

WHY AM I PADDLING SOLO DOWN THE MISSISSIPPI?

In 2012 I became affiliated with American Huey 369 as a member and supporter. Throughout the subsequent years I also had the opportunity to see this special team of pilots and crews honor our Vietnam Gold Star families. The effect of Huey 369's honor flights for these families has been nothing short of astounding. The Families are finally receiving a long overdue honor.

While I was doing research for my book "Mission of Honor" I met and spoke to many Gold Star families. Believe me this was not a club that they wanted to join. I consistently heard the same story. No honor, No support, No thanks so we just didn't talk about it.

This deeply moved me to realize the terrible wrong we have done as a country to these wonderful American families. So much so that I decided to put my life on hold for a couple months and start a MOVEMENT. And to get attention to this movement I decided to do something audacious. Something most Americans would never consider doing: A solo canoe paddle the entire length of the Mississippi River.

And just what is this MOVEMENT?

It's a movement to get Americans to appreciate the deep sacrifices of our Gold Star families. We owe them some honor. It does not have to be much, but it does have to be SOMETHING. A card, an email, a phone call.

Just something small will do.

With every media exposure I get along the way down the Mississippi I will tell this story. And I will ask for action to honor these families.

I also hope to personally meet and thank many of these families along the river. I have stops planned in every major and midsized city along the route.

The Gold Star Paddle starts at "ice out" in Lake Itasca, MN. This could be as early as April 20 or 22nd. Earth day April 22 is my goal if the weather is cooperating.