

Colorado Springs Chapter, CO Article for Officer Review Magazine

TITLE: COS MOWW Welcomes Vietnam POW, CAPT Mike McGrath, USN (Ret)

The Colorado Springs (COS), Colorado Chapter of MOWW was honored to welcome Captain Mike McGrath, US Navy (Retired), as our guest speaker on 22 November 2025. CAPT McGrath is a Naval Academy Graduate, a Distinguished Naval Aviator, a Vietnam Prisoner of War (POW), a COS MOWW Companion, and a local legend. He addressed a group of 53 MOWW Companions and Guests along with Parents and High School Students from the Colorado Springs Falcon Aerolab, a record attendance for a monthly meeting. Flying off the aircraft carrier, USS Ranger, he flew 157 missions over Southeast Asia. Later, in 1967, flying off the USS Constellation during his 22nd combat mission, he was shot down and taken as a prisoner of war where he was held captive for six years. Suffering extreme mental and physical cruelties, Mike resisted these brutalities and was released in 1973. He has held numerous positions in the Navy since then and upon retirement flew for United Airlines.

CAPT McGrath provided insights into his life and struggles as a Vietnam POW as well as valuable lessons on leadership, communication, and companionship while trying to survive torture and harsh living conditions in the “Hanoi Hilton“. He spoke of the resilience of the American POWs, their small acts of resistance, and their unwavering belief that they would someday be freed from captivity. He also provided an update on “Stolen Valor“, the effort to purge the Veteran’s Affairs (VA) roles of over 2,000 veterans who are falsely receiving benefits by claiming to be repatriated American POWs. He maintains the names, addresses, and biographies of all known military POWs from all hostile actions since the Vietnam War and, together with other former POWs including Jessica Lynch from the Iraq War, is working tirelessly to convince the VA that their records are incorrect. A true American patriot and hero, CAPT McGrath exemplifies the MOWW motto that *It is Nobler to Serve than to be Served*.



CAPT Mike McGrath addresses COS MOWW