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**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES
OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

5673 COLUMBIA PIKE, SUITE 100, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22041

PH ---703/465-7432

www.pow-miafamilies.org

FAX ---703/465-7433

MISSING MAN TABLE & HONORS CEREMONY

As you entered the room, you may have noticed a special table; it is reserved to honor our missing men.

Set for six, the empty chairs represent Americans who were or are missing from each of the services – Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard – and civilians, all with us in spirit.

Some here were very young, or not yet born, when the Vietnam War began; however, all Americans should never forget the brave men and women who answered our nation's call and served the cause of freedom in a special way.

Let me explain the meaning of this table, and then join me for a moment of silent prayer.

The table is round – to show our everlasting concern.

The cloth is white – symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to serve.

The single red rose reminds us of the lives of these Americans....and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith, while seeking answers.

The yellow ribbon symbolizes our continued uncertainty, hope for their return and determination to account for them.

A slice of lemon reminds us of their bitter fate, captured and missing in a foreign land.

A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears of our missing and their families - who long for answers after decades of uncertainty.

The lighted candle reflects our hope for their return – alive or dead.

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain us and those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.

The glass is inverted – to symbolize their inability to share a toast.

The chairs are empty – they are missing..... (moment of silence)

Let us now raise our water glasses in a toast to honor America's POW/MIAs, to the success of our efforts to account for them, and to the safety of all now serving our nation!

October 9, 2015