

EX-POW BULLETIN

the official voice of the
American Ex-Prisoners of War

501(c)3 Veterans Service Organization

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April/May/June 2019



We exist to help those who cannot help themselves



~ Memorial Day 2019 ~

MEMORIAL DAY



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PRODUCED BY AIR FORCE NEWS AGENCY

April/May/June 2019

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Happy Birthday, AXPOW!

April 9, 1942

In the Philippines... American General King surrenders 75,000 men (12,000 Americans) to the Japanese. A death march begins for the prisoners as they are taken to San Fernando, 100 miles away. Many thousands of them die on the march. Resistance continues in isolated areas of Luzon and other islands. General Wainwright and his troops continue to hold out on Corregidor Island.

At home... Information was leaking out about the atrocities and sub-human treatment that American prisoners of war were receiving in Japanese prison camps in the Pacific. When wives and mothers heard about their sons and husbands who had been taken prisoner, they started calling and writing their congressmen in an effort to find help or get assistance for their loved ones. Finally, two mothers, whose sons were members of the 200th Coast Artillery and had been captured by the Japanese, came up with an idea. It was Mrs. Charles W. Bickford and Mrs. Fred E. Landon who, on April 10, 1942, persuaded other parents and relatives to hold a mass meeting. They formed an organization to get relief to the captured boys on Bataan. On April 14th, the Bataan Relief Organization began with Dr. V. H. Spensley, as Chairman.

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Deadline for the July-Sept 2019 issue is June 1, 2019.

Please send all materials to the editor at the above address.

AXPOW Challenge Coins - featured on the back cover:

History of the Challenge Coin

During WWI, in one squadron, a wealthy lieutenant ordered medallions struck in solid bronze and presented them to his unit. It became tradition to ensure that all members carried their medallion or coin at all times. This was accomplished through challenge in the following manner - a challenger would ask to see the medallion. If the challenged could not produce a medallion, they were required to buy a drink of choice for the member who challenged them. If the challenged member produced a medallion, then the challenging member was required to pay for the drink. This tradition continued on throughout the war and for many years after the war while surviving members of the squadron were still alive.

From WWI through today, the challenge coin tradition has spread throughout military units, in all branches of service, and even to non-military organizations as well as the United States Congress, which produces challenge coins for members of Congress to give to constituents. Today, challenge coins are given to members upon joining an organization, as an award to improve morale, and sold to commemorate special occasions or as fundraisers.

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“Come Together...”

This year we remember the end of the era fifty years ago that molded our values and defined our baby boom generation—the sixties. IMUS, often recanted on his morning radio show, “*if you remember the 60s, you didn’t live it*”.

The 1960s began when Nixon ended. It ushered in Camelot, yet took us to the brink of war during the Cuban missile crisis and the Bay of Pigs. The US went to the Moon and then around the world as The Peace Corp. We listened to the tribute of *Abraham, Martin and John* and then Bobby. Motown, R&B, and Rock’n’Roll flourished, and then “the music died”.

In Austin, shots rang out from the clock tower and stunned the Nation—our first mass shooting. *Marilyn* apparently took her own life—no more *Happy Birthday*. Wal-Mart opened; a new wall closed off the East. We learned about the U-2, watched the trial of Francis Gary Powers, and waited on the bridge. Another bridge, the Edmund Pettus, updated the historic shots at Concord.

Television also took us along *Route 66* with two guys in a Corvette and introduced us to the challenges of Gilligan’s Island while Hogan’s Heroes painted a grossly distorted, comical picture of The Stalags.

In the 60s, Johnson quit and Nixon came back. We got zip codes and mini skirts. The Civil Rights Act was signed; yet we are still trying for Equal Rights.

Some fans went to Super Bowl I, some others who characterized the *love* generation went to Woodstock, and too many went to Vietnam. *Rolling Thunder* began; today, others ride in their honor. For Sky, Viking, Dog, and all the others in The Fourth, who suffered the brutality and trauma, that experience marked another lifetime. They gave us, who would follow, the strength and courage to return with honor.

Later this month our AXPOW organization will meet in annual convention at Arlington, Texas, and I will pass this position as CEO to a new and vibrant officer. In this, my last article I want to offer some final thoughts from Faith Beyond Belief:

“For most, the trials of the War with Iraq are long forgotten.

For others, the loss of a spouse, a son or daughter, a mom or dad, a brother or sister, or a close friend serves as a painful reminder of the reality of war.

Yet these trails hold lessons of eternal value.

Our nation is only as great as the character and convictions of her people.

Our freedom is only as certain as our moral and military capacity to preserve it.

And, our faith is only enduring as our trust in God.

Some men still dream of freedom,

Others have never forgotten the price of freedom.

The families of those, whose names are long forgotten, still suffer the frustration of the unknown. Their hearts are imprisoned; an ancient enemy holds their dream captive.

They will suffer a lifetime with the torment of not knowing.”

From Psalms to songs, we recall the tunes of our times. One music reprise that still echoes from the sixties comes from The Beatles’ song “Come Together” originally written for a political campaign in California:

“Oh!
Come together
Yeah
Come together
Yeah
Come together...”

I encourage you to join us later this month for our annual meeting. And if you are unable, please consider other ways to lend your support. This organization exists to help those who cannot help themselves and to bolster the legacy of the POW experience.

God Bless.

David

Sepsis

What is sepsis?

Sepsis is a serious medical condition. It is caused by an overwhelming immune response to infection. The body releases immune chemicals into the blood to combat the infection. Those chemicals trigger widespread inflammation, which leads to blood clots and leaky blood vessels. As a result, blood flow is impaired, and that deprives organs of nutrients and oxygen and leads to organ damage.

In severe cases, one or more organs fail. In the worst cases, blood pressure drops, the heart weakens, and the patient spirals toward septic shock. Once this happens, multiple organs—lungs, kidneys, liver—may quickly fail, and the patient can die.

Sepsis is a major challenge in hospitals, where it's one of the leading causes of death. It is also a main reason why people are readmitted to the hospital. Sepsis occurs unpredictably and can progress rapidly.

What causes sepsis?

Many types of microbes can cause sepsis, including bacteria, fungi, and viruses. However, bacteria are the most common cause. In many cases, doctors cannot identify the source of infection.

Severe cases of sepsis often result from a body-wide infection that

spreads through the bloodstream. Invasive medical procedures such as inserting a tube into a vein can introduce bacteria into the bloodstream and bring on the condition. But sepsis can also come from an infection confined to one part of the body, such as the lungs, urinary tract, skin, or abdomen (including the appendix).

Who gets sepsis?

Anyone can get sepsis. The people at highest risk are infants, children, the elderly, and people who have serious injuries or medical problems such as diabetes, AIDS, cancer, or liver disease.

How many people get sepsis?

Severe sepsis strikes more than a million Americans every year,¹ and 15 to 30 percent of those people die. The number of sepsis cases per year has been on the rise in the United States.² This is likely due to several factors:

- There is increased awareness and tracking of sepsis.
- People with chronic diseases are living longer, and the average age in the United States is increasing. Sepsis is more common and more dangerous in the elderly and in those with chronic diseases.
- Some infections can no longer be cured with antibiotic drugs.

Such antibiotic-resistant infections can lead to sepsis.

· Medical advances have made organ transplant operations more common. People are at higher risk for sepsis if they have had an organ transplant or have undergone any other procedure that requires the use of medications to suppress the immune system.

What are the symptoms of sepsis?

Common symptoms of sepsis are fever, chills, rapid breathing and heart rate, rash, confusion, and disorientation. Many of these symptoms are also common in other conditions, making sepsis difficult to diagnose, especially in its early stages.

How is sepsis diagnosed?

Doctors will start by checking for the symptoms mentioned above. They may also test the person's blood for an abnormal number of white blood cells or the presence of bacteria or other infectious agents. Doctors may also use a chest X-ray or a CT scan to locate an infection.

How is sepsis treated?

Doctors typically treat people with sepsis in hospital intensive care units. Doctors try to stop the infection, protect the vital organs, and prevent a drop in blood pressure. This almost always includes the use of antibiotic medications and fluids. More seriously affected patients might

medsearch, cont'd...

need a breathing tube, kidney dialysis, or surgery to remove an infection. Despite years of research, scientists have not yet developed a medicine that specifically targets the aggressive immune response seen with sepsis.

More information about the symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of sepsis is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at <https://www.cdc.gov/sepsis>

Are there any long-term effects of sepsis?

Many people who survive severe sepsis recover completely, and their lives return to normal. But some people, especially those with pre-existing chronic diseases, may have permanent organ damage. For example, in someone who already has impaired kidneys, sepsis can lead to kidney failure that requires lifelong dialysis.

There is also some evidence that severe sepsis disrupts a person's immune system, making him or her more at risk for future infections. Studies have shown that people who have experienced sepsis have a higher risk of various medical conditions and death, even several years after the episode.

What is the economic cost of sepsis?

Sepsis treatment is expensive. It often involves a prolonged stay in the intensive care unit and complex therapies with high costs. The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality lists sepsis as the most expensive condition treated in U.S. hospitals, costing nearly \$24 billion in 2013.³ People with sepsis are two to three times more likely to be readmitted to the

hospital as people with many other conditions, including heart failure, pneumonia, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.⁴ Readmissions due to sepsis are also more expensive than readmissions due to any of these other conditions.

What research is being done on sepsis?

The National Institutes of Health supports many studies focused on sepsis (see the NIH RePORTER database), some of which are clinical trials (see <https://clinicaltrials.gov>). Some of these studies evaluate the effectiveness of potential treatments. Others seek molecular clues in patients' blood that could diagnose sepsis early, allowing doctors to treat the condition before it is too late. Still others examine sepsis in specific populations, such as premature babies, people with traumatic injuries, or long-term survivors.

Articles, videos, images, and more about physical trauma and sepsis can be found on the NIGMS Science Education page.

NIGMS does not provide specific medical advice, but rather provides users with information to help them better understand health and disease. Please consult with a qualified health care professional for answers to personal medical questions.

NIGMS is a part of the National Institutes of Health that supports basic research to increase our understanding of biological processes and lay the foundation for advances in disease diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. For more information on the Institute's research and training programs, see <https://www.nigms.nih.gov>.

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GET AHEAD OF SEPSIS

KNOW THE RISKS. SPOT THE SIGNS. ACT FAST.

legislative



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STATEMENT OF
CHARLES A. SUSINO
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AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS
OF WAR
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEES ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
U.S. SENATE/
U.S. HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C.

MARCH 7, 2019

Chairmen and members of the House and Senate Veteran's Affairs Committee and guests, my name is Charles A. Susino, National Director/Legislative Officer of the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

I thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns today. Many of you knew my father, Charles Susino, Jr., National Commander of our organization for many years. It was his voice that urged many of you to do the right thing on behalf of all veterans. I will attempt to channel that voice to-

day. This past July, my family and I, and the veteran community as a whole, lost the strongest advocate on behalf of those who cannot speak to you directly. Many of you knew my dad from his years of testifying. He professed to me and others, "it's about the deserving veterans receiving what they earned".

So it is on that theme that I proceed.

First, we wish to acknowledge the passing of a great American, the 41st President of the United States, George H. W. Bush this past November who proudly served this country both in the military and in public office.

We are grateful for your efforts over this past year. This Congress has stepped up and passed several key pieces of legislation in support of our veterans with respect to health care, compensation, and public awareness. We look forward to a productive 2019-2020 as the 116th Congress works on our behalf.

If you disagree with us – either here today in testimony – or as we work for our fellow veterans – please say so and we will respect your position. Otherwise we ask for your unwavering advocacy on these issues.

We draw your attention to several bills which we believe have special merit and request your active support.

The Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act HR 299 & 203 needs to be passed. It is beyond reasonable when the exposures endured by servicemen and women to dangerous chemicals and toxics takes decades for the

government to acknowledge and act. There is a long track record with Agent Orange and other chemicals, yet exposure, treatment, and compensation from 50+ years ago is still being debated. Fortunately the courts have agreed with the navy servicemen who were located within the waters of affected southeast Asia country that certain diseases should be a presumptive.

The previous Bill S 1990, Dependency and Indemnity Compensation Improvement Act must be reintroduced. Its purpose was to amend Title 38, United States Code, to increase amounts payable by the Department of Veterans Affairs for dependency and indemnity compensation, to modify the requirements for dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain veterans rated totally disabled at the time of death, and for other purposes. For many of our veteran's spouses, DIC is the only source of income and critical to their quality of life. We need to do better by them.

We must reintroduce the National POW/MIA Flag Act to amend Title 36, United States Code, to require that the POW/MIA flag be displayed on all days that the flag of the United States is displayed on certain Federal property. We must honor those who have served our nation courageously, including those who have not made it home.

Full Military Honors Bill has been reintroduced in this session and needs to be quickly passed. The Bills, in both the House and Senate, would provide full military honors for the funeral of an eligible veteran who:

1. is first interred or inurned in Arlington National Cemetery on or after enactment of this bill,

2. was awarded the medal of honor or the prisoner-of-war medal, and

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legislative, cont'd...

3. is not currently entitled to full military honors because of such veteran's grade.

We understand that Arlington Cemetery has quietly adopted the provisions of these Bills for Medal of Honor recipients; however, they are using the excuse of long waiting periods to deny expansion to former POWs. We feel it should be up to the families to make that decision.

"Gold Star- Families Remembrance Day". March 2, 2019 marks the 90th year to honor and recognize the sacrifices made by the veteran and their families who gave their lives to defend freedom.

While all present would agree it is demanding work to get the support to provide Bills to Congress for their consideration and ultimate passage however that is only the first step. The veteran's health benefit experience and improvement to their quality of life is a measure of Congressional action and the VA's timely and effective implementation. Implementation within a high performing organization. A high performing organization can only exist within a framework and culture of strong and accountable leadership and employees, modern systems to support the information needs, and continuous improvement. We believe these shortcomings continue to prevent the veteran receiving what they deserve.

- It is not modern for a IT system to allow you to schedule a physician appointment yet does not allow to cancel or reschedule.

- It is not modern for a treating physician to explain that I know the medicine you need but you need to see a different specialist to receive that care.

- It is not modern for veterans to be denied multiple medications because the physician explains, "that is the VA policy".

- It is not modern for a veteran to wait weeks for an appointment with their primary physician for a routine illness. Does the public wait weeks to see their physician for routine illnesses such as an ear ache or a sinus infection? Of course not and neither should the veteran.

Many would agree the modernization and culture are the most difficult to achieve. If that is the case than we need to provide the approach including the appropriate metrics to measure the level of attention both from within the VA and its oversight - Congress.

In 1981, Congress and the President passed Public Law 97-37. It mandated VA health care for veterans with service connected disabilities as well as other special groups of veterans. It included veterans up to WWI, some 58 years after the end of the war. WWII ended over 75 years ago.

We have asked you for the better part of the last decade to revisit the special groups and update to include veterans of WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Cold War, and our recent conflicts in the Middle East. We have requested for many years with no movement on the part of Congress. The political landscape is ever changing and this President may see it appropriate and fair treatment for those that have kept our country free.

Thank you for your attention.

Secretary Wilkie testifies that VA will accelerate disability benefits claims processing for Purple Heart Medal recipients.

On Feb. 26, 2019, at a congressional hearing, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie announced that effective in April, it will provide priority disability benefits claims processing for the initial claims from discharged combat Veterans who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

Secretary Wilkie announced his decision at a hearing before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies. "Those who hold the Purple Heart, the recognition of wounds taken in battle, will now receive priority consideration when it comes to claims before the Department of Veterans Affairs," said Secretary Wilkie. The Veterans Benefits Administration will amend its priority processing categories to include initial claims received from Purple Heart recipients on or after April 1, 2019.

Purple Heart recipients are already treated on a priority basis at VA hospitals and are exempt from co-payments for their medical care. The Purple Heart award is the oldest U.S. military decoration and is awarded to U.S. service members for wounds suffered at the hands of the enemy. General George Washington awarded the first purple-colored heart-shaped badges to soldiers who fought in the Continental Army during the American Revolution. In 1932, it was revived to commemorate Washington's 200th birthday.

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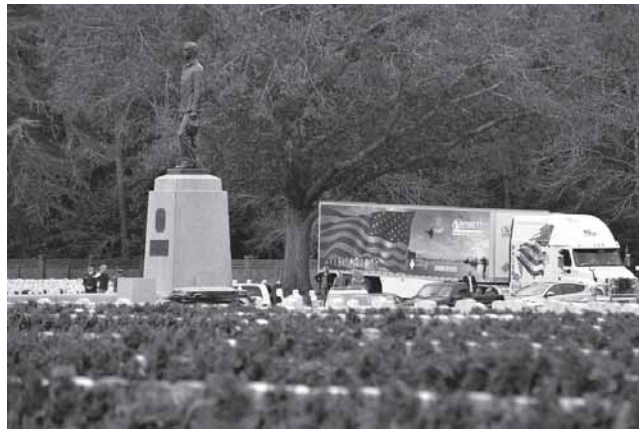
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Each December, Andersonville National Historic Site partners with the Civil Air Patrol and Wreaths Across America, a national program that encourages families, community groups, and individuals to sponsor wreaths for placement in national cemeteries across the United States. In 2017, this effort brought a record 3,654 wreaths for placement in Andersonville National Cemetery. The wreaths were delivered by Bennett International LLC.

After the 2017 event, Bennett International reached out to the park with an interest in increasing the number of wreaths brought to Andersonville National Cemetery. A partnership was established between Bennett International, the Civil Air Patrol, Wreaths Across America, and Andersonville National Historic Site. Over the course of the year, Bennett International and their nonprofit partner, the Taylor Foundation, led efforts to promote the event and set a new record for the number of wreaths sponsored for the park. The effort was incredibly successful, shattering the previous record and bringing 15,500 wreaths for placement at Andersonville National Cemetery.



On Friday, December 14th, Bennett International delivered the wreaths from McDonough, Georgia, to the park in a procession that included a police and helicopter escort. Three semi-tractor trailers were required to carry all 15,500 wreaths! Their route included a portion of Highway 19 named for local Ellaville native SFC Victor A. Anderson, who was killed in Iraq and is buried in Andersonville National Cemetery. Hundreds of boxes of wreaths were unloaded in the rain and strategically placed around the cemetery.

It was a chilly and wet morning Saturday, December 15th, 2018 as dawn came peeking through the pines around Andersonville National Cemetery and park staff made final preparations for the big event. The weather of the past few days had cast doubt as to how the event would go and how well it would be attended. But the morning proved to be clear and bright, and the event was so well attended that parking quickly overtook the cemetery roads and the overflow parking, spilling over to fill the museum parking lot and even the sides of the main park entrance road! This year's Wreaths Across America

event broke records both for number of wreaths and for attendance!

At noon, LTC Robert Kelley, Commander of the Civil Air Patrol, conducted a beautiful welcome ceremony. Park Superintendent Charles Sellars and Bennett International Vice

President Lee Gentry offered brief remarks. Then the approximately 600 people attending the event fanned out and began laying wreaths. It was inspiring to see so much support for Andersonville National Cemetery and the fallen military men and women buried there. By afternoon's end, a wreath lay on 15,500 of the over 20,000 graves in Andersonville National Cemetery. Many people remarked on the striking beauty



and stirring tribute created by tens of thousands of wreaths covering most of the national cemetery.

With the support and partnership of Bennett International, the Tay-

"There is nothing so American as our national parks.... The fundamental idea behind the parks...is that the country belongs to the people, that it is in process of making for the enrichment of the lives of all of us." -Franklin D. Roosevelt (1936)

andersonville, cont'd..

lor Foundation, The Civil Air Patrol, and Wreaths Across America, our new goal is to reach 20,000 wreaths by 2020. The hope and intention is to place a wreath on each and every grave in Andersonville National Cemetery and ensure that every military man and woman resting in honor within its walls is both remembered and honored. For more information about Wreaths Across America or to sponsor a wreath, visit their website:

(wreathscrossamerica.org).

From December 22 through January 25, most of the park was closed due to the federal lapse in appropriations. However, the national cemetery continued to be open to the public daily. Burial services for military veterans also continued as scheduled. On Saturday, January 26th, 2019, the park resumed full operation.

In January, the Victory From Within traveling exhibit left the Coronado Quivera Museum in Lyons, Kansas. The exhibit was so popular there that they had extended its display. After leaving Kansas, it was transported to Heroes Hall in Costa Mesa, California, where it will be on display until September. If you live in or plan to visit the Costa Mesa area, we encourage you to go to Heroes Hall and see the Victory From Within exhibit.

The past few months have also brought several staff changes to the park. Jennifer Hopkins, who has worked for the park's interpretation division for several years, was promoted to Lead Park Ranger and will manage daily operations at the National Prisoner of War Museum. Tony Jago, who has worked for the park's maintenance division for several years, was promoted to Facility Management System Specialist. Lindsay Galland was se-

lected as the new Education Technician for the park, a position that will help expand our education program and develop additional activities to teach students about POWs, the Civil War, and other topics. Adam Childs was hired as a Laborer for the park's maintenance division. Finally, Jaden Terry and Gloria Beard were hired as part-time Student Trainee Park Guides for the park's interpretation division.

With the early ending of winter our attention is now turned to the quickly arriving spring. Starting off our spring season is the annual Living History Weekend, held March 16-17 this year. Living Historians will portray Union prisoners and Confederate guards. Cannon firing demonstrations, distribution of rations, infantry firing demonstrations, children's activities, and other special programs will be offered. Our special guest speaker this year is Angela Zombeck, Assistant Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, who will present "Catholics in Captivity: Finding God in Andersonville". This annual event, which offers a small glimpse of life as a POW at Camp Sumter, is always well attended.

As National Former POW Recognition Day arrives on April 9th, the park will commemorate the occasion with the Avenue of Flags, which will be on display from April 5-19. Many visitors come to the park to see this dramatic display of over 200 full-sized American and POW/MIA flags. The park will also offer a special program on Sunday, April 7th. David Silkenat, Senior Lecturer of American History from the University of Edinburgh, will discuss his new book [Raising the White Flag](#), which examines

parole and exchange of POWs during the American Civil War. We invite all former POWs to attend this program and also to view our next temporary exhibit, the European Theater of World War II, which will be displayed at the National Prisoner of War Museum.

May will herald the arrival of one of our largest annual events, Memorial Day. This year's commemoration will begin with the raising of the Avenue of Flags on May 17th. More than 200 full-sized American flags will be on display until May 29th and will set a patriotic and reverent tone for the activities to come. On Saturday, May 25th, hundreds of scouts, families, and others gather to place a small American flag on each of the over 20,000 graves in Andersonville National Cemetery. On Sunday, May 26th, a special observance ceremony will be held. Finally on



Monday, May 27th, the Knights of Columbus will hold a traditional mass in the national cemetery.

Spring is a busy time of year at Andersonville National Historic Site, with many events and activities. Park entrance and all activities are free and open to the public. We hope you and your family will visit and join us for one or more of these special occasions.

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PHOTO 1: Hugh Peacock, NPS
PHOTO 2: Jody Mays, NPS
PHOTO 3: Hugh Peacock, NPS

namPOW news

Tales from the Hanoi Hilton—Commissioning three enlisted POWs in Hanoi.



By Navy Captain Mike McGrath

Here is a straight-from-the-horse's-mouth story about the commissioning of the three U.S. Air Force enlisted men held as Prisoners of War in the prisons of Hanoi, 1965-1973. The three enlisted men had been shot down and captured in North Vietnam while conducting rescue missions for downed Air Force pilots.

Flight Engineer A1C (E4) William Andrew Robinson and Pararescueman A3C (E2) Arthur Neil Black were flight crew members of a HH43B (62-4510) piloted by Captain Thomas Jerry Curtis, USAF and co-pilot 1Lt Duane Whitney Martin, USAF September 20, 1965. Curtis, Martin and Robinson were with the 38th Air Rescue Squadron. Black was attached to the 41st ARS. Both squadrons were based in Thailand. Black was a volunteer who jumped aboard the helicopter at the last moment without proper clothing or even a military identity card. All four of these rescue crewmembers became POWs. Robinson, Black and Curtis were captured along with the F105 pilot, Captain Willis Ellis Forby flying with the 334 TFS out of Takhli, Thailand. They were

taken to Hanoi while Martin evaded long enough to reach Laos. He was captured and placed in a primitive POW camp. Martin escaped on July 20, 1966 along with Navy pilot Lt (jg) Dieter Dengler. Shortly after their escape, 1Lt Martin was killed by a villager as he sought food and water. His remains have never been found. After two weeks surviving in the jungle, Dieter Dengler was spotted by a US helicopter, rescued and returned to Danang where he was hospitalized. Dengler was rescued a second time by his squadron mates from VA-145 aboard U.S. Ranger, CV61 when he was surreptitiously whisked out of the hospital and returned aboard Ranger.

Staff Sergeant (SSgt) (E5) Arthur Cormier was a Pararescueman aboard a CH3C (63-9685) helicopter piloted by Captain Warren Robert Lilly, USAF and co-pilot 1Lt Jerry Allen Singleton, USAF. They were flying with the 38th ARS out of Thailand when shot down during a rescue mission in North Vietnam November 6, 1965. A fourth member of the Jolly Green 85 crew, SSgt B.E. Naugle was rescued but was badly burned. Cormier, Lilly and Singleton became POWs in the infamous Hanoi Hilton. Cormier would later join the two Air Force Captains who were flying Rescap that day. Captain Richard Eugene Bolstad and Captain George Grigsby McKnight were flying separate A-1E Sandy aircraft from the 602 ACS, 6251 TFW out of Bien Hoa detached to Udorn, Thailand when shot down. The pilot they were trying to rescue was Lt Col George Carlton McCleary who had been shot down the day before. McCleary was flying a F-105D from the 357 TFS out of Korat, Thailand. McCleary was never spotted. He was presumptively found to have died. His remains

were returned to US control in July 1988.

Robinson, Black and Cormier ended up in 1968-1969 being held in Room 4 of the Zoo-Annex (Cu Loc prison). The Annex consisted of eight rooms each holding 9 POWs, all of whom held the ranks of O3 or below. The prison complex next door, the major part of Cu Loc, was called the Zoo. The Zoo held an equal number of POWs with the ranks of O4 and below.

On the night of May 10th, 1969 Air Force Captains John Arthur Dramesi and Edwin Lee Atterberry escaped from Room 5. The next day they were captured a few miles outside of Hanoi. Dramesi survived the torture but Atterberry died within two days of brutal interrogation. All the senior officers of each of the eight rooms of the Annex were removed from their cells and underwent intense and brutal interrogations. Beatings of all POWs in the camp with fan belts were common. Many were put in leg irons. All air vents were sealed and medical treatment was denied. In the 120 degree heat in the sealed cells, all men quickly developed boils, ringworm and heat rash over their bodies. The enlisted men were no exception.

The six officers of Room 4 decided that since the three enlisted men in their room, (Pararescueman A3C (E2) Arthur Neil Black, Pararescueman SSgt (E5) Arthur John Cormier, and Flight Engineer A1C (E4) William Andrew Robinson), were going through the same rough treatment as the rest of the officers in camp, they should be given a "battlefield commission." The SRO of Room 4, Lt (jg) Richard Marvin Brunhaver requested permission from Air Force Captain Conrad Trautman (Konnie), the Annex camp Senior Ranking Officer (SRO) in Room 5 to approve a battlefield commission for the three men.

Captain Trautman, the senior ranking officer of 72 junior officers in the Annex, agreed. He said the Air Force could consider the legality of the battlefield commission after eventual release. (Note: Release

nampow, cont'd...

came during Operation Homecoming, Feb-Mar 1973). The men of Room 4 set up an Officer Candidate Course for the three men. This later turned out to be an important decision which the Air Force took under consideration upon their return. After the officer candidate course was completed, Room 4 SRO, Skip Brunhaver turned over the responsibility of administering the Oath of Office, which can be found in Section 3331, Title 5, United States Code, to the senior ranking Air Force officer in Room 4, 1Lt John L. Borling.

Later, in Camp Unity, the senior ranking officer of all Vietnam POWs, Air Force Colonel John Peter Flynn was briefed on this event. After release of all POWs during Operation Homecoming, General Flynn took charge in presenting the issue to the Air Force. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force turned the commissioning down. Flynn then took it to the Secretary of the Air Force who in turn denied the commissioning. Flynn then went to the Secretary of Defense who in turn denied the commissioning. Flynn then did the unthinkable. He went to President Nixon and briefed the President on what these three men went through and what actions the officers of Room 4 had taken.

The President liked what he saw. He said, "Yes, make it happen." And it did. Brigadier General Flynn would later confide to Bill Robinson in a private conversation that this was one of his greatest accomplishments. He was extremely proud that he could accomplish the impossible for three men under his command.

The three enlisted men remained on active duty after their release February 12, 1973. Robinson and Black, both of whom had reached the rank of MSgt (E7), were sworn in as Air Force second lieutenants on April 9th, 1973. Briga-

dier General Flynn swore in Neil Black. Colonel Fred Vann Cherry, USAF swore in Bill Robinson. Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt) (E8) Art Cormier held off accepting his commission as he was up for promotion to Chief Master Sergeant CMSgt (E9). It was important to Art to reach this accomplishment, the highest level of promotion for the enlisted ranks. After reaching CMSgt (E9) in February 1974, Art Cormier accepted his promotion to 2Lt. Cormier's date of commission was back dated to April 9th, 1973. Arthur Neil Black would later retire with the rank of Major, USAF. William Andrew Robison and Arthur John Cormier would retire with the rank of Captain. Both William Robinson and Neil Black are recipients of the Air Force Cross, the nation's second highest military award behind only the Congressional Medal of Honor. They were the first Air Force enlisted men to receive the Air Force Cross.

Captain John Michael McGrath, USN (Ret):

Captain Mike McGrath, a native of Delta, Colorado, attended the University of Colorado for one year prior to entering the United States Naval Academy. Upon graduating from Annapolis in June 1962, he entered Naval Aviation flight training at NAS Pensacola, Florida. He was designated a Naval Aviator in November 1963.

In 1964, Mike's first tour was as a flight instructor with Training Squadron Two. He began his first sea duty tour in early 1965 when he joined the "Blue Diamonds" of VA-146. Flying the A-4C "Skyhawk," he flew 179 combat missions from the decks of USS Ranger and USS Constellation before being downed by enemy gunfire on June 30, 1967 over North Vietnam.

Destined to wait out the Vietnam War as a Prisoner of War for nearly

six years, Captain McGrath participated in communication and organization efforts to resist enemy exploitation. His experiences have been chronicled and illustrated in his book, *Prisoner of War—Six Years in Hanoi*. The book is in its 11th printing and is available from the Naval Institute.

Captain McGrath was repatriated on March 4, 1973. After rejoining his family in San Diego, he attended the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California. He graduated in September 1975 receiving a Masters Degree in Financial Management. He reported to VA-195 to fly the A7E before joining the VA-97 "Warhawks" as Executive Officer in October 1977. He took command in January 1979 to lead the squadron in highly successful WESTPAC cruises including operations on "Gonzo Station" during the Iranian hostage crisis. Following his sea tour, Captain McGrath reported to the U.S. Naval Academy as Chairman of the Leadership and Law Department. Mike's final Navy assignment was a three year tour as naval attaché in Quito, Ecuador. Mike retired from the Navy in January 1987.

Captain McGrath's military awards include: The Silver Star, Defense Superior Service Medal, two Legion of Merit Medals with Combat "V," two Distinguished Flying Crosses, two Bronze Stars with Combat "V," 17 Strike/Flight Air Medals, three Navy Commendation Medals with Combat "V," two Purple Hearts and the Prisoner of War Medal. Civil awards include his recent election to the Colorado chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame. Mike was the recipient of the 2003 Medal of Courage award.

Mike is married to the former Marlene Hanuschak of Youngstown, Ohio. They live in Monument, Colorado. Mike recently retired from United Airlines. Golf, fly fishing and six grandchildren keep the McGraths active as they enjoy life in the Colorado Rockies.



pow/mia

Mary Schantag, Chairman
P.O.W. Network
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2018 in Review

Per DPAA: 203 ACCOUNTED FOR
October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018

Results from the lab hit a high-water mark in FY18, with a total of 203 previously missing individuals being accounted for. The resolved losses included 10 from the Vietnam War, 156 from World War II, and 37 from the Korean War.

WWII identifications included the 100th identification from these disinterred USS Oklahoma remains. At the end of FY18, DPAA had identified 181 individuals from the ship's crew. Also identified was Capt. Lawrence Dickson, the first Tuskegee Airman accounted for out of 27 reported missing during World War II.

DPAA conducted more than 30 field missions involving partners in FY18, marking a ten-fold increase over FY17. Here is a list of the partners who were involved or are currently involved in these efforts:

- Terrestrial Investigation and Recovery: U. of Wisconsin, Archaeological and Historical Conservancy, U. of Maryland, Shoulder to Shoulder, U. of Queensland, St Mary's U., Cranfield U., U. of Illinois - Chicago, SEARCH, and History Flight.

- Underwater Investigation and Recovery: East Carolina U., U. of

Malta, U. of Delaware, Flanders Marine Institute, Institute of Maritime Heritage, Deep Sea Productions, SCRIPPS, Project Recover, and U.S. Navy SPAWAR.

- Surveys and Mission Support: Army Geospatial Command, U. of Warsaw Institute of Archaeology, and U. of New Orleans. PI also implemented cooperative agreements and grants; expanded the agency's volunteer program; and increased the "hub and spokes" program for historical research, with nine participating institutions: The Ohio State U., Temple U., Texas A&M, U. of Wisconsin, East Carolina U., U. of Southern Mississippi, Brigham Young U., and Tuskegee U. as well as the World War II Museum in New Orleans.

PRESCOTT, AZ (3TV/CBS 5)--A self-funded Arizona explorer [a non-profit called MIA Recoveries] has found nearly two dozen plane crashes from World War II, helping account for the remains of 193 American casualties that have been missing since World War II in the eastern Himalayas.

Clayton Kuhles, 65, of Prescott has been searching for missing aircraft wrecks near the borders of China, Myanmar and India since 2002... with a team of porters in hopes of bringing fallen American airmen home for a proper burial.

He has found and successfully identified 22 plane crashes from WWII...

...In December, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) said it has three teams actively working in the region to recover remains, but there are still hundreds of undiscovered wrecks...

DPAA said its efforts in the area are hampered by the "austere,

remote and dangerous" terrain and the "high cost of deploying teams."

Sears, the historian, said there may be another issue: the apathy of time....

According to Chris Carola with the Associated Press, in an article dated 02/01/19: ALBANY, N.Y. — American Legion officials are calling on New York lawmakers to request the Pentagon exhume the Long Island graves of sailors killed in a World War II ship explosion in an attempt to identify the fallen servicemen....

Four graves are known to contain the remains of some of the 136 sailors killed when the USS Turner exploded and sank near the entrance to New York Harbor on Jan. 3, 1944. The total number of sailors buried in each grave isn't known. Each gravestone is engraved with the words "Unknown U.S. Sailor" and the date of the sinking.

About 150 sailors survived the blast....

In February 2017, DPAA officials told the AP that dental records and other documents that could help identify the remains buried in the Long Island graves were missing. The agency said at that time the officials said an effort was being made to find those documents.

It couldn't immediately be determined from DPAA officials if the records were found.

Donna Knox, the daughter of Lt. Harold W. Downes, Jr., MIA as of January 13, 1952 says: Senate Bill 120, the Bring Our Heroes Home Act, has been limping around Senate halls since it was introduced to this Congress by Sen. Heller in [January] 2017....

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pow/mia cont'd...

So where does all this leave us? Still not knowing what intelligence lies buried in archives or file rooms that could bring answers from the dark corners of secrets past. We will have no way of changing that situation unless S-120 or its successor is passed...

But then, if our government wanted transparency on the issue, it would have brought it about decades ago. Which, of course, fuels the fire and makes me wonder *What are they hiding?* If the answer to that question is *Nothing*, what are they waiting for?

I challenge those in positions of influence to actively support the *Bring Our Heroes Home Act*. I challenge the American People, especially families whose loved ones remain missing, to pressure their elected officials to get this job done. The men who disappeared without an accounting deserve no less.

As of March 1, 2019, the current status of Unaccounted-for Americans Lost in the Vietnam War:

Vietnam	
Original Missing	1,973
Repatriated & Identified	727
Remain Missing	1,246
Laos	
Original Missing	573
Repatriated & Identified	285
Remain Missing	288
Cambodia	
Original Missing	90
Repatriated & Identified	42
Remain Missing	48
China	
Original Missing	10
Repatriated & Identified	3
Remain Missing	7

TOTAL Missing & Accounted-For
1,589

POW and MIA empty chair tribute unveiled in Winslow NJ

2019 WINSLOW TWP. – No one will sit in a new chair at the Winslow Township Municipal Building, but it will still have an important function, officials said. The commemorative chair will honor the nearly 82,000 American prisoners of war and soldiers missing in action. The chair, purchased by Winslow Township, will remain unoccupied as a poignant reminder of service member who have not returned home.

"It's a way to show young people exactly what our history is," said Winslow Mayor Barry Wright.

"Most of them probably don't know we lost 58,000 Americans in Vietnam."

Wright said his own brother served 13 months in Vietnam, and died from the effects of Agent Orange. The chair that honors POW and MIA service members was unveiled at a ceremony March 12, 2019 at the municipal building. Wright said a veterans group approached the township about purchasing and dedicating a chair. Winslow officials already have many connections with local veterans through their work with Veterans Haven at Ancora State Hospital and the township's VFW post. And Township Committeeman Carlos Vascos was newly assigned as a liaison to the Veterans Affairs Department, Wright said. The mayor added that the township believed the commemorative chair was just another way to acknowledge veterans' significance.

"You talk about what patriotism is, and you look at the people who sacrificed so much, and people who have not returned."



Sheri Berkery Cherry Hill Courier-Post
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civilians

Angus Lorenzen
bacepow@earthlink.net

BACEPOW
Bay Area Civilian Ex-
Prisoners of War.
Membership is open to
all former prisoners
of the Japanese, their
families, and friends.
There is an active
descendents group.
www.bacepow.net
Commander, Angus
Lorenzen

It is said that there are two things a person should avoid – visiting a factory to watch sausage being made and visiting the legislature to watch laws being made. There should be one addition, though it may be unavoidable, and that is to avoid watching history being made. It is disheartening to be there when something earth shattering happens, then to later read an historian's account that completely discredits what you saw.

Bilibid POW camp was liberated shortly after Santo Tomas. The civilians interned in Baguio had been transported to Bilibid in Manila in late December 1944. At a reunion years after liberation, they published a book in which it was stated that liberation occurred on February 5, 1945, and many written accounts support this date, so we have been regarding this as the banner day for the Bilibid prisoners. Then Jim Zobel dug up a letter from the MacArthur Memorial archives written by one of the 37th Infantry troopers who liberated the camp, recording the date as February 4, and there are ex-internees from Bilibid who are adamant that liberation was on the 4th. So how does History treat this discrepancy?

There is no question that Los Baños was liberated by 11th Airborne troopers on February 23, 1945. Internees remember guerillas streaming out of the jungle to attack the pillboxes at the camp entrance and to circle and enter the camp from the opposite side as the Japanese guards were in total disarray while the parachutists were dropping. Internees give credit to the guerillas, led by the 11th Airborne Reconnaissance Platoon, for suppressing the Japanese ability to counter the Airborne troopers and to keep casualties to a minimum. In his book, *Rescue at Los Baños*, Bruce Henderson gives very little credit to the guerillas.

In Santo Tomas, the rescued internees saw many things very differently. One case was the death of the hated deputy camp commander, Lt. Abiko. Many internees agree that they saw Abiko's body on the morning after liberation stretched out on a table in a small room beneath the stairwell in the rear lobby of the Main Building looking as if he had been beaten. But how did he die? A favorite story is that a group of internees caught him and beat him to death, then posed him in the room. There are at least 8 different stories about how he died, including one in which he was wounded and taken to the clinic next to the Main Building lobby, where he was patched up and moved to a bed in an adjacent women's dormitory where wounded GIs were being treated. When the woman whose bed he was in found him, she made such a fuss that he had to be removed, then died. The most credible story is that he was standing on the Plaza between the Main Building and the Education Building negotiating about the hostages with a group of American officers when

he reached across his body to a pocket in his blouse that was where Japanese often kept a grenade in case they were captured, and a GI shot him. When he went down, a group of internees standing nearby kicked his body, after which his body was dragged into the front lobby of the Main Building. I give this story some credibility since I observed his body there about ½ hour after the gate was breached and still there 15 minutes before the firefight in the Education building started. Which story will History record?

These anecdotes are not intended to challenge the accuracy of the reporters, but to illustrate how differently people can view a significant event. This is sometimes called "the fog of war", where people can't see, or remember events clearly, or misremember them. This is the challenge that historians face when trying to draw the whole truth from the myriad reports. People writing about their personal experiences in one of the camps or transcribing diaries need to be aware how discrepancies can creep into an account, which could then discredit it. Since several people have work in progress along this line, it is incumbent on BACEPOW to help them keep the record accurate, and to this end, we have created the position of Historian on our board of directors to:

- Respond to inquiries from people both within and outside BACEPOW to refer them to documentation or connect them to experts on the subject matter for help answering their research questions
- Facilitate collecting, preserving, digitizing and sharing materials documenting the internment camps and the Occupation (e.g. on the BACEPOW website) so that current and accurate information is available
- Review and provide feedback on materials (e.g., articles, books, films) submitted to

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civilians, cont'd...

BACEPOW for consistency and accuracy with actual events

Sally Meadows is this Historian, at sally.meadows.massey@gmail.com. She is working with her father to compile his records of Santo Tomas to donate to the MacArthur Memorial and has developed an extensive digital record of pertinent information.

Sally will work closely with Cliff Mills who is building a comprehensive website about the Philippine internment experience and is an important source, and he also answers inquiries about people and events in the camps from his extensive knowledge and files. The website is <http://philippineinternment.com> and is discussed in more detail in another article in this edition.

This gives us two terrific resources to help us develop information and keep our history as accurate as is possible under the circumstances and to penetrate the fog of war and fading memory.

WEIGHT CHECKING POPULAR SPORT AT SANTO TOMAS

MANILA, March 4. (AP) –

One of the longest queues in Manila is at the Santo Tomas scales.

As liberated internees and prisoners of war await transportation home they are eager to restore as much weight as possible now that good food is plentiful.

There is only one scale and every day they wait in line – persons who lost as much as 100 pounds under Japanese captivity – to see how many ounces they have put on daily. All have gained appreciably in the last couple of weeks, some enormously.



April 27, 2019. AXPOW Board of Directors meeting will be held at the Arlington Hilton, 2401 East Lamar Blvd., Arlington, TX. Make your room reservation directly with the hotel: 817-640-3322. Free airport shuttle/free parking. All are welcome!

August 9-10, 2019. Ohio State Convention will be held at Drury Inn and Suites, Grove City, Ohio. Please make your reservation by calling Drury Inn and Suites at 1-800-325-0720 and refer to Group No. 2350228. Or go online to www.druryhotels.com then enter Group number 2350228. Again this year, the Chapter is footing the bill for the rooms and all food. We would like to see all of you at the convention!!

News Briefs

VA's Appeals Modernization Act

New law streamlines department's current claims and appeals process for Veterans

On Feb. 19, 2019, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has implemented the Veterans Appeals Improvement and Modernization Act of 2017, which was signed into law Aug. 23, 2017, and represents one of the most signifi-

cant statutory changes to benefit Veterans in decades.

"This is a historic day for VA, its stakeholders and, most importantly, for Veterans and their families," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "The implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act comes as a direct result of collaboration among VA, Congress and Veteran Service Organizations to deliver on Veterans' longstanding desire for reform of the legacy appeals system. Beginning today, Veterans will have greater choice in how VA reviews their disagreement with a VA claims decision and enjoy timely resolutions of disagreements through a streamlined process."

Veterans who appeal a VA claims decision have three decision review options: Higher-Level Review, Supplemental Claim and Appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

VA's goal is to complete Supplemental Claims and Higher-Level Reviews in an average of 125 days, and decisions appealed to the Board for direct review in an average of 365 days. Under the legacy process, decisions averaged three to seven years.

VA remains committed to reducing significantly the inventory of legacy appeals. VA's fiscal year 2019 budget included funding for 605 additional appeals employees, which VA used to establish two new Decision Review Operations Centers at the St. Petersburg, Florida, and Seattle, Washington, regional offices. The former Appeals Resource Center in Washington, D.C., was converted to a third Decision Review Operations Center.

For more than 18 months, VA has worked toward full implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act, but reform has been a goal for VA and its stakeholders

news, cont'd...

for years. In March 2016, VA sponsored an "Appeals Summit" in which VA, Veterans Service Organizations, Veterans advocates and Congress worked together to design a new appeals system. The summit resulted in the drafting, passage and implementation of the Appeals Modernization Act.

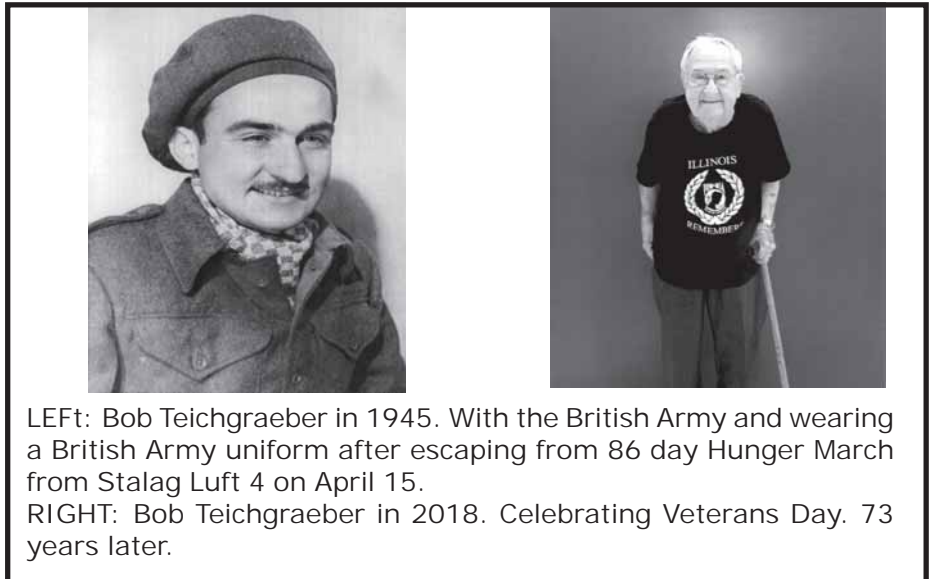
Health Records System

The Departments of Defense and Veterans Affairs are still trying to figure out how to best align their agencies' respective plans to create a common Cerner electronic health record system. Speaking on 13 FEB at the HIMSS19 conference in Orlando, DoD and VA program officials said coordinating their activities to ensure interoperable EHR systems is a work in progress, emphasizing that the agencies continue to discuss an optimal organizational design that will facilitate coordinated decision-making and oversight when it comes to governance.

Toward that end, the DoD and VA Interagency Program Office is working to establish joint EHR modernization governance bodies to foster coordination and improve communication between the departments. "We can't talk enough about the work that the Interagency Program Office has done to ensure that the DoD and VA are aligning around commercial standards and to also be able to provide a consolidated input between basically the two largest federal healthcare providers," Stacy Cummings, program executive officer for Defense Healthcare Management Systems, told a HIMSS audience.

Lost Carrier Discovered

USS Hornet is found in the South Pacific 77 years after it was sunk by the Imperial Japanese Navy



LEFT: Bob Teichgraeber in 1945. With the British Army and wearing a British Army uniform after escaping from 86 day Hunger March from Stalag Luft 4 on April 15.

RIGHT: Bob Teichgraeber in 2018. Celebrating Veterans Day. 73 years later.

The research vessel Petrel, owned by the estate of late Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen, discovered the Hornet three miles under the ocean surface off the Solomon Islands late last month. The Hornet, the last U.S. fleet carrier to be sunk by enemy fire, lost 140 hands under a relentless Japanese air bombing attack at the Battle of the Santa Cruz Islands on October 26, 1942. As Imperial Navy surface forces closed in, all hands were ordered to abandon ship, and the Hornet was finished off by enemy torpedoes and sent to its watery grave.

Fisher House Expansion

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that Fisher House Foundation plans to construct three new 16-suite Fisher Houses at VA campuses in Ann Arbor, Michigan; Aurora, Colorado; and Omaha, Nebraska; which will provide temporary accommodations for the families and caregivers of Veterans and active-duty military receiving care at the VA facilities. Construction for the new accommodations will begin within the next six months. "VA has a great and longstanding 25-year partnership with the Fisher

House Foundation and is pleased to expand support of their important mission," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "Since the first VA Fisher House was built in Albany, New York, staff and volunteers serve passionately with gratitude in a welcoming 'home away from home' for families of Veterans undergoing critical care and treatment at VA."

Mission Act

The VA Mission Act, a law that expands veterans' access to private doctors, is set to go into effect in June. VA Secretary Robert Wilkie unveiled proposed rules that stipulate when veterans would be allowed to receive private-sector medical treatment – changes that he said would revolutionize the VA health care system.

Under the VA's proposed rules, veterans who must drive more than 30 minutes to reach their VA mental health or primary care providers – or wait longer than 20 days for an appointment – would be allowed to use a private doctor. The VA plans to post the proposed rules to the Federal Register, where members of the public will be allowed to provide input. Some lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have urged Wilkie for more transparency and collaboration about the access standards.

Remembering Hands Across America: Why we need a massive act of kindness today more than ever

By Rich Garon

No one among those church volunteers on a cold, fall night in 1986 knew how it would turn out. They were preparing food and setting up cots and organizing for a group of homeless people who would spend the night in the small, sparsely furnished parish hall. At seven o'clock the doors opened and men, women and several children got ready to spend the next 12 hours in a warm, safe place.

It was a simple plan coordinated by a local non-profit and involving several Prince William County, Virginia churches. Beginning on a Sunday night, one church would host the shelter for one week, from seven pm to seven am. At the end of the week, volunteers from that church would bring supplies – cots, bedding, cooking equipment, and other items to the next church hosting the shelter. There were enough churches and enough turns to last through the winter of that year. Back then, there were no other shelters to house the homeless.

In the early stages of planning for this revolving shelter among churches, it became clear that more funds than initially envisioned would be needed to start and maintain the shelter. A \$5,000 grant from the Hands Across America campaign helped bankroll the operation during that winter that helped many avoid spending nights outside.

Hands Across America was a highly publicized event on May 25, 1986, where some six million people held hands in a chain across the United

States. Most in line donated ten dollars for their spot.

The aim was to channel funds to local charities. While some criticized the event as a publicity stunt with high administrative costs, the fact is that Hands Across America raised public consciousness to the issues of homelessness, hunger, and other issues relating to poverty. My two young children and I, holding hands in the chain in front of the Lincoln Memorial, felt that event to be very powerful and inspiring. I heard the same feelings voiced by many. There were more than enough people at that spot and the line doubled around and in some spots, tripled around. In some areas out west, the line didn't always connect, but estimates said that if the number of people had been evenly spread, the chain could have been unbroken.

The legacy of Hands Across America in my area of the nation was foundational. The money made available for the revolving church shelters in concert with the continued dedication of those and other churches, non-profits, individuals and the county government would eventually give rise to the creation of permanent shelters.

At first, the revolving churches shelter gave way to a renovated old motel with a freestanding kitchen. That building was torn down and a new state of the art shelter was constructed with private rooms, kitchen and laundry facilities, and counseling and employment services. Another new shelter was constructed at the other end of the county. Today, there are two additional facilities to support the homeless. One is a drop-in center open several hours

per day where showers, meals, counseling, clothes, and other essentials are available. The other, is an overnight shelter which expanded from just winter use to now providing year-round overnight shelter. The major non-profit (ACTS) supporting the original church shelter scheme has now grown in size and offers a considerable number of programs to support those in need of housing, food, and refuge from abusive domestic situations.

Hands Across America did have its detractors who claimed it wasn't well organized, that it raised nowhere near the money it sought, and that in a number of other ways it fell short of its goal. An article [LA Times May 26, 1986, Goal of Unbroken Chain Not Met: Millions Join in Concern for the Poor] the day after the event quoted Marty Rogol, one of organizers: "confusion was inevitable." He "warned reporters not to 'nit-pick'" and said further: "we created an event that is unheralded in human history. There is no way everybody will do everything right the first time. We controlled the event as well as any event could be controlled."

I know I shared with many people on the day of the event, a feeling that together we could help change things for the better. I was moved that so many parents there had the opportunity to join with their children in this celebration of the opportunity to do positive things.

Maybe it's time to again join hands across America. We can learn from earlier lessons. I don't know what effect technology unavailable thirty-one years ago would have on such an event, but I think the internet would help forge solid connections. Suppose we took a day and instead of sniping at opponents real and imagined, we sought their hand in a demonstra-

hands, cont'd...

tion of how great our nation can be in a sea of harmonious engagement. Efforts to bring our nation together should not be seen as publicity stunts. I'm sure there were people I saw in line that day that didn't embrace completely policies I thought fundamental to positive change. But maybe there was enough commonality to begin to build on. That's the way to frame a conversation, instead of shutting it down before it starts.

Hands Across America helped accelerate the shelter programs reaching out to the homeless in my area. Maybe a second event, involving a new generation, can reach Hands and Hearts Across America.

Rich Garon is an author and the former Chief-of-Staff for the Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives. Garon now spends much of his time working with the homeless, and all proceeds from his latest novel, *Lee Fitts*, will be donated to the Bill Mehr Drop-In Center for the homeless in his local community outside of Washington, D.C. For more information please visit www.richgaron.com.

K-9s for Warriors

The following is an excerpt from a blog on consumeradvocate.org written by Scott Smith.

James Rutland is a 12-year Army veteran who served a tour of duty in Iraq in 2004, followed by two more tours in South Korea. He left the military in 2014, suffering from multiple medical conditions related to his service, including mild traumatic brain injury (TBI), sleep apnea, and hearing loss, to name a few.



James Rutland, with his service dog Duncan

Most importantly, he suffered from depression and often thought about suicide. Thinking he could do it alone, Rutland tried healing from the trauma on his own. That wasn't working. "If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you always got," says Rutland.

In 2016, Rutland finally rounded the bend of recovery when he was paired with his service dog, Dunkin. "I started focusing on "we instead of "me", says Rutland.

He has a semi-colon tattoo on his right wrist, a known symbol of taking a pause when thinking about suicide. Unlike a "period" which ends a sentence, the semicolon creates a pause, for the reader, then continues the story. Rutland wears it proudly. "It's a great conversation starter," Rutland says.

He goes on to explain that breathing, family, friends, and the program that gave him Dunkin are what keeps him going.

K9s For Warriors is a BBB accredited charity organization located in Ponte Vedra, Florida, that has been pairing rescue dogs with traumatized soldiers since 2011. The dogs are trained to be service dogs, specifically performing tasks to quiet the symptoms of war trauma disabilities in soldiers. "The skillsets our dogs learn help these warriors with anxiety, isolation, depression, and nightmares," says Shari Duval, the founder of K9s For Warriors. "So, the warriors can function again in public."

Specifically, the dogs are trained to deal with symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury (TBI), or military sexual trauma (MST), as a result of military service on or after 9/11.-

Duval started the program after watching her son Brett Simon suffer from PTSD after he returned from Iraq. Simon did two tours, developing PTSD during the first one. Watching her son suffer from the debilitating condition motivated Duval to research alternative treatments to the standard talk therapy and medication, neither of which worked for her son.

k-9s, cont'd...

"On average, soldiers take 14 meds a day to treat PTSD, TBI, or MST," says Duval. If treatment is not working, she says veterans are prescribed more and more drugs. "I even knew one soldier who was taking 44 meds per day." After two years of researching alternative PTSD treatments, Duval came upon a program that paired service dogs to alleviate their PTSD symptoms in veterans.

According to Simon, "Mom was the one that suggested I use a service dog to deal with my PTSD when nothing else worked." Duval saw her son's symptoms begin to improve. She then wanted to help other veterans do the same.

Thus, the K9s For Warrior program was born. With her son's background in training dogs, including 13 years as a canine police officer, Duval convinced Simon to start the nonprofit together.

To date, the program has rescued more than 850 dogs and 440 military service members, with an astounding 99 percent program success rate.

Soldier, take me from this
shelter's cage.
Give me back my life. In return,
I'll cover your back.
I'll be your canine warrior, your
sixth sense.
I'll stand guard into the night
and chase the demons away,
the uninvited, cloaked in night
sweats and darkness.

I will help you open your cage of
solitude
then walk tall by your side into
the light of day.
Together, our faith will rise as
tall as your soldier's pride.
We are now family in this post-
911 world.
Because together, we stand.

-Bridget Cassidy

Your Stories

Gene Gabs

By Gene Evers
39439 NW Osterman Rd
Forest Grove, OR 97116

Being alone with only my thoughts and a lot of stare downs by angry guards (Yes, somewhat difficult to keep any thought going) and not knowing anything about what was going on in the world, you wonder what is happening.

In all that time, I had only two questions answered by my interrogators. I asked if Eisenhower had been elected President, he answered "Yes". After the guards wore dark ribbons for a few days, I asked the interrogator the next time he came in "Why?" Stalin had died. Shortly after arriving there he asked me if I knew where I was, I said "Mukden". He said "how did you know that?" He then slapped his own mouth. I didn't, but a good guess – just because I could hear jet engines. Because of guesses I had pulled when in North Korea, he thought I had a radio or something and had the guards pat me down and search everything more than once. He once asked me where the radio was hidden.

I had no information, but in late July or early August 1953 the morning rice gruel was the same, but the 2nd daily meal was increased, even got a spoon a couple of times to eat it with.

In mid-August, the guard motioned for me to get up and then motioned for me to walk around in the cell. What a change! What is this, after not being able to move for all this time?

In late August, they cut off my hair and beard then took me down the hall to a large tub about 6 ft. square and 2-½ ft. deep of hot water. I wanted to dive in to remove a year or more of filth, but never got past my crotch. TOO DAMN HOT!

I was given a new set of clothes and shoes to put on. Shoes were so narrow I couldn't get them clear on, but had to wear them anyway.

The last thing I was asked in that cell was "Where did you hide your weapon?" Of course I was not armed as I had stated, but I was not believed. The crew members would normally carry a .45 on their hip. I was asked that many times while I was there.

Late evening, Sept. 4, 1953, I was taken by jeep to a train. Three prisoners in the car, 1 front, 1 back and 1 center, with a guard by each, no one could talk or make a sound. I recognized Kenneth Bass, the tail gunner on our RB-29. When we crossed the Yalu River the next morning, Sept. 5th, the blinds were raised so we could see out at all the damage to the landscape. So many large craters from bombs – and people fishing in some.

This is the first time that I felt that we may be heading home.

That afternoon I was taken to a tent with 12 cots if I remember right. Yes, a cot, not on the floor or on the cold rocks. I was the only one there with a guard standing outside.

Late afternoon, the guard took me to a stage with several others. I'll be darned! They look like the RB-

gene gabs, cont'd...

29 crew! There were 2 or 3 large news reel cameras set up off stage recording this. Someone (Chinese) read a long list of things that we were supposed to have admitted doing. I don't remember much as I was in such a daze, but they talked about germ warfare and a whole bunch. When they were through, one officer yelled that it was not true and asked to see that paper. I was taken back to the tent and spent thenight there.

Sept. 6, 1953. The guard took me to a truck with all the crew except Harris and many started talking as I sat down. The Chinese person sitting in the back as I was said, "You must not talk". Same Strieby (co-pilot) yelled a few obscenities at him and said "You try to stop us", at which the Chinese turned his back to us and looked out the back of the truck.

Bill Koski, CFC gunner said to me, "Evers, I saved your life. They were going to shoot you for being a spy but I told them you were an ABC expert". I replied, "You bastard, that was on Sept. 18th wasn't it?" That's the day that hill hit me all over.

As we were driven to the bridge, what a sight to see the GI guards standing about 7 ft. tall with shining chromium helmets. The Chinese prisoners going the other way were throwing away the American-issued clothes. As we stopped at the Exchange Center, the Chink with us handed a clipboard to the officer there. (Seems it was a general, but I can't remember his name). He looked at his clipboard and said "Who in the hell are you? But welcome back".

Ted Harris (pilot), refused to come back saying he would not return because he had not signed or agreed to the statements as they were read. He was manually picked

up and forced into a jeep so arrived about 1-½ hours behind us (the rest of the crew).

Ted Harris was the last man to exchange in the Big Switch, even though some others have claimed to be. After a dish of ice-cream, a shower and new clothes, I went back to the pile of discarded POW uniforms and retrieved mine from the top of the pile. I still have it, but someone had stolen my cap and bowl.

I was flown to Tokyo General Hospital and kept there for more than a week, then flown to Hawaii and on to California. I was back in the States before the guys who came back on the ship. I had to go to reunions and meet other ex-POWs. What neat gentlemen!

Strange things happen. I was assigned to be a camera inspector in a factory in the Tokyo area that did contract work for the US Air Force and Navy so should not have been in any danger even though I had made two trips to South Korea for some work there.

My parents received a telegram that I had been killed in action in July 1952. Two days later, they received another stating that no bodies had been found, so I was listed as missing in action. This was quite puzzling to them as my job was in Tokyo. My brother Ed had visited me there a few weeks earlier as he was on his way home from front line duty with the 3rd Div. in North Korea. He presumed that the "Commies" had gotten me on the back streets of Tokyo. Don't remember ever walking there but when we drove from our FEAMCOM base to work we often had to avoid some routes. I usually took the train back and forth.

My parents only found some information on me as a couple of parents of other crew members got info that I was on that flight and passed it around. I still have some very nice letters that were sent our way.

As none of our crew was ever listed as POWs, when the Big Switch came around they all waited and hoped for the best. Sept. 4th came and no word, so they kind of gave up. On Sept. 6th, my dad has his prized Holsteins in the show ring at the Oregon State Fair in Salem when they announced over the loud speakers that I had been released. I guess some of the cows even got a big spooked from all the yelling after it all sunk in. Almost every time I go to the fair there, someone tells me about that and just what they were doing at the fair then.

Has anyone
seen this pin?



If you know its history or have any information about it, please contact:

SGT Gary Spencer, Curator/
Historian

North Carolina National Guard
Museum

4105 Reedy Creek RD

Raleigh, NC 27607

O-984-664-6544

C-919-749-7967

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Captured at Anzio

By Vickie Aldeus

Mail Tribune



American machine gunner Cordino "Cor" Longiotti was trapped with a handful of other soldiers in no man's land — caught in the crossfire between Allied and German forces.

In 1944, the Allies had invaded near the coastal town of Anzio in Italy. But the Germans, determined to drive them back into the Mediterranean Sea, strafed and bombed them with planes, then attacked with tanks.

Suffering from massive casualties, Allied troops pulled back, leaving Longiotti and his small machine gun squad alone on a road with their wounded sergeant.

"This was the worst battle of the war that I have seen; it was like being in hell itself," said Longiotti, who recounted his experiences in an interview and a book he wrote titled "The Way It Was: WWII."

Longiotti, 94, now lives outside Ashland, OR.

Being a machine gunner had always been one of the most dangerous jobs in World War II. Be-

cause of their firepower, machine guns were often targeted. Machine gunners were at risk of being shot or blown up with grenades.

A German tank fired at Longiotti's machine gun, knocking it out and leaving the squad with only a rifle and pistol.

Surrounded by the deafening noise of gunfire and mortars exploding around them, the men hoped the Allies would gain ground and come back.

Instead, on Feb. 18, 1944, German soldiers with bayonets on their rifles snuck up from behind, poked the men in their backs and ordered them to put their hands up. The men were forced to surrender.

Longiotti saw thousands of bayonet-wielding Germans racing across an open field, their eyes glassy as if they had been drugged. Rather than running in a zigzag pattern or taking cover as Americans did, they appeared to make no effort to avoid Allied fire.

Researchers would later learn Nazis delivered millions of doses of methamphetamine to fuel German soldiers.

Carrying their wounded sergeant on a blanket, Longiotti and the three other remaining members of his machine gun squad were marched past fields of dead Allied and German soldiers to a German first-aid station. Many of the soldiers had been blown to pieces.

"It was the most horrible sight of the war that I have ever seen and it was a great loss for both sides," Longiotti wrote.

After delivering their sergeant, they never saw him again.

American fighter planes then veered toward the first-aid station — which had military vehicles and ammunition boxes nearby — and fired.

"No American got hit, but a German sitting behind me on a box of ammunition was hit. He never got up," Longiotti said, noting he was killed by a strike to the chest but still held a sandwich in his hand.

Longiotti was eventually moved to Camp Laterina in Italy, a large prisoner-of-war camp that held Allied prisoners from many nations.

The camp was surrounded by two tall barbed-wire fences about eight feet apart. Guard towers were at each corner, and German shepherds patrolled the perimeter.

Water was scarce, and the POWs received barely enough food to survive.

Breakfast was a cup of coffee. Lunch was a cup of watery soup. Dinner was another cup of soup or tea, plus a small loaf of dark bread that had to be divided among six men.

The bread was made of rye, sugar beets, sawdust, minced leaves and straw.

Fights sometimes erupted over the bread because it was almost impossible to divide each loaf into six exactly equal pieces. To prevent fights, the person who cut the bread would put a piece in each hand behind his back, then ask another person to pick a hand.

Within three months, Longiotti's weight had dropped to 90 pounds.

Conditions in the camp were filthy.

"Everybody had lice. You would sit out in the sun and pick lice off you," Longiotti said.

The tunnel

Anyone who tried to escape was put in solitary confinement with

capture, cont'd...

only bread and water. Those who successfully escaped were usually captured and killed, their bodies displayed for all to see in the camp.

Despite the danger, a select group of POWs, including Longiotti, knew of a plan underway to tunnel through a barracks floor and burrow underground out past the two lines of fences.

Men digging the tunnel would let dirt sift from their pockets down their pant legs and onto the ground of the camp. Dirt was also thrown into latrines.

One night, 50 men prepared to go through the tunnel to freedom. But tunnel engineers estimated the passageway was about two feet short of the outside fence — meaning the escapees would come up between the two fences.

The attempt was aborted.

"It was a real good, dark night," Longiotti said. "If we'd have got out, the Italians would have helped us."

The next day, a Scottish soldier told the Germans about the tunnel. The Germans crushed the tunnel, filled it with rocks and dirt and placed many POW officers in solitary confinement for weeks.

The prisoners learned the tunnel had actually reached out past both fences.

About a month later, Longiotti and other prisoners were crammed into boxcars. They took turns standing and sitting for the three days it took to reach Stalag 7A, a German POW camp.

Upon arrival, the prisoners were stripped, placed in a shower room and sprayed with a chemical to kill lice.

Longiotti later learned it was the same type of shower room where

Germans killed Jews and other people with poison gas.

The farm

Longiotti and others were transferred to another camp and spent their time going out to clean up rubble in a German town bombed by American and British planes.

One day for lunch they were presented with a large pot of snail soup.

"Some of the snails were still alive and clinging to the sides of the pot, and it had a terrible odor," he wrote.

The men went hungry that day.

Longiotti was interviewed at the camp. He claimed he had been a farmer before the war and knew how to milk cows, plow with oxen and do other farm chores.

Along with 17 other prisoners, he was sent to work on a farm.

There he shared whatever the farm family ate. Meat was rare, but cabbage, sauerkraut, potatoes, soup and beer provided a better diet than what they had eaten in the POW camps.

They worked seven days a week, plowing fields and cutting wheat and hay fields by hand with scythes.

Farmers had to give most of what they raised to the German government.

Food was so scarce, inspectors would weigh the milk to be sure it was being turned in.

"They could keep only a very small amount of milk for small children, no adults," Longiotti wrote.

The farmer who Longiotti worked for secreted food away for his family, hiding potatoes in a cellar and

stashing burlap bags of wheat beneath hay and straw.

"They would hide the wheat in the hay loft in the barn so they would have food because Germans were starving," he said.

In the winter, the prisoners went to the woods and brought back wagon loads of firewood using oxen. Longiotti fell deathly ill and was diagnosed with the infectious bacterial disease diphtheria — an experience that brought back childhood memories of his 9-year-old brother, who died from diphtheria.

While Longiotti was lying in a hospital, his mind was filled with fears that he would die there and his family would never learn his fate.

Fortunately, he recovered and was able to go back to farm work.

The POWs saw Allied planes flying overhead, dropping strips of aluminum foil in an effort to evade enemy radar. As Christmas approached in 1944, the men picked up foil that drifted down onto the fields and used it like tinsel to decorate a small evergreen tree.

With the war drawing to a close, the German people seemed anxious and excited for the Nazi reign to end, although they would not speak openly against Adolf Hitler for fear of reprisal.

In April 1945, American soldiers arrived, and Longiotti was free after spending more than 14 months in captivity.

"It was the most beautiful sight we have ever seen, the American troops arriving in town with no resistance from the enemy," he wrote. "It was a day that I will never forget."

Reach Mail Tribune reporter Vickie Aldous at 541-776-4486 or valdous@rosebudmedia.com. Follow her at www.twitter.com/VickieAldous.



The RIDE HOME

3818 Litchfield Loop
Lake Wales, Florida 33859
www.theridehome.com



Dear Former Prisoners of War and Families of our Missing in Action,

We respectfully request that you join us as our guest at the National POW/MIA Recognition Day event, The RIDE HOME, to be held 19- 21 September 2019 in Warner Robins, Georgia. Our goal is to answer the call of every sitting President since 1978;

"I call upon the people of The United States to join me in Honoring and Remembering all former Prisoners of War and those still Missing in Action who valiantly served our great nation."

It will be our privilege to provide your room accommodations, seating for two at both the Heroes Dinner and Ground-Pounder & Fly-Boy luncheon, Military styled recognition for your service, transportation for you and a guest/spouse while you are in Warner Robins as well as fellowship and camaraderie you can only find with those who served this great nation with you.

Take a moment, please, and complete the information sheet on the following page, drop it in an envelope (add a stamp) to the address at the top of the page and we'll handle the arrangements. If you have a question or concern or perhaps would like to confirm your participation this year verbally, call us and we will do our best to accommodate you.

We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in September.

Until they all come home.....

Warm regards,

On behalf of the Board of Directors for The RIDE HOME, INC.,

Jim 'Moe' Moyer

407 448 1181

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The Ride Home 2019

Thursday, Friday, Saturday
September 19-20-21, 2019
www.theridehome.com

The RIDE HOME Inc.
3818 Litchfield Loop, Lake Wales, Florida 33859



YES, I will attend

NO, I will not attend

Please return this form by June 30 2019, to the RIDE HOME address above.

POW or MIA Name: _____

MIA Rep Name: _____

NOK Name: _____

Guest Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone #: _____

Cell Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Branch: _____

Rank: _____

Area of Capture: _____

Date of Capture: _____

Date of Release: _____

Area at time MIA: _____

Date of MIA: _____

Remains returned: _____

Room Accommodations

We will try our best to accommodate your room preferences; however, we cannot guarantee them. Room accommodations will depend on availability at the time your information is received.

Your lodging is offered Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights courtesy of The Ride Home.

Please reserve a room for the following dates (check all that apply):

Thursday, September 19 _____

Friday, September 20 _____

Saturday, September 21 _____

Smoking: _____ Non-Smoking? _____

Bed Size: Queen/King: _____ Two Doubles: _____

Special Requirements

Handicap accessible, handicap shower, etc.

Are you interested in being a passenger on a motorcycle at either of the Escort Rides? (Circle one).....

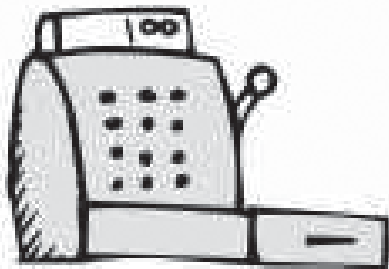
YES _____ NO _____

Concerns or Questions – Contact Ginny or Moe at 863 324 7268 or moehog@verizon.net

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contributions



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Checks must be made payable to
AXPOW or American Ex-Prisoners
of War.

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When you or your family make a donation to AXPOW, or list us in your will, please make sure
to update your instructions by using our Post Office Box listed above.

The PO does not have to forward our mail after one year.

The Meaningful Gift

A number of years ago, one of our members made the decision to establish a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. He felt strongly that he truly cared about the future of AXPOW and wanted to leave a legacy to us. He and his wife are now gone, but their generous gift enabled them to demonstrate in a very meaningful way their commitment to the organization. Most recently, the American Legion in Milwaukie, Oregon made a gift to AXPOW. Support for our programs became the beneficiary of that generosity.

You, too can take action today to help ensure that the American Ex-Prisoners of War is there for returning POWs, their families and their dependents through your will or living trust. This gift can be funded with cash or securities, mutual funds or other investments that are not serving your current needs. This special gift will benefit future generations as well as we transition to a legacy organization.

It's very simple to make a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. Simply share this sentence with your attorney or financial planner and they can add the following to your will or living trust:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the American Ex-Prisoners of War, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445, the sum of \$_____ or _____(named investment) or _____percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate."

Your generous support of our programs over the years has made a tremendous difference to ex-POWs and their families. Please take a few minutes of your time to help. And feel free to contact CFO Marsha Coke at 817-649-2979/axpow76010@yahoo.com or CEO David Eberly at (757) 508-8453 /eberlydsl@verizon.net

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Thank
You!

new members



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request for membership application American Ex-Prisoners of War

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Do NOT send dues with this request for an application

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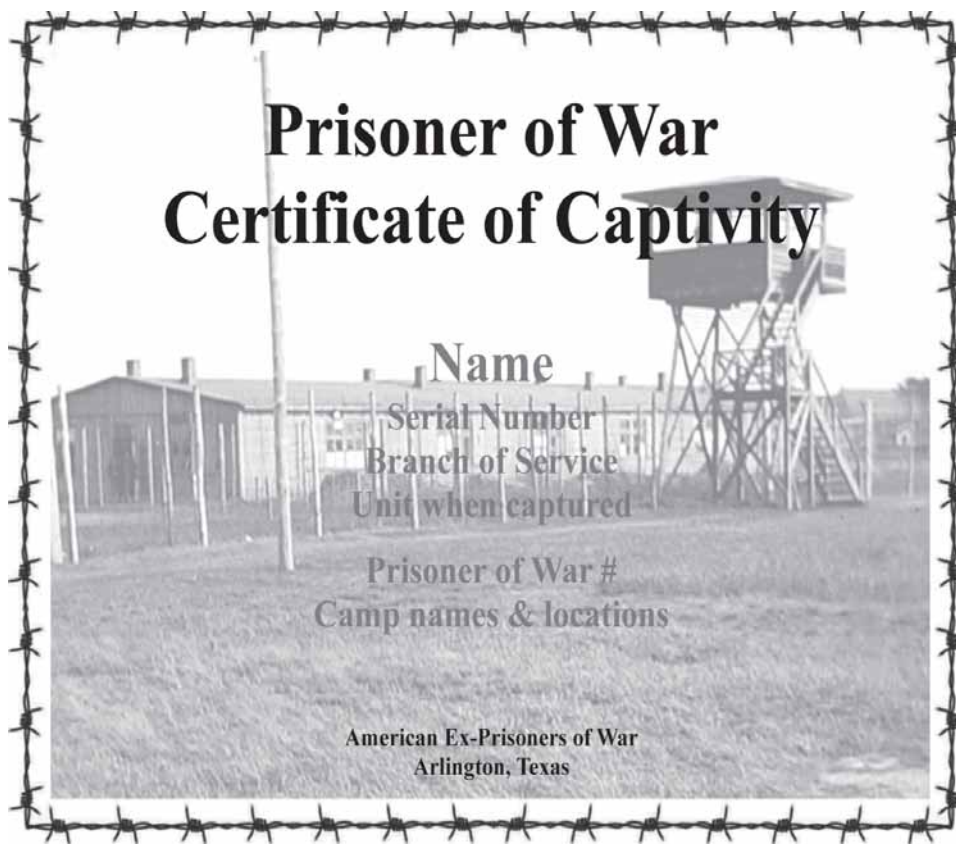
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Certificate of Captivity

Suitable for framing, this certificate of captivity, printed on 8½" x 11" quality paper, proudly displays your history as a prisoner of war. Each certificate background is personalized to the theater of operation. To receive this certificate from AXPOW, please order from National Headquarters. If you are ordering at Convention, you can place your order in the Merchandise Room. We will need your name, service number, branch of service, unit when captured, POW number (if known), camp names and locations. You can call 817-649-2979 or email: axpow76010@yahoo.com.

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You may include a picture with your order.



taps



Please submit taps notices to:
Cheryl Cerbone, 23 Cove View Drive, South Yarmouth, MA 02664
axpoweditor@comcast.net

From Zack...

Hi Cheryl, if and when??? This is my obituary, hope you don't have to use it in the near future. I should be able to make it to the 100 mark – only 18 years ago. Love and best wishes always, Zack (May 4, 2006)

PNC Zack David Roberts



Zack David Roberts, 95, passed away on Feb. 14, 2019. He was born in the coal-mining town of Plymouth, PA. His father, grandfather and great-grandfather were coal miners and his mother ran a successful beauty salon in the midst of the depression years.

Zack entered service in April 1943, trained as a combat infantryman serving with the 179th Reg. Combat Team, 45th Div., was sent to North Africa, and then into Italy where he fought in the Monte Cassino campaign, and then on to the Anzio beachhead. At Anzio, he became one of four surviving wounded out of a company of 200. He was captured by the Germans Feb. 16, 1944 and spent 15 months in German POW camps. He was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, Purple Heart, Bronze

Star for Meritorious Achievement in Ground Combat, three major Battle Stars in the European, African and Middle East Theaters of Operation and New Jersey's Distinguished Service Medal.



When he returned to his hometown, he went to a small dance hall where he met a very beautiful young blond girl who had graduated from the same high school. She was younger so he had not known her there. Her name was Agnes Whitlow. At the time, she was engaged to a sailor, but for Zack this was love at first sight. She ended her engagement, and they were married Dec. 27, 1946.

He always considered Agnes as divine intervention in his life. He believed he could never have achieved the life he had without her unwavering support. During those first difficult years, he would tease her "Agnes, you'd better take care of me; you'll never get another one like me." Her response was always an affectionate "Who wants another one like you?" She always said "One life; one love."

He was the successful business owner of four hairdressing salons. During his career, he traveled throughout the United States and Canada for international beauty shows as the featured guest artist. Later, he developed a career in real estate and investments.

In the 1980s, he became involved with the American Ex-Prisoners of War because he liked their slogan:

"We exist to help those who cannot help themselves". He started as a Chapter Commander in 1985, served as the new Jersey State Judge Advocate for more than 20 years, on the Board of Directors for AXPOW and on their Education Committee before becoming chairman. He set up Speakers Bureau programs nationally, and developed and produced training videos. Because of his interest in legislation, he served on the Legislative Committee, working on presumptives and benefits; he advanced to become National Legislative Chair for this committee.

He became the National Commander of the Ex-Prisoners of War 1999-2000 and testified before the Veterans Affairs Committee to help and protect the benefits all disabled veterans.

Zack was a life member of AXPOW, DAV and MOPH. He was also a member of The Peninsula Masonic Lodge for 70 years.

He was predeceased by the love of his life, Agnes Whitlow Roberts whom he was married to for over 58 years and without whose love, understanding and support, he could not have accomplished all he did. He was also predeceased by his son, Master Sergeant Zack Sheldon Roberts and his sister, Elizabeth Hecht. Surviving are his daughter, Kim Roberts-Honecker, son-in-law, Robert A. Honecker Jr. and his grandchildren, Brett, Zach, and Mariah Honecker of Shrewsbury, N.J. He is also survived by his nieces, Carol Stolpe, Nancy Carey, and Joyce Hecht of Columbus, Ohio.

taps, cont'd...

COMACHO, Greg, of San Diego, CA died recently. He was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW. Greg was a Civilian Pow, born while his parents were in captivity.

DAVIS, William F., of Lakeside, CA, passed away recently. During WWII, he served with the 8th AF, 392nd BG, 477th BS. After capture, he was held in Luft 1, Barth. Bill was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

GOLEC, Teofil, 96, of Eastpointe, MI died Dec. 12, 2018. He was a life member of AXPOW and the Wolverine Chapter. Teel served in the Army during WWII; he was captured in France and held in Stalag VII, Mooseburg. His wife of 65 years, Norma, predeceased him; he leaves 3 children, 6 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

GONZALEZ, Julio Francisco, 99 of Silver Spring, MD passed away January 31, 2019. He proudly served in the United States Army and was a WWII POW. He was born in Humacao, Puerto Rico and moved to New York City as a child.. He is survived by his loving wife of 76 years Mary. He was the loving father of two daughters; he also leaves 4 grandsons, 3 great-grandsons and 1 great-granddaughter.

GREENFIELD, David S., of Temucula, CA died May 13, 2018. He was captured while serving with the 15th AF, 97th BG, 314th BS and held in Stalag Luft 3. Survivors include his companion, Harriet Brooks. He was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

HARDIMAN, Edward J. Sr, 91, of Ft. Myers, FL formerly of Quincy, MA passed away November 24, 2018. He was captured while serving in the Army during WWII and held until liberation. He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Marion, 4 children, 3 sisters, 11

grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and a large extended family.

HARTUNIAN, Mike, 97, of Newport Beach, CA died Dec. 11, 2018. During WWII, he served with the 15th AF, 484th BG, 825th BS. He was held in Luft IIIA. His wife, Viola, predeceased him; he is survived by 2 daughters, 3 grandchildren and 2 great-grandsons.

JONES, Murphy Neal Sr., of Magnolia, DE died Jan. 31, 2019 at the age of 81. He endured more than 6½ years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam's infamous "Hanoi Hilton." He was a pilot when his F105-D fighter-bomber was struck by antiaircraft fire on June 29, 1966. Losing his battle to keep the jet airborne, Jones ejected only 300 feet from the ground, and his rough parachute landing left him with a shattered left arm, three fractured vertebrae, torn knee cartilage and shrapnel that infected his right leg. He was released in Feb. 1973. A native of Baton Rouge, he returned to LA; he moved in 2018 with his wife, Glenda to be close to his daughter. He also leaves 1 brother, 4 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

KENNIE, Beulah, of San Diego, CA and widow of ex-POW Frederick Kennie, died June 18, 2018. She was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

KROMMINGA, Edward L., long-time member of the Mn/St. Paul Chapter, passed away Jan. 25, 2019. During WWII, he served with the AAC, 15th AF, 736th BS, 454th BG. On his 33rd mission, he was shot down over Italy, captured and held until liberation. He is survived by his wife of 74 years, Dorothy, 2 children and 1 grandchild. Both were life members of AXPOW.

LARSEN, John, of Alameda, CA died March 1, 2017. He was a member of AXPOW and BACEPOW. John was a civilian internee of the Santo Tomas Internment Camp in Manila.

MILLSPAUGH, Dorothy Ann, of Gig Harbor, WA passed away Nov. 28, 2018 at the age of 90. Her late husband, Vesper, served during the Korean War and was captured at the Chosin Reservoir. Dorothy is survived by 3 sons, 1 daughter and their families.

MONELL, Frank Joseph, of Fairmont, WV died Jan. 15, 2019. He was captured in the Battle of the Bulge while serving in the Army during WWII. Frank was a member of the Barbwire Mountaineers, AXPOW. He leaves 1 son, 3 granddaughters, 3 great-grandchildren and their families.

ORTIZ, Aurelio, of San Diego, CA died Dec. 27, 2018. He served in Korea with the US Army, F Co, 187th RCT. Survivors include his wife, Maria Ana and 1 daughter. He was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

PITTS, Anita M., 88, of Sun City, AZ passed away Jan. 16. In 1987 Anita was elected Adjutant/Treasurer of the newly formed Agua Fria Chapter of Sun City, AZ. She remained an active member of the Chapter throughout the years serving as Chapter Commander in 2009 and 2010. Anita was preceded in death by her Ex-POW husband John Pitts (deceased 1997) and is survived by two sons and one daughter.

PROUD, Ann May, of Mt. Morris, IL died Jan. 24, 2019. She was 93. An artist and volunteer for many worthy causes, she will be missed by her 3 daughters, 1 son, 7 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, 1 brother, nieces and nephews, and their families. Her husband, ex-POW David, predeceased her.

taps, cont'd...

RUZICKA, Mary Frances, of Springfield, IL died Feb. 19, 2019. She was 91 and an avid gardener and cook. Mary Frances was the widow of ex-POW John. She leaves 4 daughters, 1 son, 6 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and a large loving extended family.

SCHLEPEGRELL, William V. 95, of Hibbing, MN passed away Nov. 29, 2018. He served with the AAC during WWII and was stationed in France. He was shot down, captured and held until liberation. Bill is survived by his beloved wife of 70 years, Norma, 5 daughters, 4 sons, 14 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren and a host of friends.

SHARPELL, Howard, of San Marcos, CA died recently. He served with the 81st Eng., Combat Bn and was held in Stalag IVB after capture. His wife, Ginny, predeceased him; he leaves 1 son. Howard was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

SHAVITZ, Ernest, of Skokie, IL passed away Dec. 2018. He was an active member of the former Chicago Chapter, AXPOW. During WWII, he served with the 456th BG, Army Air Corps. He leaves his loving wife of 72 years, Evelyn, four children, seven grandchildren, four great-grandchildren and a host of friends and extended family.

TURNHAM, Genny, of San Diego, CA, widow of ex-POW Keith, died Feb. 28, 2018. She was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

VOGLER, Robert J., Jr., of San Diego, CA died May 13, 2018. During WWII, he served with the Far East AF, 17 Pur. Sq. Kamioka, Japan. He was a Bataan Death March survivor, held in Mukden. His wife Vera and 1 daughter survive him. He was a member of the San Diego Chapter, AXPOW.

chaplain



Benny Rayborn
459 Grady Brown road
Lumberton, MS 39455

I was placing an order at a fast food restaurant the other day and as I finished my order, the cashier asked me, "Do you want to super size that?" It's *food* we're talking about...Of course, I did but, being aware of the calorie count and my weight I turned down the offer of more food. I'm still a growing boy, unfortunately, it's towards the wall and not the ceiling! More food is not ideal for my health.

Recently we observed another super event, that of a "super moon". A super moon is when the moon is

closest to the earth which causes it to look larger although it's size is exactly the same as when it is "Smallest" being at its most distant point from earth.

These are many things that do not need to be "super sized" or enlarged. However, there is one that we need to increase: Our time with God. Prayer, Scripture study, and worship service attendance are all ways to increase our time with God as well as thinking about Him and trying to understand Him.

The more time we spend with God, the more in awe we find ourselves. We eventually realize (as in II Samuel 7:22) that God is AWE-SOME. King David wrote: "Wherefore thou art great, O Lord God; for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee..." David found our Lord to be awesome, awe inspiring and the greatest of all!

David was trying to "know God" but his human brain was stunned by the greatness of God. He could

only say "Lord, You are Great!" David realized we do not need a God who is a tool to be used for our wants and desires but rather we need a God who is "super sized" with power because He is in charge of the universe, with wisdom to guide us and with love so that He cares and acts on our behalf.

I close with Psalm 98:1 "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory."

Prayer: O Lord, God, Creator and Preserver of the universe we thank you for the wonderful things that You have done for us and for those that You will do in the future. May we always be in awe of You so that we may worship you with sincerity. In the Messiah's Name. Amen.



Benny



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AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR VOLUNTARY FUNDING PROGRAM



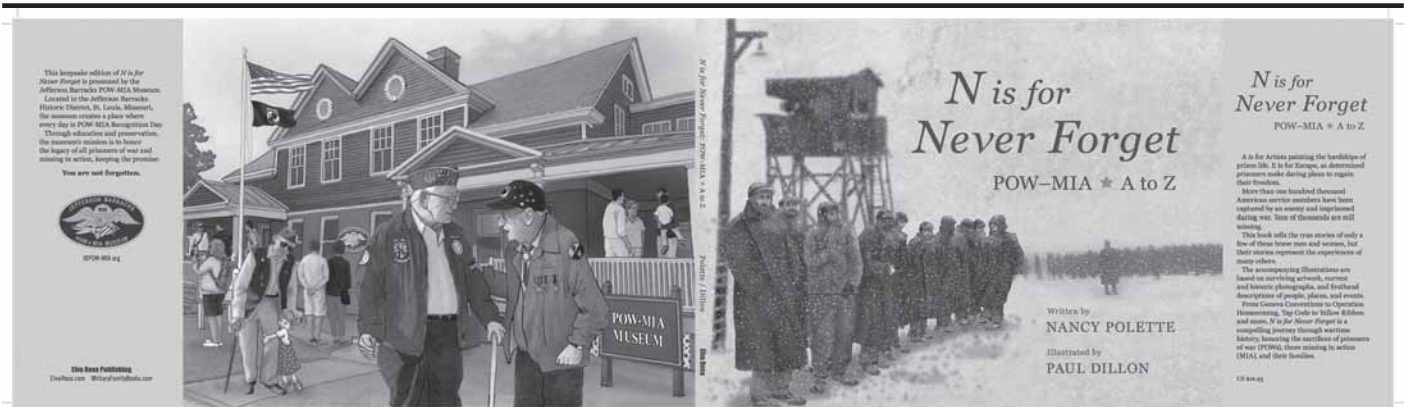
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From Chris Nogues...

Last weekend my family hosted a "Roaring 20's" themed lunch for our Inland Empire Chapter of ex-POWs & their families, at Bob's Big Boy in Calimesa. We made a surprise cake to also celebrate Mr. Archie Aitcheson's birthday. He was born on Leap Year, so he says he's officially 23 & 3/4 years young. Some members were snowed in and weren't able to make it but we still had a good turnout. People dressed up, danced to 1920's music, won raffle prizes and had a great time!



LEFT: (Top Row, from left to right): Chris Nogues, Augustine Martinez (35th Infantry Div), Archie Aitcheson (15th Air Force), Norman Gibbs (15th Air Force) (Bottom Row, from left to right): Tom Gibbons (14th Armored Division, Liberator of Stalag Luft 7A), Marty Schlocker (17th Airborne Div), James Goble (35th Infantry Div) & Cecil Davis (8th AF, 100th BG).

RIGHT: ExPOWs with family members



LEFT: Birthday Boy Mr. Archie Aitcheson & Son next to him



Custom Mugs

RIGHT: Cecil Davis - Ex-POW at Stalag Luft 7A (8th AF, 100th BG, 349th BS)



Artwork I did for the event



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