



The White Table

The White Table originated during the Vietnam War as a symbol for and remembrance of service members held as prisoners of war or missing in action. Solitary and solemn, it is a table where no one ever sits. Today this table is set in honor of all the men and women who serve in America's armed forces. Tables are set in Dining Halls of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force across our country. We have set this table to help us remember and honor those who have served so that we may enjoy freedom!

Each item on the table has a special meaning.

- A small table symbolizes one soldier's lonely battle against many.
- The white cloth honors a soldier's pure heart when he answers his country's call to duty.
- A lemon slice is placed on the plate to show a captive's soldier's bitter fate.
- Salt is sprinkled on the plate to symbolize the tears of families waiting for loved ones to return.

- HERO is traced into the salt to symbolize how we feel about each service member. This was traced into the salt by one of the children who has a cousin currently serving in Afghanistan.
- We push an empty chair to the table for the missing soldiers who are not here.
- a black napkin placed on the table to symbolize the sorrow of captivity.
- A glass is turned over for the meal that won't be eaten.
- A white candle is placed on the table as a symbol for peace.
- A red rose in a vase tied with a red ribbon is a symbol of the hope that all our service people will return someday.

The Magic Carpet Book Club meets monthly at the Canton Public Library. Offered free of charge to students in grades 1-5, this program run by Self Help Inc./CFCE program, takes children on a journey through different points of American history through books and projects. The children listened to the story The White Table by Margaret Theis Raven.