



ROLLING THUNDER® INC  
 MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER 1  
 NEWSLETTER

Dead or Alive  
 They are in enemy hands !

October 2008



# VETERANS DAY

HONORING ALL  
 WHO SERVED

NOVEMBER 11, 2008



*Our Logo Colors:*  
*The White is for their purity*  
*The Red is for their Blood*  
*that was shed*  
*The Black is for our Mourning*

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## *Honoring All Who Served*

*Many Americans mistakenly believe that Veterans Day is the day America sets aside to honor American military personnel who died in battle or as a result of wounds sustained from combat. That's not quite true. Memorial Day is the day set aside to honor America's war dead. Veterans Day, on the other hand, honors ALL American veterans, both living and dead. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank LIVING veterans for dedicated and loyal service to their country. November 11 of each year is the day that we ensure veterans know that we deeply appreciate the sacrifices they have made in the lives to keep our country free.*

### *Armistice Day*

*To commemorate the ending of the "Great War" (World War I), an "unknown soldier" was buried in highest place of honor in both England and France ( in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triomphe). These ceremonies took place on November 11th, celebrating the ending of World War I hostilities at 11 a.m., November 11, 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month). This day became known internationally as "Armistice Day".*

*In 1921, the United States of America followed France and England by laying to rest the remains of a World War I American soldier -- his name "known but to God" -- on a Virginia hillside overlooking the city of Washington DC and the Potomac River. This site became known as the "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," and today is called the "Tomb of the Unknowns." Located in Arlington National Cemetery, the tomb symbolizes dignity and reverence for the American veteran.*

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*In America, November 11th officially became known as Armistice Day through an act of Congress in 1926. It wasn't until 12 years later, through a similar act that Armistice Day became a national holiday.*

*The entire World thought that World War I was the "War to end all wars." Had this been true, the holiday might still be called Armistice Day today. That dream was shattered in 1939 when World War II broke out in Europe. More than 400,000 American service members died during that horrific war.*

### ***Veterans Day***

*In 1947, Raymond Weeks, of Birmingham Ala., organized a "Veterans Day" parade on November 11th to honor all of America's veterans for their loyal and dedicated service. Shortly thereafter, Congressman Edward H. Rees (Kansas) introduced legislation to change the name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day in order to honor all veterans who have served the United States in all wars.*

*In 1954, President Eisenhower signed a bill proclaiming November 11 as Veterans Day, and called upon Americans everywhere to rededicate themselves to the cause of peace. He issued a Presidential Order directing the head of the Veterans Administration (now called the Department of Veterans Affairs), to form a Veterans Day National Committee to organize and oversee the national observance of Veterans Day.*

*Congress passed legislation in 1968 to move Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. However as it became apparent that November 11th was historically significant to many Americans, in 1978, Congress reversed itself and returned the holiday to its traditional date.*

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## *Veterans Day National Ceremony*

*At exactly 11 a.m., each November 11th, a color guard, made up of members from each of the military branches, renders honors to America's war dead during a heart-moving ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery. The President or his representative places a wreath at the Tomb and a bugler sounds Taps. The balance of the ceremony, including a "Parade of Flags" by numerous veterans service organizations, takes place inside the Memorial Amphitheater, adjacent to the Tomb.*

*In addition to planning and coordinating the National Veterans Day Ceremony, the Veterans Day National Committee supports a number of Veterans Day Regional Sites. These sites conduct Veterans Day celebrations that provide excellent examples for other communities to follow.*

## *Veterans Day Observance*

*Veterans Day is always observed on November 11, regardless of the day of the week on which it falls. The Veterans Day National Ceremony is always held on Veterans Day itself, even if the holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday. However, like all other federal holidays, when it falls on a non-workday -- Saturday or Sunday -- the federal government employees take the day off on Monday (if the holiday falls on Sunday) or Friday (if the holiday falls on Saturday).*

*Federal government holiday observance (for federal employees, including military) is established by federal law. 5 U.S.C. 6103 establishes the following public holidays for Federal employees: New Year's Day, Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington's Birthday (President's Day), Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.*

*This federal law does not apply to state and local governments. They are free to determine local government closings (including school closings) locally. As such, there is no legal requirement that schools close on Veterans Day, and many do not. However, most schools hold Veterans Day activities on Veterans Day and throughout the week of the holiday to honor American veterans.*



## Airman Missing In Action From WWII is Identified

*The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from World War II, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.*

*He is 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Ray D. Packard, U.S. Army Air Forces, of Atwood, Calif. He will be buried on Oct. 22 in Prescott, Ariz.*

*Representatives from the Army met with Packard's next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.*

*On Aug. 25, 1944, Packard was a pilot in a flight of 22 P-38 Lightning fighter aircraft that left the allied airfield at St. Lambert, France, to attack enemy airfields near Laon-Chambry, France. Enroute to their target, the fighter group was intercepted by more than 80 German fighters near Beauvais, France. During the ensuing dogfight, 11 P-38s were shot down, including Packard's which crashed 15 miles south of Beauvais near the town of Angy. Five of the pilots escaped and evaded enemy capture and two were taken as prisoners of war. Of the four men who were missing in action, three were later recovered and identified, but Packard remained unaccounted-for.*

*In 1951, a U.S. Army Graves Registration Command team investigated the incident and interviewed a French citizen who said he recovered human remains from a P-38 crash site in Angy. The team also interviewed the mayor of Angy who said that the remains had been buried in a local cemetery, but had later been exhumed and he didn't know what happened after the disinterment. The team went to the crash site, but only found small pieces of aircraft wreckage.*

*In 2006, a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) team traveled to Angy to investigate the incident. The team interviewed the son of the French citizen interviewed in 1951. He turned over to the team human remains and other non-biological evidence recovered from the crash site. The team interviewed another French citizen, an aircraft wreckage hunter, who turned over remains and other evidence from an excavation that he conducted at the site.*

*In 2006 and 2007, JPAC teams conducted two excavations and recovered more human remains, aircraft wreckage, and material evidence including Packard's identification tag.*

*Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC used dental comparisons in the identification of Packard's remains.*

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### ***"Dead or Alive," they are in enemy hands***

***Iraqi Freedom: 1***

***Southeast Asia: 1,763***

***Korea: 8,144***

***Cold War: 123***

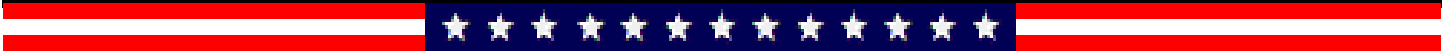
***World War II: 78,648***

***World War I: 3,349***



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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Medical Center  
1400 VFW Parkway  
West Roxbury, MASSACHUSETTS 02132

October 08, 2008

In Reply Refer To: 523C/135

BOB DEGREGORIO  
ROLLING THUNDER  
P.O BOX 227  
WAKEFIELD, MA 01880

Dear Bob DeGregorio:

On behalf of the West Roxbury-VA Boston HCS patients and staff, we would like to extend our appreciation to you for your donation of 6 Wii consoles and accessories for our rehab department. Your thoughtfulness reflects the concern that you feel for our veterans and for the service they provided to all of us while in service to our country.

Without your support, we could not provide for the smaller niceties that make hospitalization more bearable.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

  
RALPH MARCHE  
Chief, Voluntary Service



red to state "The Department of Veterans Affairs did not provide consideration in whole or part for your contribution."



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**The Director's Corner Nov. 2008**

**It seems like summer was just here, and now we are already looking at snow and the North East Riding season for most will be ending soon.**

**Right around the corner is November 11th, Veterans Day. Many will be participating in various ceremonies and/or parades that honor our Veterans. It is appropriate at this time of year to remind everyone why and how we are free, and it is clearly the sacrifice of our Veterans over the years. Now is a perfect time to make a commitment to remember them every day, not just on the 11th. Remember those Veterans past, and honor them. Shower our present day Veterans with Thanks, Appreciation and remember to give them a proper and deserved "Welcome Home."**

**In October, we held our Regional New England Meeting and I thought that it went very well. This meeting involved several officers from each of the New England Chapters. I appreciate the time and efforts of all who attended. We also have our National Conference coming up in November. This tends to be an informative time for many as there is an assortment of seminars on Friday along with a visit to the House and Senate. I know I will see several of you there and I hope that the experience is worthwhile and that you will have some items to bring back to your chapters.**

**Never forget our POW's and MIA's and keep those serving today in your thoughts and prayers.**

*Patrick McGhie*  
*NE States Director*  
[pmcghie@comcast.net](mailto:pmcghie@comcast.net)