



# Rolling Thunder® At-a-Glance

2009

Rolling Thunder® Kentucky Chapter I

## Overview...

- Volunteers from all walks of life dedicate their time, energy and skills for the mission
- Conduct POW/MIA Flag Raising Ceremonies in the community
- Sponsor community events to raise funds and awareness to support the mission
- Assist needy veterans, veterans organizations and VA facilities
- Lobby Congress in support of POW/MIA and veteran's legislation
- Teach the values of patriotism and community service to area youth

## Our Mission

Rolling Thunder®, Inc.'s major function is to publicize the POW-MIA issue. To educate the public of the fact that many American prisoners of war were left behind after all past wars. To help correct the past and to protect the future veterans from being left behind should they become prisoners of war-missing in action. We are committed to helping American veterans from all wars!



**POW/MIA flag raising ceremonies are conducted year-round to promote public awareness about the POW/MIA issue**



**LST 325 docked on display in Evansville, IN is the first decommissioned Naval vessel to fly the POW/MIA flag**



**Annual Christmas visit with residents of the Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson, KY**

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Many people know Rolling Thunder® from the annual demonstration "Ride for Freedom" to Washington, DC during Memorial Day weekend where approximately 500,000 motorcycles participate.

"Rolling Thunder® the Run", was started in 1987 just before Veterans Day by Ray Manzo and Artie Muller. They wanted to do something about the POW/MIA issue. They wanted to wake up the American public and educate them about the many American POWs that had been left behind. Rolling Thunder® "Ride for Freedom" of

all POW/MIAs was born.

There were some 2600 riders in Rolling Thunder® I and thousands lined the streets as Rolling Thunder® roared into Washington, DC. Today hundreds of thousands of men, women and children attend Rolling Thunder® in Washington, DC each year.

People from all the 50 U.S. states, Canada, Australia, England, South Korea, New Zealand, Germany and many other countries have helped make this one of the largest Runs for the POW/MIA issue worldwide.

Their purpose was and is to honor our brothers and sisters on the Wall as well as veterans of all wars that gave their lives for their country.

They demonstrate to people worldwide that POW/MIAs do exist! They demand a complete accounting of all POW/MIAs and insist on bringing home all live American POWs still held by foreign countries!! They protect our future veterans so that they will be "guaranteed" that they will not be left behind!! That is what we represent.

## "Ride for Freedom" - Washington, D.C.

## Rolling Thunder®

### Non-Profit Status & Membership



**The chapter collaborates with like-minded community based organizations to honor and support America's veterans and fallen heroes**

Rolling Thunder® was incorporated as a section 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 1995, and is headquartered in New Jersey.

Today, the organization has over 10,000 members throughout the United States and a few in Canada, Australia and Europe.

There are over 88 chartered Rolling Thunder® chapters in the continental United States.

Rolling Thunder® membership is comprised of veterans from all wars and times of peace. Veteran

members have earned such distinctions as the Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, Bronze Star, Silver Star, Purple Heart, and others.

Membership also consists of non-veteran advocates of all ages, generations and backgrounds.

Rolling Thunder® teaches the values of patriotism and community service to its youth.

The National Chapter of Rolling Thunder® has almost 100 junior members (ages 18 and under) who actively participate in visits to the

local VA hospital, food and clothing collection for homeless veterans, and fundraising.

Kentucky Chapter I, one of the three chapters in Kentucky, has over 50 active members located throughout western Kentucky, central Tennessee, and southern Indiana.

Meetings for Kentucky Chapter I are held at 1:00 p.m. the third Sunday of each month. For the current meeting location visit [www.rollingthunderky1.org/calendar](http://www.rollingthunderky1.org/calendar).

*“We really appreciate what Rolling Thunder does for our veterans.”*

— Jana Raney

Western KY Veterans

Center, Hanson, KY

### Community Involvement

Chartered in 1997, Rolling Thunder® Kentucky Chapter I is a section 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with over 50 members located in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Indiana. The chapter:

- Sponsors an annual motorcycle Poker Run at the Western Kentucky Veterans Center to raise funds for the center which has facilitated the purchase of a computer, digital camera, scanner, printer, wireless speaker system, yard barn for storage of equipment, shaved ice machine and other equipment
- Sponsors annual Poker Runs, conducts raffles and sells POW/MIA awareness items (pins, patches, t-shirts, etc.) to raise money to help support veterans and veterans related organizations and interest groups
- Donated approximately \$22,000, from 2004-2008, to disabled American veteran's transportation services in Kentucky, Indiana and Tennessee to transport disabled veterans to medical appointments
- Donated funds to assist in providing care packages for service members in Iraq, to assist in travel for two WWII veterans visitation to the World War II Memorial and to assist a legally blind disabled veteran attend limited vision training
- Participates in parades, toy runs, opening ceremonies, and other events to increase awareness of POW/MIA and veterans issues including setting up an information center at events
- Veterans regularly speak at local area schools and other community gatherings about the honor of serving their country and educating the public about the POW/MIA issue
- Makes available POW/MIA flags to courthouses, fire departments, post offices, veterans memorials, various organizations and interests groups, and organizes flag raising ceremonies promoting public awareness about the POW/MIA issue
- Santa and Kentucky Chapter I annually visit residents at the Western Kentucky Veterans Center, Hanson, KY to deliver gifts from area merchants and Christmas cards from school children



**Participates in community events to educate the public to the plight of American POW/MIAs from all wars**

2009

## Becoming a Member

Membership in Rolling Thunder® Inc. is open to anyone with an interest in educating the public regarding the POW-MIA issue regardless of race, color, creed or sex. All persons must be 18 years of age or older.

Anyone who was a Prisoner Of War, their wife or husband, Gold Star Mothers and Medal of Honor

(CMH) Recipients will have a free membership in Rolling Thunder® Inc. provided they present legal documentation of their status.

Membership dues are \$30/year per member and are due during the month of February.

Members receive a Rolling Thunder® Inc. Membership Boot patch

when they become a full member at the end of a 120-day trial period. A new member must make 3 meetings or events, or a combination thereof, during the 120-day trial period to become a full member. After a member completes his/her first year as a member in good standing then they will be issued the Eagle & Rocker patches.



**Donated funds to transport two WWII veterans to the WWII monument in Washington DC**

## Fund-Raising and Charitable Donations

Rolling Thunder® accepts contributions from the general public, including their members, other non-profit organizations, business corporations, partnerships, proprietorships and any governmental organization. Rolling Thunder® is a section 501(c)(3) non-profit chartered organization. An audit of the chapter's financial records is conducted at least once a calendar year to ensure the integrity of the chapter's finances.

Funding for the organization is provided through membership dues, raffles, fund-raising events, charitable donations and in-kind contributions. Some of our supporters include:

- Atlas Van Lines, Inc.
- Area Wal-mart's
- Tyson's Foods
- Elks Lodge #206 of Henderson
- KY, TN & IN Businesses/Organizations
- Union Trades (Tennessee & Indiana)
- Buehler's Buy Low
- Appleton's Harley-Davidson
- Henderson Country Club
- Ewing Tire
- Sureway Foods
- Chapter members and their families

*"We can not thank you enough and the Americanism award does not really do justice for what all you do."*

— Patty Coomes

Americanism Committee,  
Elks Lodge, Henderson, KY

## Becoming a Supporter

Rolling Thunder® supporters have provided meeting facilities, monetary donations, donated merchandise, product discounts, donated products or materials, provided services free of charge or at reduced rates to assist the chapter in accomplishing its mission.

To become a supporter contact a Kentucky Chapter I member or the chapter president to find out how you can help:

Rolling Thunder KY I  
P.O. Box 326  
Elkton, KY 42220  
Phone: 270-604-0060  
Email: lu572ae@bellsouth.net

Send financial donations payable to Rolling Thunder® Kentucky Chapter I to the :  
Chapter Treasurer  
Rolling Thunder KY I  
P.O. Box Box 236  
Elkton, KY 42220

Some supporters have chosen to fly a POW/MIA flag at their home and/or business to show their support for the on-going mission.

The chapter conducts POW/MIA flag raising ceremonies so that those who were taken prisoner or otherwise unaccounted for in various wars and conflicts throughout the history of our nation are "NEVER FORGOTTEN".



**Contributed to a collaborative effort to display a traveling replica of the Vietnam War Memorial in Clarksville, TN**



POW-MIA "We Will Never Forget"

Rolling Thunder Kentucky Chapter I  
P.O. Box 326  
Elkton, KY 42220

Phone: 270-604-0060  
Email: lu572ae@bellsouth.net

**We're on the web!**

**RollingThunderKy1.org**

## "POW/MIA We Will Never Forget"

### What If?

by Rhonda Cain

My son asked me some questions tonight  
About the POW/MIAs plight,  
For he has heard much that has been said.  
What if they're not there? What if they're all dead?  
What if the refugees are lying for some reason we don't know?  
What if there's been no prisoners of war since a long time ago?  
What if they all died in torture in a place without a name?  
What if the POW issue is all just a horrible game?  
What if all our hopes are all in vain?  
What if the Vietnamese are using us for their own personal gain?  
What if what many are saying is really right?  
What if we brought them all out at the end of the fight?  
What if they're dead?  
What if they've all been shot?  
...I answered him simply – what if they're not?

Rolling Thunder® will continue to fight for the timely return of all POW's and the continued investigation into the fate of all MIA's from all wars. Rolling Thunder® passionately follows the Army Ranger Creed that vows: "I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy..." Rolling Thunder® will continue to grow and gain strength as long as even one person remains unaccounted for. For more information about Rolling Thunder®, or to learn how to become a member or supporter, see the contact information listed on the left.

## Legislation

Rolling Thunder® has advocated and co-authored legislation on the POW/MIA issue and other veteran concerns and interests.

**Missing Service Personnel Act of 1997** Since the mid-1980's, Rolling Thunder® has worked tirelessly on this bill that would guarantee missing servicemen or women could not be arbitrarily "killed on paper" by the U.S. government without credible proof of death. The bill was originally sponsored by Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell (Colorado) in 1993. Rolling Thunder® co-wrote 17 resolutions to revive the bill. Rolling Thunder's efforts helped facilitate passing of a majority of the resolutions, and efforts continue to restore the law as it was originally written.

**Bring Them Home Alive Act of 2000** Rolling Thunder® also co-authored the Bring Them Home Alive Act of 2000, which was coauthored and sponsored by Senator Nighthorse-Campbell. The Act provides for the granting of refugee status in the United States to nationals of certain foreign countries in which American Vietnam War POW/MIAs or American Korean War POW/MIAs may be present, if those nationals assist in returning POW/MIAs alive.

**Persian Gulf War POW/MIA Accountability Act of 2002, S.1339** First introduced by Campbell in August 2, 2001, the legislation amends the Bring Them Home Alive Act of 2000 which was signed into law in November of 2001. The new law extends the granting of refugee

status in the United States to nationals of Iraq or the greater Middle East region. It provides for the International Broadcasting Bureau, which includes the Voice of America, to broadcast information about the law in the Middle East.

### The POW/MIA Memorial Flag Act (S-1226)

This bill was signed into legislation by President George W. Bush in part due to Rolling Thunder's lobbying efforts. The main force behind this bill was Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell and Congressman Dan Burton. The POW/MIA flag will fly below the American Flag any day the American flag is flown in Washington, DC at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the Korean Memorial and the WWII memorial when it is completed.



Rolling Thunder® teaches the values of patriotism and community service