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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## Flagler County Public Library holds ‘White Table Ceremony’ on Saturday – November 4 at 11 a.m.

**October 17, 2023** – The Flagler County Public Library Palm Coast Main Branch will hold a “White Table Ceremony” to honor service men and women who are Prisoners of War or Missing in Action.

“The POW/MIA Honor Guard Detachment of 157 Air Force ROTC at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University will perform the ceremony,” said Library Director Holly Albanese. “Refreshments will follow, provided by the Friends of the Library.”

The ceremony, rich in military tradition, will be presented at 11 a.m. on Saturday, November 4. It represents the United States Army, the United States Navy, the United States Air Force, the United States Coast Guard, and the United States Marine Corps held prisoner or missing in action from all wars, but the tradition began at the end of the Vietnam War.

“This is always a very moving ceremony,” Albanese said. “We are presenting it in recognition of Veterans Day.”

The table and ceremony script will remain set up at the library through Monday, November 6. Each element of the display holds a special meaning.

The white cloth symbolizes purity of the motives of servicemen and servicewomen when answering the call of duty so their children could remain free. A lone candle symbolizes the frailty of prisoners, each standing up alone against their oppressors. The black ribbon on the candle serves as a reminder that they may not be coming home.

A single rose is a reminder of the families and loved ones who keep the faith. One slice of lemon on the bread plate symbolizes their bitter fate should they never return home. Salt is symbolic of the families’ tears as they wait and remember. An inverted glass on the table symbolizes that their loved ones cannot toast with them today, but maybe tomorrow.

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Andy Dance  
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Greg Hansen  
District 2

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Leann Pennington  
District 4

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District 5

The red ribbon on the flower vase – and the yellow ribbons worn by scores – personify those who await their return. A faded picture on the table expresses how much they are both missed and remembered by their families. Their chairs are tipped because they are not here, but space is saved for them in hopes of their return.

“I appreciate the library hosting this ceremony annually,” County Administrator Heidi Petito said. “We should never forget the brave men and women who answered our nation’s call to serve and fought for our freedom with honor.”

The library is located at 2500 Palm Coast Parkway Northwest.

For more information, call 386-446-6763 and select option 1, or go to the Library’s Facebook page: [www.Facebook.com/FlaglerCountyPublicLibrary](http://www.Facebook.com/FlaglerCountyPublicLibrary).

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