



HISTORY OF THE POW/MIA FLAG

In 1971, Mrs. Michael Hoff, an MIA wife and member of the National League of Families, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida Times-Union, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice President of Annin & Company which had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the People's Republic of China, as a part of their policy to provide flags to all United Nations members states. Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he, along with Annin's advertising agency, designed a flag to represent our missing men. Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution.

On March 9, 1989, an official League flag, which flew over the White House on 1988 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, was installed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda as a result of legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th Congress. In a demonstration of bipartisan Congressional support, the leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony.

The League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever displayed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda where it will stand as a powerful symbol of national commitment to America's POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting has been achieved for U.S. personnel still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

On August 10, 1990, the 101st Congress passed U.S. Public Law 101-355, which recognized the League's POW/MIA flag and designated it "as the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation".

The importance of the League's POW/MIA flag lies in its continued visibility, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIAs.

Other than "Old Glory", the League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever to fly over the White House, having been displayed in this place of honor on National POW/MIA Recognition Day since 1982. With passage of Section 1082 of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act during the first term of the 105th Congress, the League's POW/MIA flag will fly each year on Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day National POW/MIA Recognition Day and Veterans Day on the grounds or in the public lobbies of major military installations as designated by the Secretary of the Defense, all Federal national cemeteries, the National Korean War Veterans Memorial, the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the White House. The United States Postal Service post offices and at the official offices of the Secretaries of State, Defense and Veteran's Affairs, and Director of the Selective Service System.