

## Missing Man Table

Mick Gutttau talked about the missing man table at the Treynor Optimist Club meeting on August 13. The table is reserved to honor our missing men from wars. Mick said that 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.



- The empty chair represents 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.
- 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 with us today.
- The chair is empty – they are missing.

A good book for children about the table is called [America's White Table](#), by Margot Theis Raven.

Mick talked about Vietnam Veteran's reunions he has attended. The people enter a dark room with a bright spotlight shining on the table. The first reunion was in Washington DC. 2600 people attended. In 2005 they had a reunion in San Francisco. Mike, a man who was instrumental in teaching Mick about flying Cobra helicopters, planned to attend, but committed suicide three weeks before the reunion. This year's reunion will be in Reno, Nevada.

There were 36,000 men and women who came home from the Vietnam War. 8000 have died since then. Two Cobra pilots, John and Billy are still missing. They were reported as captured.

There were 14 members and 4 guests at the meeting.