

**Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary**  
**Department of New Mexico**  
**Americanism/Patriotic Instructor**

**Promotional #7**  
**1,2026**

**January**

**To: Diana Russell-Milton, National Ambassador**

**Jeanette D. Garcia, Department President of New Mexico**

In this promotional I would like to go over the Missing Man Table, sometimes referred to the "Fallen Comrade Table."

The Missing man Table has a historical background that runs back to the Vietnam War. It was initially established to remember Prisoners of War (POWs) and Missing in Action (MIA) service members. Over time, this tradition has extended to include all fallen, missing, or imprisoned service members.

Each item on the Missing Man table represents the emotions and feelings reserved for those who did not come home. The ceremony symbolizes that they are with us, here in spirit. All Americans should never forget the brave men and women who answered our nation's call to serve and have fought for our freedom with honor.

The symbolism of the Missing Man Table:

**The table is round**, the table is round, to show our everlasting concern for our missing comrades.

**The cloth is white**, symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to service.

**The single red rose**, displayed in a vase, reminds us of the lives of those Americans and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith while seeking answers.

**The red ribbon:** symbolizes our continued determination to account for our missing.

**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,** symbolizing their inability to share a toast.

**The chair is empty;** the seat remains unclaimed at the table.

Proud to be an American

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