AMERICA’S WHITE TABLE

America has been through many wars. Many men and women have heeded the call of their country during these difficult times. During the Vietnam War, a war that many people considered the most unpopular war of our country’s history, America lost over 58,000 men and women. Those who survived the war came home to a less than friendly nation, a nation that was bitter, for its losses, and for reasons known only to them. Instead of a hero’s welcome, the soldiers came home to discord and mixed emotions. They had not asked to go to war but had answered the call of duty to their country.

A group of men known as the Red River Valley Fighter Pilots wanted a way to honor and remember those men and women who never came home from war. These men started the White Table Ceremony.

For those men and women, we want to honor their ultimate sacrifices & today set a table in their memory.

- We begin with a simple table and cover it with a pure white cloth. This white cloth represents the purity of the soldier’s motives when he or she answered the call to duty.
- An American flag placed on the table represents our country & the freedom for which it stands.
- A bible placed next to the flag represents the strength gained through faith, which sustained those lost from our country, founded as one nation under god.
- A circular white plate placed on the table shows everlasting concern for our missing soldiers.
- A vase, tied with a yellow ribbon, a symbol of our continued determination to account for our missing soldiers until all are returned home.
- A single white rose placed in the vase represents those soldiers who never returned and gave the ultimate sacrifice, their lives.
- A single red rose represents those soldiers who suffered injury, shed blood, and died for our freedom.
- There are nearly 37,000 soldiers still missing in action. 30,314 from World War II, 4,759 from the Korean War, 1,643 from the Vietnam war and 4 from Iraq and Afghanistan wars. For these soldiers, a single yellow rose is placed alongside the white & red roses.
- Next to the plate we place a black napkin the black symbolizes deep sorrow felt by family, friends and comrades of those soldiers who never returned.
- A handful of salt sprinkled in the plate represents the many tears shed by those missing in action and the tears shed by their families and friends; those who still seek answers.
- A slice of lemon placed on the rim of the plate reminds us of the bitter fate of those who were captured, missing in action, or killed in a foreign land.
- The inverted glass symbolizes the inability of the soldiers to be present and share in the meal.
- The empty chair leaned against the table, their absence.
- A white candle placed in the center of the table and lit is to remember that the light of America will always be the light in a world of darkness.
- May we always remember and always honor America’s prisoners of war, those missing in action; those who never returned from war.
- May we always honor our veterans, those who are now serving & those who have served in the past.
- May they receive the respect and thanks they so richly deserve from each and every one of us.