birthdays.  
**\$9.95**



**Wooden Yoyo** **818**  
 Kids will love this wood yoyo etched with The Highground Veterans Memorial Park logo.  
**\$5.95**



**"My Grandpa" Frame** **3131**  
 Wooden picture frame with "I Love That You're My Grandpa" saying on it.  
**\$9.95**



**Patriotic Memo Set** **1497**  
 Wooden patriotic magnets. Set of three.  
**\$9.95**



**"Love Never Fails"** **5265**  
 Rustic metal wall sign with "Love never fails".  
**\$17.95**



**"Cool" Kids T-shirt** **1011**  
 Kids tee with "a cool place to hang" saying with green and yellow geckos.  
**\$19.95**

**GIFT SHOP SUMMER SALE - JUNE 17-19, 2021**  
**15-60% off regular prices!**  
**Sweatshirts, t-shirts, wall decor and a variety of miscellaneous items. Mark your calendar!**

**Call us at 715-743-4224**

Email: [store@thehighground.us](mailto:store@thehighground.us)  
 W7031 Ridge Road, Neillsville, WI 54456  
[thehighground.shop](http://thehighground.shop)



## Board of Directors

**Chairman–Gary Weirauch**  
Neillsville, WI

**Vice Chair–Gary Karczewski**  
LeRoy, IL

**Secretary–Scott Kissinger**  
Wisconsin Rapids, WI

**Treasurer–Don Quicker**  
Neillsville, WI

Bob Barth–Neillsville, WI

Leonard Frye–Richland Center, WI

Al Lamovec–Chippewa Falls, WI

Bill Lobeck–Viola, WI

Steve Maddox–Chippewa Falls, WI

Daniel Curran–Dodgeville, WI

Michele Benson–Ripon, WI

Ron “Bulldog” Perry–Augusta, WI

Dominic Anderson–Richland Center, WI

Wayne Guenther–Strum, WI

Jim Henchen–Neillsville, WI

### Executive Director

Chris Pettis  
director@thehighground.us

### Operations Manager

Randy Buchholz  
ops@thehighground.us

### Donations Coordinator

Kay Anason  
donations@thehighground.us

### Museum Coordinator

Theresa Hebert  
museum@thehighground.us

### Marketing & Social Media Coordinator

Liz Hamilton  
marketing@thehighground.us

### Events Coordinator

Bonnie Pettis  
events@thehighground.us

### Gift Shop Coordinator

Rhonda Miller  
store@thehighground.us

### Maintenance

Mike Purgett

### Gift Shop Staff

Roxane Purgett  
Judy Quicker  
Rayle Winegarden  
Myrisa Pettis

## ATV AND QUILT RAFFLES

**Attention Quilters!** We need your patriotic quilted creations for the 5th Annual Quilt Display and Raffle. 23 very happy winners ended 2020 on a cozy note. The quilts will be on display, as room allows in the Museum, starting December 1. Creations can be any size—wall hanging or lap size to king size. We ask that all projects be quilted and patriotic-themed to honor our Veterans. Tickets are available for \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The drawing will be in The Highground Museum at noon on December 18, 2021.

**The Honoring Our Veterans Raffle drawing** will be held on Veterans Day, November 11, 2021 following the Veterans Day ceremony. The first place prize is a 2021 Polaris 450 Sportsman ATV, the 2nd place prize is \$1000 cash and 3rd place is \$500 cash. Tickets are available for \$20 each or 3 for \$50. Only 1500 tickets will be sold!

### The Highground is looking for a partner for the ATV raffle.

Getting an ATV to raffle in 2021 was not easy due to lack of availability. Chilson Automotive Dealership partnered with The Highground to raffle an ATV and thankfully, Chris Pettis, Executive Director was able to order one through NextGen in Chippewa Falls. We are now looking for another sponsor to help with additional costs. Become a sponsor and your logo will be displayed on a banner that will accompany the ATV at different locations in support of ticket sales. For questions or to sponsor this fundraiser, email Kay at donations@thehighground.us or call 715-743-4224.

*Thank you Dave Droste from Hardee's for your steadfast support in helping to make our annual fireworks display possible.*



The Highground Newsletter is published by the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project Inc. at P.O. Box 457 Neillsville, WI 54456. Printed in the USA. Copyright 2021. All rights reserved. Reproduction of materials herein is prohibited except by written permission of The Highground. The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited material and reserves the right to publish, in whole or part, all letters received. Opinions expressed in The Highground Newsletter are not necessarily those held by the Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Memorial Project Inc.



# WISH LIST

- Skid Steer Broom
- Leaf vacuum for lawn mower
- Wire welder
- Funds for Registry materials
- Funds for archival quality storage items
- Funding for Veterans Retreat PTSD outdoor and therapeutic workshops
- Digital camera for events and ceremonies
- ATV Raffle Sponsor for 11/11/21 drawing
- Patriotic, quilted blankets of assorted sizes for Quilt Raffle on 12/18/21

## Gifting opportunities

- Honor a lost loved one with a Memorial gift
- Honor a loved one still with us with an Honorarium
- Include The Highground Endowment Fund in your Will
- Sponsor a Persian Gulf Tribute barrier for \$4K (together with family, community, employer, etc.)

To support these initiatives, call 715-743-4224 or email Kay at [donations@thehighground.us](mailto:donations@thehighground.us).



For More Information, Contact 715-743-4224

W7031 Ridge Rd P.O. Box 457, Neillsville, WI 54456

Find us somewhere on Social Media!



## Newsletter Subscription Request

We continue to update our records and need your help! The newsletter is a big project to organize and we want to make sure people continue to receive it as well as other important updates. Please visit our website and look for the **"I support The Highground"** box located on the home page. Click on it and then update your information by completing the form. We can mail you a printed newsletter or send a digital copy; we just need to know what you prefer. If you provide us with your information, we can also send you our email newsletter which will include updates as they happen. Want to make sure you don't miss an issue? Cut off the form to the right, fill it out and send it with your donation in the included envelope. Please rest assured that The Highground does not sell its lists or your information to anyone.

## 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 the Newsletter subscription \$25

Please mail to: The Highground  
P.O. Box 457 Neillsville, WI 54456  
or call 715-743-4224 to make a donation.

### I would like more information about:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Upcoming Events and Fundraising Calendar
- \_\_\_\_\_ Honor Stones
- \_\_\_\_\_ Add someone to the mailing list  
(please include the name and address of the person you want to send a gift subscription to)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Endowment Fund
- \_\_\_\_\_ Booking information for the "My War" and "We Were There" exhibits

### I would also like to volunteer for the following events and activities. Please reach out to me!

- \_\_\_\_\_ Porch Greeter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Work Week
- \_\_\_\_\_ Heroes Ride Annual Bike Tour
- \_\_\_\_\_ Honor Ride/Memorial Day
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ride to Remember™
- \_\_\_\_\_ The Highground Museum
- \_\_\_\_\_ Camp Victory
- \_\_\_\_\_ Legacy Honor Stone Ceremonies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Military Working Dog Honor Stone Ceremonies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Korean War Honor Stone Ceremonies
- \_\_\_\_\_ Persian Gulf Honor Stone Ceremonies

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



The "Lost 74" tribute was placed in the Meditation Garden in 2020, paying tribute to the 74 sailors, and more specifically the three Wisconsin sailors; James R. Cmeyla, 24, of Luxemburg; Michael A. Orlikowski, 28, Milwaukee; and Jon W. Thomas, 22, of Delavan, who died at sea on June 3, 1969 aboard the USS Frank E. Evans when it collided with the HMAS Melbourne during a training exercise.

## Let Them Not Go In Silence

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park staff, visitors and supporters remember and honor all who have served; in times of combat and in times of peace. All Veterans of any era have, at one point in their life, written a blank check made payable to "The United States of America", for an amount up to and including their life. 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 gave their lives during combat (KIA) service to our country. As a tangible reminder for us all, a different selection of KIA names will be printed for each future ceremony and newsletter. Again, this is not the complete list but a selection of names from each war who gave their lives in combat areas.**

Let us remember and honor all those who perished during their service and let them not go in silence. We ring our replica Liberty Bell in their honor at each ceremony. We hope you will ring it whenever you are here.

### WWII

Fred Hirtreiter  
 Bruno A. Hmielewski  
 Edward E. Hogan  
 Hallard J. Holm  
 Roscoe C. Hosmer  
 Alex F. Houle  
 Francis J. Hovorka  
 Eugene F. Hurley  
 Harvey E. Hyllested  
 Joseph A. Jack  
 Irwin R. Jackson  
 Edmond H. Jeffers  
 Andrew T. Johanik  
 Robert H. Johnson  
 Allan E. Johnson  
 Helmar C. Johnson  
 Walter E. Johnson  
 Floyd A. Johnson  
 Joseph L. Johnson Jr.  
 Lorne G. Kahl  
 Fred Kathrine  
 Donald A. Kelly  
 Raymond J. Kelnhofer  
 James A. Kennedy  
 Robert W. Kennedy  
 Eldon H. Kinn  
 Felix P. Klimas  
 Joseph F. Kohn  
 Robert M. Konop  
 Leo E. Korppas  
 Eino J. Kosola  
 Warren F. Krueger

Charles H. Kuchera  
 Byron E. Lablanc  
 Mertz W. Lampella

### Korean War

Norman R. Henricksen  
 Wallace B. Hermann  
 Claude R. Hess  
 Paul F. Heuss  
 Douglas Leroy Hewlett  
 Kenneth C. Hilgart  
 Donald L. Hitz  
 Harold L. Hodge  
 Henry E. Hohne  
 Louis Dearve Holland  
 John Herbert Holmes  
 Eugene R. Honel  
 William J. Hoolhan  
 Arthur Hopfensperger  
 Daniel D. Hopfensperger  
 William H. Hotchkiss  
 Oliver W. Hottenstein  
 Eugene O. Houle  
 Harvey J. House  
 Bernard L. Howe  
 Joseph A. Howell  
 Ronald D. Huebner  
 Glenn Huff  
 Gene M. Ingram  
 James Eugene Iverson  
 Douglas G. Jackson  
 Ralph V. Jackson  
 Arthur F. Jacob

Richard Jahnke  
 John Raymond Jalas  
 John Clell James  
 Adrian D. Janiszewski  
 Roland J. Jarvey  
 Donald C. Jaskulske  
 Kenneth Lyle Jensen

### Vietnam War

David Patrick Quinlan  
 Jeffery Michael Quirk  
 Robert Raymond Rades  
 Leland Eugene Radley  
 Kenneth Wayne Radonski  
 Eric Rudolph Radtke  
 Roger William Raih  
 Steven Paul Rance  
 Dennis Robert Rank  
 Francis W. Rasmussen  
 Robert Edgar Ratajczak  
 Dale Eugene Rauber  
 John Alex Rausch  
 Bruce H. Rawling  
 Ronald John Ray  
 James Charles Reamer  
 Gloria Redlin  
 Dennis Wayne Reed  
 Jon Edward Reed  
 Ronald Henry Reilly  
 Robert Harvey Reinke  
 Ronald Richard Reinke  
 Neil George Reuter  
 Louis George Rhoades

James Roy Rice  
 Jon W. Rich  
 Duane L. Richard  
 Dale Wayne Richardson  
 Edmond William Richardson  
 Donald Joseph Richter  
 Roger Allen Rickert  
 Rodney Howard Rickli  
 Carl Joseph Riederer  
 James G. Riley  
 Kevin L. Rimel

### Desert Storm, OIF, OEF – To Present Day

Robert J. Basham  
 Evan A. Bixler  
 Andrew L. Bossert  
 Rachel K. Bosveld  
 Paul R. Bartz  
 Joshua C. Brennan  
 Justin J. Cain  
 Ryan J. Cantafio  
 Stephen Castner  
 Steven J. Christofferson  
 Eric D. Clark  
 Chad D. Coleman  
 Jeremiah Collins Jr.  
 Robert J. Cook  
 Todd R. Cornell  
 Kenneth M. Cross  
 Grant Allen Dampier  
 Jesse D. Tillery

Nick A. Dewhirst  
 Trevor J. Diesing  
 Derek A. Dobogai  
 Steven T. Drees  
 Donald W. Eacho  
 Benjamin C. Edinger  
 Garrick L. Eppinger Jr.  
 Christopher S. Frost  
 Nichole M. Frye  
 Dan H. Gabrielson  
 Jacob A. Gassen  
 Louis A. Griesse  
 Matthew T. Grimm  
 Jesse J. Grindey  
 Anthony "Alex" Gaunk  
 Andrew Halverson  
 Warren S. Hansen  
 Timothy R. Hanson