

# GOLD STAR FAMILY FILM SCREENINGS

**RESERVE  
FREE TICKETS**



MAY 10, 2023 @ DAR CONSTITUTION HALL

*War reverberates for generations. For six Gold Star daughters and a sister of the Vietnam War —War is not the final word. Over a lifetime, these women have sought to share a greater understanding of their losses to war through powerful storytelling.*

*Each woman holds lessons learned. Six films illuminate the sacrifice, triumph, and heart to move forward from the shadow of Vietnam.*

*Touching on a poignant arc of experience during and after the war, these films define what it means to be a Gold Star Family.*



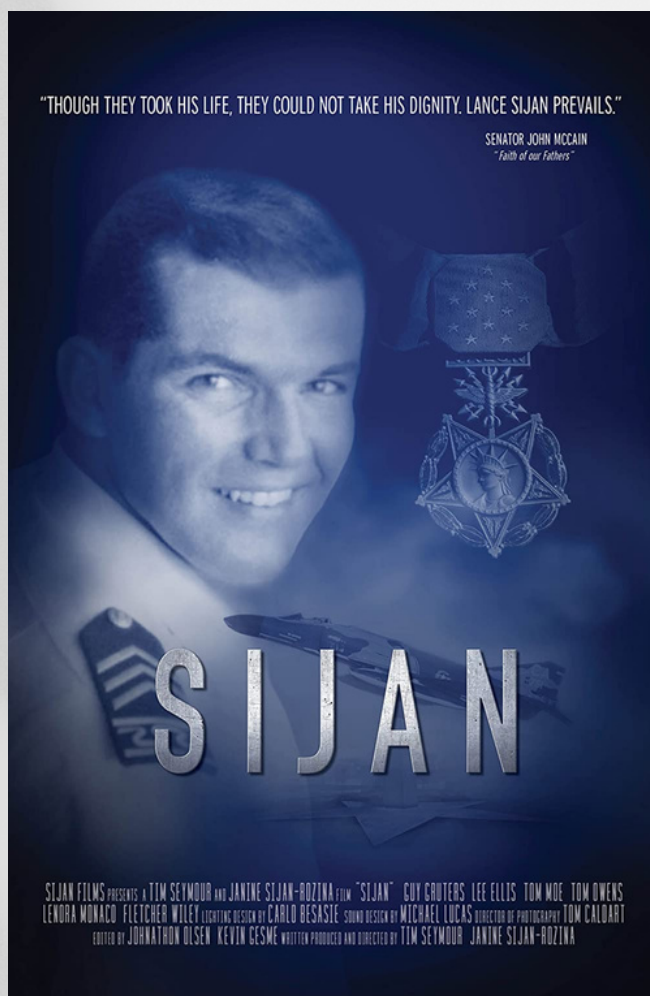
Image: Based on photo by Brittany Morgan, painting by Dave Rappaport

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS:



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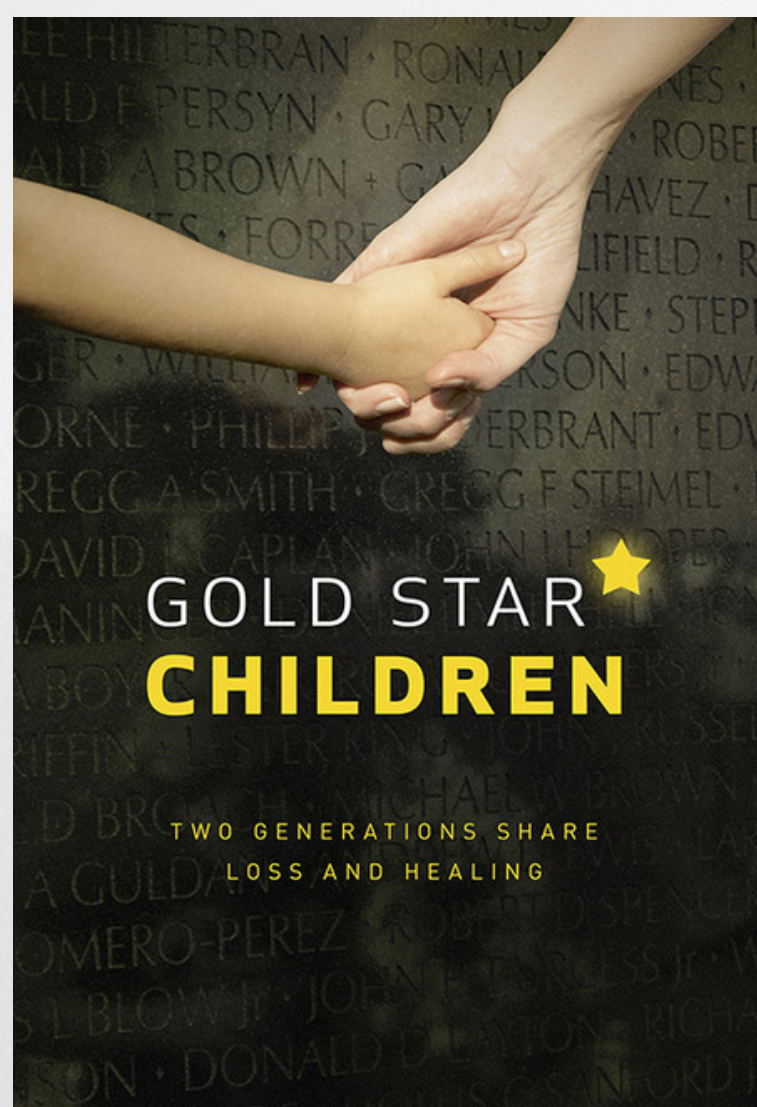
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**SIJAN-** produced and directed by the sister of U.S. Air Force Captain Lance P. Sijan. This inspiring and heartfelt documentary is a tribute to the resilience and camaraderie America's POWs upheld during the Vietnam War. Sijan's sister, Janine Sijan-Rozina, tells the story of not only an airman, but a man—an older brother, a son, a friend. A graduate of the United States Air Force Academy, Sijan's story reflects the optimism he held for his country and sense of duty. Fellow POW veterans who lived with Sijan detail his final days and incredible will to survive. Sijan, a posthumously awarded Medal of Honor recipient, evaded the North Vietnamese for a harrowing six weeks after being shot down in November 1967. *Today, Janine leads resiliency training for the USAF at installations across the globe.*



**BLOOD ROAD-** Released in 2017, Blood Road follows the journey of ultra-endurance mountain bike athlete Rebecca Rusch and her Vietnamese riding partner, Huyen Nguyen, as they pedal 1,200 miles along the infamous Ho Chi Minh Trail through the dense jungles of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Their goal: to reach the crash site and final resting place of Rebecca's father, a U.S. Air Force pilot shot down over Laos some 40 years earlier. During this poignant voyage of self-discovery, the women push their bodies to the limit while learning more about the historic 'Blood Road' they're pedaling and how the Vietnam War shaped their lives in different ways. *MIA daughter Rebecca Rusch and her sister BG Sharon Bannister, USAF, a member of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's board of directors, are frequent speakers on the POW/MIA issue.*



**GOLD STAR CHILDREN-** an award-winning documentary about child survivors of war casualties. Director/Producer Mitty Mirrer is also the Gold Star daughter of Marine Capt. William A Griffis, III. This intimate look at children who have lost a parent to war follows the parallel journeys of two generations of our nation's Gold Star Children. Gold Star Children who lost parents serving in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq work together to ensure that all child survivors know they are not alone. The film opens a window on a unique part of the American story—one that has been tragically overlooked and is happening now. Ultimately, this is a story about the redemptive power of sharing and resilience of America's Gold Star Children. In 2008, *Mitty founded Gold Star Children, a nonprofit organization dedicated to raising awareness about Gold Star children, and military surviving families.*

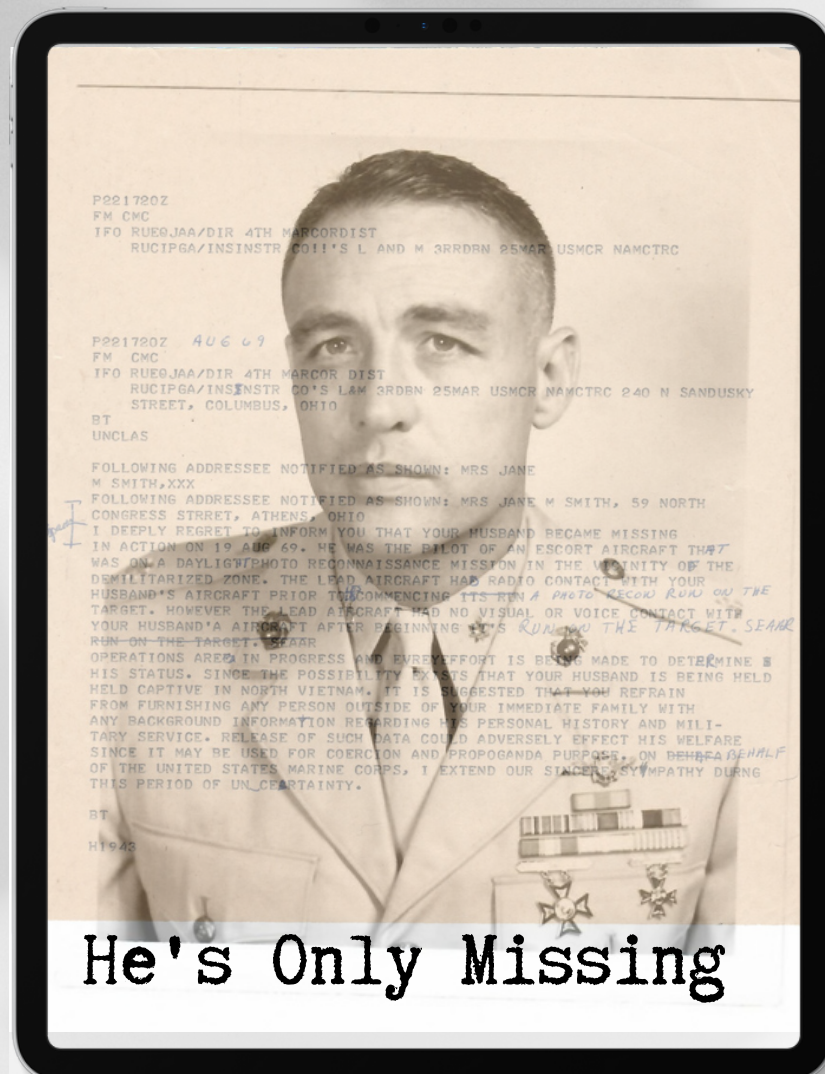
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**THEY WERE OUR FATHERS** is a documentary narrated by Director/Producer Jill Hubbs whose father Navy Commander Donald Hubbs became Missing in Action during his second tour of duty in Vietnam, and who remains unaccounted for today. The film features the stories of America's Gold Star Children from the Vietnam War—members of Sons and Daughters in Touch, a non-profit established in 1989 to locate, unite and support the estimated 20,000 American children who lost fathers in the Vietnam War. These stories of loss, patriotism and honor are powerful testimonies of the true costs of war. Jill is the General Manager of WSRE (PBS) in Pensacola, FL.



**HE'S ONLY MISSING** - The American POWs were released in 1973, and my father, Lt. Col. Robert Norman Smith USMC, was not among them. The absence of information allowed the possibility of hope to linger. In 1978, I produced this film to try to explain what it feels like to live in this state of limbo, never really knowing the circumstances of a loss. Years later, fragments of what happened began to emerge with the discovery of some bones in the village of Phuy Thuy. A CBS News television crew followed me and my husband as an elderly former Viet Cong soldier led us into the jungle to see remnants that remained at the crash site. "Your father is sacred," he told me through a translator. "His soul led you to this place. You may not find everything you are looking for, but you will find what you need to know." The story of our journey, "Letting Go," aired on CBS News in 1995. Robin Smith is an Emmy Award-winning producer and Founder and President of Video/Action Fund.



**THE 2 SIDES PROJECT** is an award-winning documentary that follows the unforgettable journey of six U.S. sons and daughters as they discover a country and a people with whom they share a common history. Over 11 days in December 2015, American and Vietnamese sons and daughters—who had all lost fathers on opposite sides of the war—held the first-ever formal meetings. The film captures the entire story, not just the transformative two sides encounter, but the profoundly moving experiences these Americans had while visiting the sites where their fathers died, and the powerful encounters they had with the country itself. The 2 Sides Project was produced by Margot Carlson Delogne, whose father, Air Force Captain John W. Carlson, was killed on December 7, 1966. His body was never recovered, and he remains missing in action.



## RESERVE YOUR FREE TICKETS

Scan the QR code to reserve your **FREE** ticket for entry to the theater for all six films as well as the reception. Refreshments will be available throughout the day.

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*Courage is the price that life exacts for granting peace.*

-Amelia Earhart

Join moderators Colleen Shine and Donna Houle as they explore the uncertainty of the POW/MIA issue, the unbroken will of America's POWs, bridge to today's Gold Star Families, and illuminate international and intergenerational perspectives on the costs of war—from the women who bore the burden of loss and picked up the pieces.

## MAY 10, 2023 - SCHEDULE

10:30 – 11:30	He's Only Missing & Letting Go
11:30 - 12:45	Gold Star Children
12:45 - 2:00	Lunch Break
2:00 - 3:00	They Were Our Fathers
3:15 – 4:15	The 2 Sides Project
4:30 - 5:45	Sijan
5:45 - 7:00	Reception
7:00 - 8:45	Blood Road
8:45 - 9:15	Cookies & Conversation

PLEASE NOTE: SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

**Colleen Shine** is the Gold Star Daughter of Air Force fighter pilot Lt Col Anthony C. Shine, who was MIA in Vietnam from 1972 until his remains were repatriated in 1996. An Advisor and Founding Director of Sons and Daughters in Touch, the nation's first military service organization serving Gold Star Children, Colleen is a graduate of Wellesley College, and a lifelong advocate for the military, veterans, and Gold Star and POW/MIA Families. She is Mentor to the Air Force Survivor Advocacy Council and Liaison for the Air Force Top Gun Award in her father's name.

**Donna Houle**, Senior Director, Memorial Engagement & Impact has been in leadership positions with the Military Women's Memorial since before its founding in 1997. Donna has led the Memorial for over two decades working closely with the Memorial's founder Brigadier General Wilma Vaught and the executive team. She has interacted and facilitated countless programs and initiatives that cater to and assist military personnel, focusing mainly on servicewomen and their families. It is with a particular passion that Donna supports our country's military, veterans, and Gold Star Families.