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**FORMER POW "SEES HIMSELF" IN MIAMI BOAT SHOW EXHIBIT**  
**Latham Marine's Tribute to the U.S. Military Awarded Best Engine/Accessories Display**

One doesn't travel cross-country to attend a boat show and expect to see a car. Nor does one expect to see his name hand-painted on that 1955 Chevy Dragster; but that is what happened to US military veteran Paul L. Granger of San Diego, CA, when he came upon The POW Race Car in the Latham Marine exhibit at the Miami International Boat Show.

The one-of-a-kind rolling tribute is the work of Max Loffgren, a retired firefighter and Viet Nam-era veteran, who designed the car to honor the 3,578 American POWs and those still listed as missing in action from the Viet Nam War. Bob and Kathy Latham, owners of Latham Marine, a 37-year industry leader in performance marine steering and Made in the USA accessories, wanted to honor our nation's military during the annual Miami show and included the car in their expanded booth.

Loffgren explained the history and purpose of the vehicle and his non-profit association and website [www.neverforgotteninc.org](http://www.neverforgotteninc.org), to Granger, who was unaware of the POW Dragster prior to the show. As the story unfolded, a friend pointed out that Granger's name would likely be on the car. As a 27 year-old Air Force Lieutenant flying B-52's in December, 1972, Paul Granger, his crew and the crew of a second bomber was shot down over Hanoi. Those who survived were taken as prisoners.

Granger, who was released in March of 1973, said it was "interesting" seeing his name, along with those of friends and fellow crew members, then further explained modestly, "I'm embarrassed to see my name among those who made a far greater sacrifice than I, some the ultimate sacrifice. Everyone who served should have their name listed in tribute." He explained that the concept of the POW Dragster is more than it appears, "The names on that car, to me, are a symbol to represent all who served. I hope it allows other vets to feel pride in their service and know that the car represents them as well. Some POWs returned home to parades. Not everyone got that sort of reception."

Granger approached the car with caution, having seen his share of POWs exploitation, but commended Loffgren and the Latham's. "Max is to be congratulated for a professional and respectful presentation and you could tell from talking with Kathy and Bob that their hearts are really in it, it's not just a promotional activity for them," he said.

Granger signed the car's tailfin – joining a handful of other POWs, as well as a copy of "We Came Home," a book that provides brief biographical information on most of the returning POWs.

The POW Race Car drew heavy traffic to the Latham display, where people of all ages admired the car for its hand-built craftsmanship as well as its remembrance message. Among them, Deidra Bridger, of Tampa, Florida, who was emotionally moved to find her father, Barry Bridger, listed on the car. The display was awarded "Best Engine / Engine Accessories Display by the National Marine Manufacturers Association which produces the Miami International Boat Show. "I am so proud that we were able to achieve this award," said Kathy Latham, "It is an honor to show respect to our parents who served and to all of the US Military, past and present."

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