



# Rolling Thunder

## New York Chapter 3

### Calendar Update

**MISSION STATEMENT:** 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.



Our chapter wishes to acknowledge **American Gold Star Mothers, Inc.** as an organization, like our own, that dedicates itself to the support of the behind-the-scenes heroes of our country's military actions. We also want to recognize and honor **all** Gold Star parents, and let them know they are in our thoughts and prayers, always.

Rolling Thunder NY Ch. 3  
P.O. Box 10991  
Newburgh, NY  
12552-10991  
Voicemail: (845)427-7924

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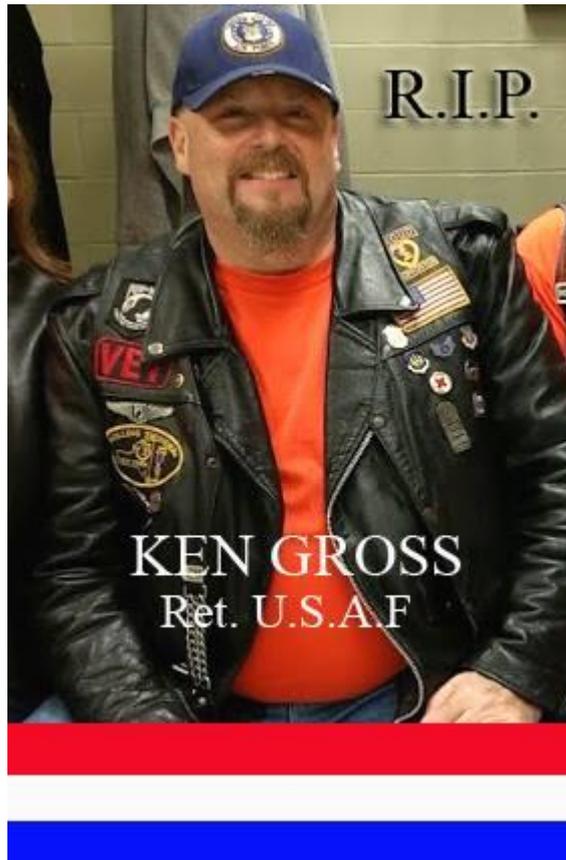
Ken Gross

Mike Kraiza

Pete Szulewski

Paul Thompkins

June 2017



KEN GROSS: August 5, 1963 - May 25, 2017

A friend, a brother and a true patriot. Ken, you will be missed but forever remembered as a true gentlemen and as one of those guy's we could always depend on. My heart is broken over our loss

of you. No doubt in my mind that everyone who knew you feels the same way. I personally cannot remember one instance where you outwardly made a negative comment about anyone. You my friend were a classy guy and everyone I know felt the same. Always a smile, a leader and I am proud to call you my friend

The last time I saw you was at the wake of Joe DeFillipo's mom. I was sitting in a chair on the porch and you walked right over, gave me a hug, shook my hand and asked me how I was feeling.

That was you and was one so many examples of how un-selfish you were.

I can remember as well as all your Rolling Thunder N.Y.3 brothers and sisters your infectious personality. I will say this a million times and it hurts as bad every time, but we lost you our friend and brother on 05/25/2017, but know for sure you will be watching over us all and I am positive in some way you will help guide us in striving to always do the right thing. Rest in peace OUR friend OUR Brother you will always be in our hearts.

We talk about JPAC and write about the latest finds but do all of us know and understand how this all Began and how what they do is accomplished. So, here is a description of how it is all put together.

## Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command



The **Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command** (often referred to as **JPAC**) was a joint [task force](#) within the [United States Department of Defense](#) (DoD) whose mission was to account for Americans who are listed as [Prisoners of War](#) (POW), or [Missing in Action](#) (MIA), from all past wars and conflicts. It was especially visible in conjunction with the [Vietnam War POW/MIA issue](#). The mission of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command was to achieve the fullest possible accounting of all Americans missing as a result of the nation's past conflicts.<sup>[1]</sup> The motto of JPAC was "Until they are home".

On 30 January 2015, JPAC was officially deactivated by the Department of Defense. The Defense Department's efforts at reform followed a series of embarrassing scandals and damning revelations in reports and testimony before Congress starting in 2013 concerning failures in the effort to identify missing war dead. JPAC, the [Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office](#) (DPMO), and certain functions of the U.S. Air Force's Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory, were all merged into the new [Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency](#).

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## Structure

JPAC was a standing [direct reporting unit](#) within the [United States Pacific Command](#). Its headquarters were located at [Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam](#) in Hawaii.

DPAA maintained three permanent overseas detachments, two local detachments, the Annex, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, and the European Liaison Office located on Miesau Army Depot, Germany; all devoted to the ongoing tasks of POW/MIA accounting. Each detachment was under the command of a field grade officer of the United States armed forces.

- Detachment 1 – [Bangkok](#), Thailand (American Embassy in Thailand)<sup>[2]</sup>
- Detachment 2 – [Hanoi](#), Vietnam<sup>[3]</sup>
- Detachment 3 – [Vientiane](#), Laos
- Investigation and Recovery Group – [Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Oahu](#), Hawaii; this group was the home base of the recovery teams when they were not deployed
- HQ – [Pentagon](#), [Arlington](#), Virginia.
- DPAA Annex - [Offutt Air Force Base](#), Nebraska; the JCA performed routine anthropological and odontological analysis in order to identify unaccounted-for service members.
- European Liaison Office - [Miesau Army Depot](#), Germany; helped facilitate the planning, execution, logistical and administrative support for all Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command operations in the European Command area of responsibility.
- The laboratory portion of DPAA referred to as the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL).

## **History 1973: The DOD established the Central Identification Laboratory–Thailand to coordinate POW/MIA recovery efforts in Southeast Asia.**

- 1976: The DOD established the Central Identification Laboratory–Hawaii to search for, recover, and identify missing Americans from all previous conflicts.
- 1992: The Joint Task Force–Full Accounting (JFA-FA) was established to focus on achieving the fullest possible accounting of American missing from the Vietnam War.
- 2002: DOD determined that POW/MIA recovery efforts would be best served by combining the two Central Identification Laboratories and the Joint Task Force.
- 1 October 2003: The Joint POW/MIA Accounting command was established under the auspices of the Commander, Pacific Command (CDRUSPACOM).

## **Operations**

JPAC's operations were divided into four areas: Analysis and Investigation, Recovery, Identification, and Closure.

## Analysis and investigation

JPAC investigated leads concerning Americans who were killed in action but were never brought home. This process involved close coordination with other U.S. agencies involved in the POW/MIA issue. JPAC carried out technical negotiations and talks with representatives of foreign governments around the world in order to ensure positive in-country conditions were maintained or created for JPAC investigative and recovery operations wherever JPAC teams deployed in the world. If enough evidence was found, a site was recommended for recovery in a process that often took years to accomplish.

## Recovery

United Nations Command (UNC) honor guard members receive remains from Korean People's Army soldiers at the [Joint Security Area](#) Nov 6, 1998



Laotians hired to assist U.S. troops sift then move tons of dirt on a mountain near Xepon, [Laos](#) (July 2004). This particular mission involved searching for the human remains of two [F-4 Phantom](#) crewmen who crashed after a bombing run over Vietnam.

JPAC had 18 Recovery Teams whose members traveled throughout the world to recover missing from past wars. A typical recovery team was made up of 10 to 14 people, led by a team leader and a [forensic anthropologist](#). Other members of the team typically included a team sergeant, linguist, medic, life support technician, forensic photographer, RF systems communications technician/operator and an [explosive ordnance disposal](#) technician. Additional experts were added to the mission as needed, such as mountaineering specialists or divers.

The team carefully excavates the site and screens the soil to locate all possible remains and artifacts. In the case of an airplane crash, a recovery site may be quite large.

Once the recovery effort was completed, the team returned to Hawaii. All remains and artifacts found during the recovery operation were then transported from a U.S. military plane or private airline to JPAC's Central Identification Laboratory where identification took an average of eleven years to complete.

## Identification

Upon arrival at the laboratory, all remains and artifacts recovered from a site were signed over to the custody of the CIL and stored in a secure area. Forensic anthropologists carefully analyze all remains and artifacts to determine the sex, race,

age at death, and stature of the individual. Anthropologists also analyzed trauma caused at or near the time of death and pathological conditions of bone such as arthritis or previous healed breaks. Lab scientists used a variety of techniques to establish the identification of missing Americans, including analysis of skeletal and dental remains, sampling [mitochondrial DNA](#) (mtDNA), and analyzing material evidence, personal effects, aviation life-support equipment (gear used by aircrew: helmets, oxygen masks, harnesses, etc.), or other military equipment.

Often, recovered military and personal equipment artifacts were forwarded to the USAF Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL, located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, in Dayton, OH), for advanced scientific and historical analysis. The LSEL (a highly unique scientific facility within the US and the world) was singularly qualified to scientifically study recovered military equipment artifacts and determine critical forensic aspects, to include, but not limited to: number of unaccounted for personnel represented at the loss site (i.e. 2 aviators), branch of military service represented (i.e. Navy), vehicle type represented (i.e. F-4 aircraft type), time frame represented (i.e. c. 1967), and represented levels of non-survivability or survivability (i.e. any evidence of fatal/non-fatal status). Frequently, the LSEL was able to provide crucial case determinations (through analysis of recovered equipment artifacts) when other critical evidence (such as human remains: bone or teeth) was not recovered or available, and/or does not yield any substantial conclusions through testing (i.e. DNA testing).

## Closure

The recovery and identification process may take years to complete. The average identification time by the JPAC CIL was eleven years after remains arrived in the laboratory. In addition to the factors previously mentioned, each separate line of evidence was examined at the CIL (bones, teeth, and material evidence) and correlated with all historical evidence. All reports underwent a thorough peer review process that included an external review by independent experts. Additionally, if mt DNA was part of the process, the search for family reference samples for mt. DNA comparison added a significant amount of time to the identification process because building a DNA database was not a priority for JPAC. Completed cases were forwarded to the appropriate service [Mortuary Affairs](#) office, whose members personally notified next-of-kin family members.

All, below represents the latest recoveries.

## NEWS & STORIES

### [Marine Missing From World War II Identified \(Andregg\)](#)

By | May 19, 2017

Marine Corps Reserve Cpl. Henry Andregg, Jr., has now been accounted for. In November 1943, Andregg was assigned to Company C, 2nd Amphibious Tractor Battalion,...

### [Marine Missing From World War II Identified \(Kourkos\)](#)

By | May 19, 2017

Marine Corps Reserve Pfc. Sam J. Kourkos, has now been accounted for. In November 1943, Kourkos was assigned to Company M, 3rd Battalion, 8th Marines, 2nd Marine...

[Soldier Missing From World War II Identified \(Aiello\)](#)

By | May 15, 2017

Army Staff Sgt. Michael Aiello, missing from World War II, has now been accounted for. In September 1944, Aiello was a member of Company G, 401st Glider Infantry...

[Soldier Missing From Korean War Identified \(Kritzwiser\)](#)

By | May 15, 2017

Army Cpl. Glen E. Kritzwiser, missing from the Korean War, has now been accounted for. In early February 1951, Kritzwiser was a member of Battery C, 15th Field...

## NEWS RELEASES

05/30/17: [Soldier Missing From Korean War Accounted For \(Mitchell\)](#)

05/22/17: [Soldier Killed In Korean War Accounted For \(Stagg\)](#)

05/22/17: [Soldier Killed In Korean War Accounted For \(Johnson\)](#)

05/22/17: [Navy Pilot Killed In Vietnam War Accounted For \(Crosby\)](#)

05/19/17: [USS Oklahoma Sailor From World War II Accounted For \(Iverson\)](#)

This past Month had a lot of goings on. Obviously, the biggest event was the sale of T-Shirts in Washington D.C. What I would like to talk about is the unity and dedication of all that was there. I know that there were many others who could not make it but helped with many things to aide in our quest to sell the most we could. At thunder ally, the stock of shirts arrived on Friday and a dedicated crew unloaded the tents and tables in preparation for the events the following day. Saturday morning arrives and the same dedicated crew puts out the shirts in preparation for the crowds to come. They did and the various teams took on their individual time slots with ease. No team had to stay any longer than they wanted to. Most hung out because that's what we do. I was there and personally observed the transitions and dedication. We did this all without any controversy and it was a beautiful process the whole weekend. So thank you to everyone for a job well done, mission accomplished. Thank God, no-one was hurt or fell ill at this event, at least not to my knowledge. Kenny's passing was clearly on the minds of us all and I know Ken is smiling upon us. Again, thanks Ken for your support.

I am not including any jokes this month because I feel it inappropriate in light of our tragic loss. So.....

Here is an array of some of Kenny's pics over the years.





Rest in Peace Ken.

Your Brothers and Sisters  
Rolling Thunder N.Y. Chapter 3

Rolling Thunder Newsletter  
Joe DallVechia