

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, 2021



We exist to help those who cannot help themselves



"Flags In" ~ Memorial Day, Arlington National Cemetery

Communist POW Camps during the Korean War

Known camp locations where American prisoners were held



The Korean war began on June 25, 1950, when some 75,000 soldiers from the North Korean People's Army poured across the 38th parallel, the boundary between the Soviet-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the north and the pro-Western Republic of Korea to the south. This invasion was the first military action of the Cold War. By July, American troops had entered the war on South Korea's behalf.

The National Archives has 4,714 Americans listed as prisoners of war...there are still more than 7,800 still missing in action and unaccounted for.

April-June 2021

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Deadline for the July-Sept. 2021
Bulletin is June 1, 2021
Please send all materials to the
editor at the above address.

*Soldier, rest, thy warfare o'er,
Dream of fighting fields no more.
Sleep the sleep that knows not breaking,
Morn of toil, nor night of waking.*
Sir Walter Scott

Memorial Day began as a memorial for Civil War veterans. It has become both, a National Decoration Day of family graves, and the holiday that opens the summer season. It is celebrated with backyard barbecues, outdoor picnics and parades.

No survivor of that war remains, but the memories of it grow longer. As do our memories of the parades with floats; civic organizations and drum majorettes twirling their batons; lines and lines of young veterans from The Gulf War and shorter lines of older men who saw service in the Second World War. As long as there are wars, there will be veterans and casualties. We will still decorate the graves of those men whose bodies came home and remember those who don't.

Just before Memorial Day weekend, the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (the "Old Guard") honors America's fallen heroes by placing American flags at gravesites for service members buried at Arlington National Cemetery and the U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.

This tradition, known as "Flags In," has taken place annually since the Old Guard was designated as the Army's official ceremonial unit in 1948. Every available soldier in the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment participates, placing small American flags in front of more than 228,000 headstones and at the bottom of about 7,000 niche rows in the cemetery's Columbarium Courts and Niche Wall. Each flag is inserted into the ground, exactly one boot length from the headstone's base.

At the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the Sentinels (who are members of the Old Guard) place flags to honor the Unknowns. Army chaplains place flags in front of the headstones and four memorials located on Chaplains' Hill in Section 2.

All flags are removed after Memorial Day, before the cemetery opens to the public.

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As we enter into a season with a new Administration and a new Congress, the legislative agenda for American Ex-POWs will remain much as it has since our establishment in 1942: the veterans' earned benefits of healthcare, and fair compensation for sacrifices made in the service of this nation.

During this first session of the 117th Congress, we will urge attention to several concerns affecting former POWs, other veterans, and their families or survivors.

First, I will urge modifications to two existing laws, PL97-37 (the Former Prisoners of War Benefit Act) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 which limits volunteer citizen service on

Advisory Committees to ten years. The FACA has resulted in long-serving former POWs being removed from the VA Advisory Committee on Former POWs along with their corporate knowledge of the work done. I believe term limits should be lifted for this particular Advisory Committee and opportunity given for former members to return to service.

I shall also urge the Veterans Affairs Committees to require the Secretary of the VA to place this committee under his direct oversight. In the last dozen years it has been moved away from that Office and placed several levels down under the Veterans Benefit Administration. That placement has made it easy to ignore and its recommendations easy to lose.

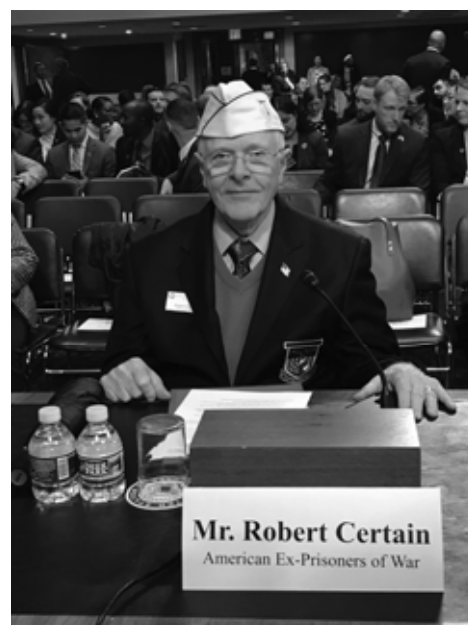
We will also try to work with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to obtain the official list of former prisoners of war from the Department of Defense.

I believe it vital that the Department of Veterans Affairs locate all living POWs on the DoD list and to invite those outside the VA system to come in for protocol physicals to determine service-connected disabilities and to receive treatment in VA Medical Centers and Clinics.

Finally, I urge the Congress and this nation to continue to search for the remains of our fallen, to identify those remains whenever possible, and to secure their burial in American soil. Much has been accomplished, but much more needs to be done.

This nation must always stand with those men and women who have stood between their loved home and war's desolation, and the Department of Veterans Affairs must live up to its charge to care for those who have borne the battle, their surviving spouses and their orphans.

Last March, just before the country began to lockdown all activities due to COVID-19, Commander Certain presented our annual Congressional testimony before the Joint House/Senate Veterans Affairs Committee. This year, our testimony was written and offered to the committees. It is available on our website.





from the CEO

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One year.

It was one year ago this week that Commander Certain, his wife, Robbie and I made the annual trek to Washington, DC to offer the testimony of our organization to the Joint House/Senate Veterans Affairs Committees. We had lunch at Legal Seafood, then walked across to the Capitol. The Commander spoke before a mostly uninterested number of aides and one committee member, we flew home and that was the last time I traveled, spent time with a group or ate in a restaurant.

This year, our testimony was emailed to the committee, to be read on March 18th. It will be the first time in nearly 40 years that we were not there making our case for our members and the veteran population as a whole.

But finally, we can see a return to "normal". Latest figures (March 1) show that nearly 17% of the US population has received at least one dose of vaccine. By summer, we're told it should be safe to be out and about. I for one plan to be dancing in the streets. The last time Clydie and I did that was when the Saints won the Super Bowl!

This coming year, I am focusing again on our surviving spouses. The DIC Bills that were introduced in the 116th Congress stalled in committee with few sponsors. We received word that one of our widows – Theresa Hoffmann – passed away at 98 after years of hardship trying to survive on the pitiful stipend she received. It is part of this year's testimony as well. Interested members can read it on our website.

One of the best things about our organization is the great diversity of our members. Different issues are important to them. Our commander, for example, was chairman of the Advisory Committee for former Prisoners of War. He has concerns that today's committee is not adequately representing the POW population and he addresses those concerns.

POW/MIA Chair Mary Schantag is an AXPOW board member. She is also CEO of the POW Network, where she works to uncover fraudulent POWs and ensures we are doing everything we can as a country to account for the 80,000+ who have not returned.

We heard from Dwight Mears from Oregon that the POW medal is still not being awarded equally by the different branches of service. In our testimony, we asked the committees to look into this and rectify it.

Please read the columns in each Bulletin for pertinent information on the issues that are important to us all as a community. We will be asking you to get involved again this year.

This April is AXPOW's 79th birthday. As information began leaking out about the atrocities and subhuman 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. Their motto was "We will not let them down."

As we enter into warmer months and a hopeful end to the pandemic, I am looking forward to spending time with friends and family. It has been one year since I have been to Washington, DC to visit my parents at Arlington National Cemetery and I am hopeful that by Memorial Day 2021, I will be able to return.

Stay safe,

Fondly
Cheryl

peripheral Neuropathy

Every now and then we focus on one or more of the presumptives for former prisoners of war. This month, our article is on peripheral neuropathy. Sources: National Institutes of Health.

Peripheral neuropathy is a term used to describe disorders of your peripheral nervous system. Your peripheral nervous system includes nerves in your face, arms, legs, torso, and some cranial nerves. In fact, all of your nerves not located in your central nervous system — which includes the brain and the spinal cord — are peripheral nerves.

Neuropathies may affect just one nerve (mononeuropathy) or several nerves (polyneuropathy). Your nerves provide communication between your brain and your muscles, skin, internal organs and blood vessels. When damaged, your nerves can't communicate properly, and that miscommunication causes symptoms such as pain or numbness.

Peripheral neuropathy often affects people with diabetes and autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Certain vitamin deficiencies, some medications and alcoholism can also damage peripheral nerves.

Treating the underlying condition may relieve some cases of peripheral neuropathy. In other cases, treatment may focus on managing pain. Peripheral nerves have a remarkable ability to regenerate themselves, and new treatments using nerve growth factors or gene therapy may offer even better chances for recovery in the future.

Signs and Symptoms

Neurologic symptoms may occur related to your central nervous system, which consists of your brain and spinal cord, or your peripheral nervous system, which links your spinal cord and brain to all other parts of your body. The extensive network of peripheral nerves helps your muscles contract (motor nerves) and allows you to feel a range of sensations (sensory nerves). In addition, your peripheral nerves help control some of the involuntary functions of the autonomic nervous system, which regulates your internal organs, sweat glands and blood pressure.

Unfortunately, peripheral nerves are fragile and easily damaged. Damage to a peripheral nerve can interfere with the communication between the area it serves and your brain, affecting your ability to move certain muscles or feel normal sensations. Your symptoms will depend on the cause of your neuropathy and on which nerve or nerves are involved.

If a sensory nerve is damaged, you're likely to experience symptoms that may include:

- Pain
- Numbness
- Tingling
- Burning
- Loss of feeling

These symptoms often begin gradually. You may have a tingling sensation or numbness that starts in your toes or the balls of your feet and spreads upward. Tingling might also begin in your hands and extend up your arms. In some cases your skin may become so sensitive that the slightest touch is agonizing. You may also have numbness, or even a complete lack of feeling, in your hands or feet.

At times your symptoms may be barely noticeable, and some people go years without realizing anything is wrong. For others, symptoms are constant, and especially at night may be almost unbearable. Signs and symptoms may include:

- The sensation that you're wearing an invisible glove or sock
- Burning pain
- Sharp, jabbing or electric-like pain
- Extreme sensitivity to touch, even light touch
- Lack of coordination

If your motor nerves are affected, you may have weakness or paralysis of the muscles controlled by those nerves. And if you have damage to nerves that control certain functions of the autonomic nervous system, you might have bowel or bladder problems, reduced sweating or impotence. You might also experience a sharp fall in your blood pressure when

medsearch, cont'd...

you stand up, which may cause you to faint or feel lightheaded.

Causes

A number of factors can cause neuropathies. When a single nerve is affected, the most likely cause is trauma or some type of repetitive use that puts pressure on the nerve. Nerve pressure can result from using a cast or crutches, spending a long time in an unnatural position — such as typing at a computer keyboard — or having a tumor or abnormal bone growth.

When damage occurs to several nerves, the cause is frequently diabetes. About half of all people with diabetes develop some type of neuropathy. Other common causes include alcoholism, HIV/AIDS, inherited disorders and a deficiency of certain vitamins, especially B vitamins.

Autoimmune diseases, including lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, kidney disease, liver disease and an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) also can damage peripheral nerves. So can exposure to poisons, some toxic substances and certain medications — especially those used to treat cancer. You may even inherit a tendency to develop peripheral neuropathy.

Sometimes bacterial or viral infections may cause neuropathy. An acute condition called Guillain-Barre syndrome frequently causes severe damage to all or part of your peripheral nerves by destroying the myelin sheath that covers nerve fibers. The myelin sheath acts as an insulator for your nerves and helps conduct nerve impulses. Although the exact cause of Guillain-Barre syndrome isn't known, approximately two-thirds

of cases occur after an infection, surgery or immunization.

Risk Factors

Having diabetes places you at high risk of developing peripheral nerve damage. In fact, about half of people with diabetes have some form of neuropathy. The risk increases the longer you have diabetes, and is highest for those who've had the disease for more than 25 years. Your risk is even greater if you are older than 40 or have difficulty controlling your blood sugar level.

Although researchers don't understand exactly how damage occurs, a high blood sugar level seems to impair your nerves' ability to transmit signals. You can help reduce your risk by carefully following a medically approved plan for keeping your blood sugar level as close to normal as possible.

Your risk of developing peripheral neuropathy is also higher if you have one or more of the following risk factors:

Alcohol abuse. Excessive drinking of alcohol can affect your nervous system, causing numbness of your hands and feet.

Vitamin deficiency. A lack of certain vitamins, especially B-1 (thiamin) and B-12. Pernicious anemia, which occurs when your body can't absorb B-12 properly, often leads to peripheral neuropathy.

Autoimmune diseases. You're more likely to develop peripheral neuropathy if you have an autoimmune disease such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis, or if your immune system is compromised by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or AIDS.

Other health problems. Medical conditions including certain types of cancer, kidney and liver disease, also can put you at risk for nerve damage.

Repetitive stress. A job or hobby that puts stress on one nerve for long periods of time increases your

chances of developing peripheral neuropathy.

In carpal tunnel syndrome, for example, the median nerve that extends through your wrist into your fingers becomes compressed. Repetitive assembly line work or work involving prolonged, heavy gripping can compress the median nerve. Playing golf, tennis or a musical instrument and using vibrating power tools or even crutches also can put pressure on peripheral nerves.

Toxic substances. Exposure to some toxic substances can make you susceptible to peripheral nerve damage. These substances include heavy metals, such as lead, mercury and arsenic; organic solvents; carbon monoxide and certain medications, such as those used to treat cancer or AIDS.

When to seek medical advice

See your doctor regularly if you have diabetes, a compromised immune system or any other chronic medical condition.

If you have a cut or sore on your foot that doesn't seem to be healing, is infected or is getting worse, see your doctor promptly, especially if you have diabetes. Even minor sores that don't heal can turn into ulcers. In the most severe cases, untreated foot ulcers may become gangrenous — a condition in which the tissue dies — and require surgery or even amputation of your foot.

Seek medical care right away if you notice any unusual tingling, weakness or pain in your hands or feet. Early diagnosis and treatment offer the best chance for controlling your symptoms and preventing further damage to your peripheral nerves. If your symptoms are interfering with your sleep or you feel depressed, your doctor may be able to suggest treatments that can help.

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Screening and Diagnosis

Peripheral neuropathy isn't a single disease, but rather a syndrome with many causes. For that reason it can be difficult to diagnose. To help in the diagnosis, your doctor will likely take a full medical history and perform a physical and neurologic exam that may include checking your tendon reflexes, your muscle strength and tone, your ability to feel certain sensations, and your posture and coordination.

Your doctor also may request blood tests to check your level of vitamin B-12, a urinalysis, thyroid function tests and, often, electromyography (EMG) — a test that measures the electrical discharges produced in your muscles. As a part of this test you'll be asked to have a nerve conduction study, which measures how quickly your nerves carry electrical signals. A nerve conduction study is often used to diagnose carpal tunnel syndrome and other peripheral nerve disorders.

Your doctor may recommend a nerve biopsy, a procedure in which a small portion of a nerve is removed and examined for abnormalities. But even a nerve biopsy may not always reveal what's damaging your nerves.

Complications

Diabetic neuropathy may cause a number of complications. Damage to the nerves in your feet, along with poor circulation, can lead to ulcers and even gangrene. But it's not only your feet that are vulnerable — diabetes-related neuropathy can affect any organ in your body.

If nerves related to digestion are damaged, for instance, your stomach may empty too slowly, which may cause constant nausea, vomiting and bloating. Or you may have frequent constipation or

diarrhea. In some cases you may have problems with bladder control or impotence.

Other complications include:

- Partial or complete loss of movement or sensation
- Ulcers
- Relationship problems due to impotence
- Depression
- Weight loss
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing

Treatment

The goal of treatment is to manage the underlying condition causing your neuropathy and to repair damage, as well as provide symptom relief. If your doctor hasn't been able to determine the cause of your neuropathy, he or she may try a variety of medications to see which help ease your symptoms.

Controlling a chronic condition may not eliminate your neuropathy, but it can play a key role in managing it. Here's what your doctor may recommend for treating various underlying conditions:

- Diabetes.
- Autoimmune disorder.
- Nerve pressure.
- Toxic substances or medications.

Research aimed at finding more effective treatments for peripheral neuropathy is ongoing. For example, researchers are looking at developing nerve growth factors to reproduce the chemicals that signal your body to repair small nerve fibers. Other scientists are studying the use of the antioxidant alpha lipoic acid (thioctic acid) to treat diabetic neuropathy. Unfortunately, no medications can repair nerve damage yet, but the body can regenerate nerves if the offending substance is removed.

Therapies

Several drug-free therapies and techniques may also help with pain relief. Doctors frequently use them

in conjunction with medications, but some may be effective on their own. They include:

Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS). Your doctor may prescribe this therapy, which may help prevent pain signals from reaching your brain. TENS delivers tiny electrical impulses to specific nerve pathways through small electrodes placed on your skin.

Biofeedback. This therapy uses a special machine to teach you how to control certain body responses that reduce pain. You then learn how to control these same responses yourself.

Acupuncture. The National Institutes of Health have found that acupuncture can be an effective treatment for chronic pain, possibly including the pain of neuropathy.

Hypnosis. Many adults can be hypnotized by a trained professional, but for hypnosis to be most effective, you also have to be a willing and motivated participant. Relaxation techniques. Designed to help reduce the muscle tension that makes pain worse, relaxation techniques range from deep-breathing exercises to visualization (imagining yourself floating in a tropical ocean, for example), yoga and meditation. You might want to take classes in one or more of these techniques, or you can learn them yourself using books or tapes.

Talk to a counselor or therapist. Insomnia, depression and impotence are possible complications of peripheral neuropathy. There are treatments that can help.

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US Department of Health & Human Services
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Bethesda, Maryland 20892

PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Public Law 97-37

by William Paul Skelton, III, MD F.A.C.P.

All ex-POWs should keep these. Whenever you open your claim, take them with you and make sure the adjudication officer sees them and have him read them! Make sure he knows all about them. Tell him your own story as it relates to your problem.....

1. ARTHRITIS, TRAUMATIC

Also known as articular trauma.

2. AVITAMINOSIS

The total lack of vitamins in the diet.

3. BERIBERI

Caused by a severe lack of vitamin B1 (thiamine) in the diet.

4. DYSENTERY, CHRONIC

A disease characterized by frequent and watery stools, usually with blood and mucus, and accompanied by rectal and abdominal pain, fever, and dehydration.

5. FROSTBITE

The actual freezing of tissue.

6. HELMINTHIASIS

Infection with any type of worms that parasitize the human.

7. MALNUTRITION

Merely means bad nutrition.

8. PELLAGRA

It is caused by a virtual lack of vitamin B3 (niacin) in the diet.

9. ANY OTHER NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY

The lack of protein and calories in the diet generally produces no lasting side effects.

10. PSYCHOSIS

A generic term for any of the insanities.

11. PANIC DISORDER

Characterized by discrete periods of apprehension or fear.

12. GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

13. OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

This may be either obsessions or compulsions.

14. POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

The re-experiencing of a trauma of a past recognized stress or that can produce symptoms of distress.

15. ATYPICAL ANXIETY DISORDER

This is a category that is used for diagnosis when the affected individual appears to have an anxiety disorder that does not meet the criteria for entry into any of the other known anxiety disorders.

16. DEPRESSIVE NEUROSIS /DYSTHYMIC DISORDER

Characterized by depressive periods in which the patient feels sad and/or down and has a loss of interest in the usual activities that cause pleasure or involvement in usual pastimes.

17. PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Literally Greek for the suffering of nerves outside of the brain and spinal cord.

18. IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common disorder of the intestines that leads to crampy pain, gas, bloating, and changes in bowel habits.

19. PEPTIC ULCER DISEASE

A peptic ulcer is a sore or hole in the lining of the stomach or

duodenum (the first part of the small intestine).

20. CIRRHOSIS

Scar tissue replaces normal, healthy tissue, blocking the flow of blood through the organ and preventing it from working as it should.

21. STROKE & COMPLICATIONS

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is suddenly interrupted or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, spilling blood into the spaces surrounding brain cells.

22. HEART & COMPLICATIONS

Heart disease includes atherosclerotic heart disease, and hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease, and hypertension).

23. OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis is a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to break.

Disability compensation is a monetary benefit paid to Veterans who are determined by VA to be disabled by an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during active military service. These disabilities are considered to be service connected.

To be eligible for compensation, the Veteran must have been separated or discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

Monthly disability compensation varies with the degree of disability and the number of eligible dependents. Veterans with certain severe disabilities may be eligible for additional special monthly compensation (SMC). Disability compensation benefits are not subject to federal or state income tax.

legislative



Legislative officer Charles A Susino

We hope this bulletin finds you and your family in good health. Over the past three months there has been the change in administration with President Biden beginning in January so as in the change in any administration, there are impacts.

A new VA Secretary has been confirmed. Denis R. McDonough is the new Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Although he is not a veteran, he brings a wealth of experience dealing in Washington and we are confident that he will use this experience to enhance his effectiveness dealing in veterans issues.

Both the House and the Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs have announced all their committee members. The Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs will be chaired by Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) with Sen. Jerry Moran (R-KS) as the ranking member. The House Committee on Veterans' Affairs will be chaired by Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA) with Rep. Mike Bost (R-IL) as the ranking member.

Regarding new legislation, Congress was able to provide limited new bills.

The House and Senate passed H.R. 6395, National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year

2021 (NDAA), over a presidential veto. This law will add bladder cancer, hypothyroidism, and parkinsonism to the VA's list of presumptive conditions associated with exposure to Agent Orange

In January, the President signed H.R. 7105, Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020 into law. This legislation includes several Benefits to women in armed services, homeless veterans, lowering age for remarry without penalties to DIC, study illnesses related to conflicts in the middle east, change the statutory definition of Vietnam veteran to include individuals who served in the Republic of Vietnam from Nov. 1, 1955, to Feb. 27, 1961, and increase certain veteran funeral benefits and authorize VA to add spouses and eligible dependent children to VA-furnished headstones.

As we have reported previously, the government continues to locate and identify those veterans who went missing during our many conflicts.

The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) continues to fulfill our nation's promise and to better facilitate WWII families of the missing conversations, they provident a set of DPAA Briefing videos describing the overall historic perspective of various battles/operations, addressing the number of unresolved losses and providing a high level mission progress update designed to educate and create two way conversations with WWII families of the missing.

These can be located using the following link.

<https://www.dpaa.mil/Resources/Briefing-Videos/>

Veterans Affairs
Committees
117th Congress

You can direct calls and correspondence to the following addresses:

Chairman Senator Jon Tester
311 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-2604
Phone: (202) 224-2644

Chairman, Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA)
420 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
202.225.2305

For Correspondence to U.S. Senators
Office of Senator (Name)
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
202-224-3121

Senate Veterans Affairs Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510
Majority Staff (202) 224-9126;
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andersonville



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Gia Wagner,
Superintendent

Greetings from Andersonville,



PHOTO: NPS/Park Guide Davis Duffey

We have had an eventful winter here at Andersonville National Historic Site. Despite the pandemic, through the tireless determination and generosity of supporters at AXPOW, the Taylor Foundation, Bennett

International, and the Friends of Andersonville NHS, volunteers placed 10,600 wreaths to honor and remember our service members interred here at the national cemetery this year. While the pandemic made coordination and communication a bit challenging, several hundred volunteers participated this year. We are also grateful for a group of nearly 50 volunteers, staff, and equipment from the Jimmy Carter National Historical Park who pitched in to help us with wreath clean-up.



PHOTO: NPS- Wreaths Across America/Andersonville National Historic Site

We have been working with our Washington office to revise guidance documents and establish a method for reimbursement of grave liner costs for interments in the national cemetery as required by law. We are processing the first reimbursements this month.

The National POW Museum will be re-opening this Spring. Providing for the safety of our visitors, volunteers and employees is a high priority. While we are still working through these mitigations and plans, we will post them on our website and in the media along with our opening date.

As spring approaches and pandemic conditions improve, we are seeing more visitors in the park and are starting to see a few military staff rides and school groups. We are working with these groups to offer modified and virtual/online programs to continue our mission of instilling knowledge of the stories and sacrifices of American POWs in the next generation.

Park staff met with former park employee and AXPOW board member Alan Marsh in December to discuss the 2020 education projects supported by AXPOW, review the impacts of the pandemic on those projects, and discuss potential alternative projects for both 2020 and 2021.

The park currently has two internship positions available. One is a Data Specialist who will work on updating the park's prisoner database. The other is a library intern who will work on improving our POW Research Library. In May, two interns from the Gettysburg Institute will come on board to gain experience and support park interpretive programs through the summer.

The Traveling Exhibit containers have been repaired and the exhibit is heading to the US Army Airborne and Special Operations Museum at Fort Bragg in North Carolina and will remain there through September.

We are looking for a new location for the exhibit in October. Our gratitude goes out to Fred Boyles, Friends Board member and previous Superintendent for making this connection for us.

Gia Wagner

namPOW news

Paul aka Pablo Galanti
paulgalanti@mac.com

The Golden Guinea Advertising & Plumbing Corporation

The weeks in Hanoi, North Vietnam following the November 21, 1970 Son Tay Raid were filled with activities not seen by most of the Vietnam POWs in years. In a panic following the raid on the empty POW camp 20 miles west of Hanoi, the North Vietnamese communists hauled most of the American POWs from the outlying camps all over the countryside to the central Hoa Lo Prison known to the Americans as the Hanoi Hilton. To put this in proper chronological perspective, Everett Alvarez had been a POW for more than six years and most in my 48-man cell had been in captivity more than four years. For the first time for nearly all of us since we'd been captured, social relationships evolved in our 40-58 man cells. A society was born from the rubble of spirits smashed in solitary confinement or four souls stuffed into a 7' by 7' individual cell.

We got organized immediately – the Senior Ranking Officer in each room was identified and immediately appointed a chain of command. The room was organized like an Air Force squadron. Individuals were tasked to use their particular talents to help the group. Those with the good eyes and ears became our communicators with other rooms. Those who had teachable talents taught their cellmates their subjects. Within a very short period of time we had a full-blown school going three or four hours a day with courses ranging from languages (I taught French and learned Spanish, German and enough Russian to insult a Russkie!)

Since there were no books or writing materials, all subject matter had to be memorized which came easily to most of us after so much time in solitary confinement.

But my favorite course was the music class taught by Bill Butler, an Air Force F-105 pilot and amateur musician. He taught by using roofing tile to scratch musical staves on the floor of our cell and would point to different notes while the class would sing them. It worked well until it became time to teach chord theory. How could that be done without musical instruments?

Four of the gents in the room had sung in school or church choirs and they provided the impetus for Bill Butler's human piano keys. Gene Smith, the bass stood on "C," Jim Ray, the baritone, stood on "E," Ray Alcorn stood on "G" as the first tenor and Ron Mastin stood on the the higher "C" key to complete the C-major chord! Since North Vietnam was a communist country it seemed appropriate to call it the "Peoples' Organ."

Bill Butler would sing a song, signal his "organ" to change pitch by using our communication "signing" language and the choir would change pitch to the new note as they jumped to the appropriate key. It was a little crude but it worked and it was fun for both the Peoples' Organ and us students. And during these hi-jinks, I discovered that I had a hidden, latent talent.

At night, somebody would "tell a movie." I had always had trouble remembering anything about a movie other than the way it was filmed and how the graphics were done but I could never remember plots. Or characters' names. Or even the actors' names. But some of this mostly engineering group were sufficiently right-brained to make up for the rest of the number-crunching group's mentality. The longest "flick" I remember was "War and Peace" which took six weeks for Russ Temperly to tell!

My hidden talent? I could think of a product and an advertising jingle would pop into my mind. Just like that. Sooooooo, since this was a Communist country, we decided a little commercialism would be a welcome relief. And for the next two years Bill Butler's singers and I worked up an advertising skit with a different singling commercial almost every single night!

The movie-teller would take a break and the commercial would come on. They were clever, they were funny, and they were multi-lingual. It was a tremendous mental exercise to write funny singing commercials in a foreign language keeping the meter intact and having it rhyme. Many of them can't be displayed in a "family magazine" such as the Bulletin but here's one that can!

Picture the Cisco Kid and Pancho. Galloping away from the sheriff. "Hey, Cisco!"; "Hey, Pancho!"; "Hey, Cisco, We got to get outta her, Mon. Dese horses, dey ain't fast enough!"

"Hey Pancho! Look up there. It's an hombre with a Ferrari."

Then, in Four Part Harmony, Cisco, Pancho, the Sheriff and guy with the Ferrari would sing (to the tune of *Mañana*):

The engine is a V-12 the car she go so fast
When you drive Ferrari, I think you don't get passed.
So buy a new Ferrari, Twelve Grand is all you pay... (editor: That was 1965 prices!)
Drive a new Ferrari and drive your cares away!

<Chorus>

Ferrari, Ferrari, Ferrari is good enough for me.
Ferrari, Ferrari, faster than an
A-4C..... Si!

pow/mia

Mary Schantag, Chairman
P.O.W. Network
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NOT a Prisoner of War - but a Political Prisoner

News reports in late January related that the terrorists who kidnapped and beheaded Wall Street Journalist Daniel Pearl in 2002 were ordered released by Pakistan.

"Sheikh, Fahad Naseem, Syed Salman and Muhammad Adil were found guilty of the abduction and murder of the journalist in 2012," according to the Daily Mail on January 28. Sheikh had been sentenced to death, the others, life in prison. All have had their convictions overturned.

The Pakistan Government and Pearl's parents had appealed the rulings, but Pakistan's Supreme Court tossed out the appeal. The United States had stated previously that it would demand an extradition for Sheikh so he could be tried in the U.S. No immediate reaction to the latest news has been heard.

"The Pearl Project, an investigative journalism team at Georgetown University, carried

out a three-year investigation into Pearl's kidnapping and death.

They found the reporter was beheaded by Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, who was arrested in Pakistan in 2003 and later described as the architect of the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

Mohammad is a prisoner at the US Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba."

On January 31, FOX news headlines touted the cost of keeping Mohammad at Gitmo, after reports he would receive the COVID vaccine before US citizens.

"The U.S. government has spent an estimated \$161.5 million housing the suspected mastermind of the 9/11 terror attacks – Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. And up until Saturday, Mohammed was to receive a coronavirus vaccine so that he could be tried and put to death, if convicted."

He was due to go to trial January 2021.

Christmas Eve found a disturbing story on former Marine Corps Veteran, Paul Whelan. In 2020, convicted for being a "spy," after his arrest in December of 2018.

The interview, published by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty spoke of his daily routine.

.... told the BBC of his "very, very grim existence" as he prepares to spend Christmas alongside murderers and thieves in a labor camp.

"I get up in the morning and try to be as positive as I can," Paul Whelan told the BBC from Correctional Colony No. 17 in the

region of Mordovia, some 350 kilometers east of Moscow.

The 50-year-old Whelan, giving his first detailed interview since his arrest in December 2018, said he was spending his days sewing prison uniforms in the camp "workhouse" and is taking "one day at a time" — not focusing on his 16-year sentence on espionage charges that he has always rejected.

Prison guards are waking him at night every two hours to take his photograph, he said. Part of the camp has also been quarantined for a suspected coronavirus outbreak..."

Jim Moyer, co-chairman of Honor, Release, Return, Inc, stated, "...he is NOT a Prisoner of War - but he is a Political Prisoner and deserves whatever support we, as Advocates, can afford him. He was NOT wearing a uniform or carrying a weapon in an act of combat at the time of capture."

And he is not alone.

Ben Gittleson reported on January 27, that "A State Department official tells @ABC that it has received reports" that detained American Trevor Reed could be transferred to a labor camp in Russia "any day" and that "Trevor's health and welfare are of grave concern"

Free Trevor Reed commented that " [Day 530] Trevor Reed has been wrongfully detained for 1.5 years. He's falsely sentenced to 9 yrs prison for no crime... He's a former Marine... help him."

Later on the same day, the State Department also issued on a statement on Whelan's detention. It reads: "Paul Whelan was

convicted in a closed and secret trial, depriving him of a key protection, transparency, and depriving the Russian people of the confidence that justice was being carried out in a Russian courtroom, in their name and on their behalf. The trial was a mockery of justice. No evidence was shown. Russian authorities provided a public defender for Paul, yet refused to facilitate even the translation of court documents that would have assisted Paul in demonstrating his innocence.

The AP continued headlines on Americans in captivity on January 30 with “Biden faces calls to secure release of US man in Afghanistan.”

“On the one-year anniversary of Mark Frerichs’ abduction, family members and other supporters are urging the Biden administration not to withdraw additional troops without the Navy veteran being released from captivity. Frerichs was abducted one year ago Sunday while working in the country on engineering projects. U.S. officials believe he is in the custody of the Haqqani network, though the Taliban have not publicly acknowledged holding him.

Frerichs, who is from Lombard, Illinois... is one of several Americans the Biden administration is inheriting responsibility for, including journalist Austin Tice, who went missing in Syria in 2012, as well as U.S. Marine Trevor Reed and Michigan corporate executive Paul Whelan, both of whom are imprisoned in Russia.”

Looking Back, Looking Forward: “Adulting” at Santo Tomas

©Mary Beth Klee, 2020

Reprinted from *Beyond the Wire*, January 2021, the newsletter of Civilian ex-POWs (CPOW).

Janus, the two-faced Roman god for whom the month of January is named, invites us to move forward by looking back. With one face turned to the future and another to the past, he reminds us we chart our best course by reflecting on where we have come from – as well as where we’re going. What does that mean in 2021 for survivors of Santo Tomas Internment Camp and their descendants?

January 2021 marks no memorable anniversary: seventy-nine years since the camp’s formation and seventy-six years from its liberation. Survivors who experienced its horrors (and humor) were mostly children on February 3, 1945. Long gone are the adults who structured the STIC experience, confronted their captors, negotiated for internee health and sustenance, and let’s face it – largely ensured their survival. Perhaps then, this January we do well to remember *them* and the experience of “adulting at Santo Tomas.”

“To adult” is a new verb in American English. I became aware of it two years ago when a young cashier with jet-black hair, tattooed arms, and an earring in his lip, rang up my groceries sporting the button “I Can’t Adult Today. You can’t make me.” (This did not fill me with confidence.) “Adulting” refers to the ability to execute responsibilities normally associated with maturity—let’s say paying bills, caring for children, organizing a home. The fact that it has become a verb (in jest or not) indicates that many believe it is optional nowadays, and that one can choose to do it or decline. As we look forward to this new option in life, I propose that we look back and celebrate the splendid record of “adulting” at Santo Tomas – grownups acting responsibly to ensure the wellbeing of those in their care.

Examples? Securing Santo Tomas itself, the university campus as the place of internment for Allied civilians, was the first noteworthy example of “grown-ups at work.” Classes at the Dominican-run University of Santo Tomas had ended on December 8, 1941 when the war began. By December 25, when Manila was declared an “open city” and US troops pulled out, the Emergency Committee of the American Red Cross hustled. Headed by newly arrived insurance executive Earl Carroll, they confronted the likelihood of Japanese conquest and internment of American civilians. Carroll and the committee negotiated energetically with (neutral) Spanish Dominican priests for use of Santo Tomas as a place of internment should the worst occur. To their lasting credit, the Dominicans granted that permission.

Why was this a good thing? The University of Santo Tomas, founded in 1611, was famously “the oldest university under the American flag,” but facilities on the España Street campus were recent

civilian, cont'd...

construction with the Main Building completed in 1927. Architect and civil engineer, Fra Roque Ruaño, O.P., had taken pains to design the safest, most quake-proof building he could. The Japanese were leaders in quake-resistant construction (having suffered "the big one" in Yokohama in 1923), so Ruaño traveled to Tokyo to study their new techniques. He designed the university's Main Building with forty independent, rebar-ribbed, small towers on a continuous slab foundation. The campus was also big, open, and had been plumbed for hundreds of (day) students. All of those attributes became enormous advantages for what would become an overcrowded, under-plumbed internment camp. But the greatest advantage in securing the quake-proof Main Building was evident in a man-made quake. During the horrible shelling at war's end, the building's central staircase was one safe haven, a place where internees sat and endured, even as Japanese pounded from across the Pasig River.

If site choice were simply a fortuitous first step by self-interested Americans, numerous ongoing camp initiatives testified to the can-do spirit and unflinching acceptance of "adulthood." The camp's hastily conceived and highly functional organizational structure came not from Japanese edict, but from Americans and Brits bringing lessons of representative democracy to play before the Japanese knew what hit them.

The Japanese appointed Earl Carroll as their go-between with internees, but Carroll persuaded his captors to accept an elected Executive Committee, which in turn, labored diligently to organize committees on all fronts: sanitation, health, food procurement, finance and

supplies, public order, education, religious services, recreation, radio-music, but before all else: "duplication." During this blizzard of organizational activity in January 1942 the "Duplication Department" headed by Charles Buhler and Peter Richards, and assisted by Bessie Hackett, was formed before any other committee. It would be the means of keeping "the people," the internees informed. It had as its charge: "duplicating official circulars and notices, department news items" for circulation. (Stevens, 384)

Why is this interesting? I speculate that Santo Tomas is not a widely known or understood story of World War II internment partly because of this aspect – its extraordinary organization and dizzying amount of documentation. The number of committees formed in short order, and the number of pages devoted to their various activities, staggers the imagination, taking up blocks of shelf space at the Jesuit archives in the Ateneo. It is little wonder that one of the greatest internee shortages in the last year of imprisonment was paper.

Viewing the documentation, the uninitiated scholar of Santo Tomas wants to ask: who was running this camp? And it turns out the answer is: the internees. Internees on the American Red Cross committee. Internees on the Executive Committee. Internees on the various committees established by the Executive Committee. Internees acting as Room Monitors or Red Arm-Band patrol officers. All of the internees doing the work assigned to them by the committees. **Jailed by the Japanese, deprived of liberty, and imprisoned to be sure, internees were not deprived of a sense of responsibility and can-do.** "Let's show them how democracy works!" was an oft-cited slogan in the early months.

The American Red Cross committee (made up of internees) immediately established a canteen that served coffee and breakfast. Within one week of internment, the Executive Committee launched a vaccination program and organized a Central Kitchen. An infirmary and hospital were set up in camp, and a "release committee" arranged for transport of internees to outside hospitals with conditions that couldn't be treated in camp. A package line was organized to receive donations from "the outside." Within two weeks, a K-12 school was up and running for more than seven hundred children, an afternoon sports program organized, regular religious services begun, choral groups organized, and a newspaper published. Internees started small businesses and registered them, paying fees to the Camp Administration. A system of shanty neighborhoods with names like Froggy Bottom, Glamerville, and Jungle Town sprang up (with monthly rent also paid to the Executive Committee to help support those of lesser means.)

Most readers of this newsletter can rattle off dozens of other examples of organizational "adulthood" that astound (a bamboo pavilion and jungle gym built for kids; a "cafeteria Christmas" with toys fashioned of scraps from camp; quiz shows, dancing lessons, and floor shows). These initiatives are important because each one buffered. Each one was a layer of protection from the horror of war and complete dehumanization.

School was a bulwark against hunger and horror for many older children. It absorbed and distracted. My mother, internee Leonore Agnes Iserson (Klee), who was thirteen at the time of internment in 1942, raved about her education at Santo Tomas. She and best friend Mary Louella Cleland (Hedrick) spent many

civilian, cont'd...

nights studying by candlelight in the halls of the Main Building with the scarce textbooks shared by their 28 classmates. "The camp census lists 28 professional teachers" Lee wrote, "but for the most part, we had engineers teaching math, chemists teaching science, missionaries who had lived abroad teaching us languages, and of course, religion. And there was one Shakespearean actress who taught history in a way no one could ever forget." Each of those newly deputized high school teachers stepped up to the plate in a time of need, and with noteworthy results. "We were juniors in high school when we left camp," Lee recalled. "We scattered to schools all over the U.S. and the following year, six of the twenty-eight graduated as valedictorians."

I close these modest reflections with perhaps the most important theme of "adulthood" – which is willingness to sacrifice, putting those in one's care before one's self. This did not happen universally. STIC was home to venality as well as virtue, but self-sacrifice was particularly striking at the end. Among the most moving liberation photos are those of parents and children. Parents are gaunt, haggard, hollow-faced, and stick-like. But the children look well, like children. They suffered, to be sure. They hungered for "a sandwich with some bread on it," as one little girl put it. They suffered calcium deficiency. But children were shielded from many of the most deadly effects of starvation by a community that organized for their wellbeing (extra Lactogen and eggs for children under two, and full food rations for kids in the chow line, though the Japanese allotted only half rations for kids; adults sacrificed their own). And on the side, parents, friends, and roommates gave extra to children "not from their surplus but from their want," as Jesus would say. Stories of adults sacrificing the last ounces of their own sustenance for their children are legion. Stories of those in authority (members of the Executive Committee) losing their own lives for those they served are also exemplars at camp's end.

This January, a time when we are called to sacrifice (a little) in our own time of (modest) confinement, survivors and descendants of Santo Tomas can draw strength from a backward glance. Maybe we should make some new buttons: "I'm adulthood today. You can count on me."

Mary Beth Klee holds a Ph.D. in the History of American Civilization from Brandeis University, and teaches at Salve Regina University in Newport, RI. She is the daughter of internee Leonore Agnes Iserson Klee (1928-1996) and the author of *Leonore's Suite*, a novel about the teen experience at Santo Tomas, available at www.leonoressuite.com or amazon.com.

CPOW

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News & Information

H.R. 1276: The VA VACCINE Act

Passed the House of
Representatives March 9, 2021

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on Americans, including America's veterans. Operation Warp Speed has resulted in multiple safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19. Ensuring that as many veterans as possible are able to access those vaccines is key to getting past the pandemic and saving lives. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has done an excellent job getting veterans vaccinated so far. However, not all veterans are eligible to seek VA care. This has led to heartbreaking stories across the country of elderly, high-risk veterans being denied vaccines at VA medical facilities. For example, in Poughkeepsie, New York, a 78-year-old Korean War veteran with a heart condition was refused a vaccine from VA because his household income exceeded VA's income threshold despite the vaccine being free to all Americans, regardless of income.

The VA VACCINE Act would ensure that no veteran seeking a COVID-19 vaccine is turned away by VA. It would allow VA to provide vaccines to all veterans including those living

abroad and those who are not eligible to enroll in the VA healthcare system. It would also allow VA to provide COVID-19 vaccines to the caregivers of veterans in various VA home-based and long-term care programs. Enrolled veterans and

News, cont'd...

their caregivers would receive priority access to COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccine availability to others would be dependent on supply. This would ensure that the most vulnerable veterans remain at the front of the line and that VA makes appropriate use of its vaccine allotment.

The Message: • Vaccines are key to getting past the pandemic, getting back to normal, and saving lives. • Every veteran who wants to get vaccinated against COVID-19 should be able to get vaccinated at a VA medical facility. So should the caregivers of those veterans who are most vulnerable. • The bipartisan VA VACCINE Act would bolster VA's vaccination efforts and ensure as many veterans and caregivers as possible are able to get

vaccinated against this deadly virus.

Centennial

Arlington National Cemetery announces the Department of Defense's yearlong Tomb of the Unknown Soldier centennial commemoration.

For nearly 100 years, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier (TUS) has served as the heart of Arlington National Cemetery. It is a people's memorial that inspires reflection on service, valor, sacrifice and mourning. As a sacred memorial site and the grave of three unknown American service members, the Tomb connects visitors with the legacy of the U.S. armed forces throughout the nation's history.

"As the stewards of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, it's our

honor to lead the centennial commemoration of this site," said Karen Durham-Aguilera, Executive Director, Army National Military Cemeteries and Arlington National Cemetery.

"In collaboration with other governmental and non-governmental organizations, ANC is using this centennial commemoration to explore and share with the public the history, meaning and evolution of the Tomb."

Throughout this year, the cemetery will hold events leading up to the centennial ceremony on November 11, 2021. The public will be able to experience and participate in the commemorative events in many ways, both at the cemetery and virtually.



Military Gala & Banquet

November 9, 2021

**Saluting the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
and Tomb Guard**

Chateau on the Lake, Branson, MO

Cocktail Reception 5:00 pm

Dinner, USMC Birthday, Salute, Fireworks and Entertainment to follow.

GALA tickets, \$55 each. Reservations required.

Join us for Branson's Veterans Homecoming. NOV 5-11

**For more information contact Mary Schantag, Chairman
info@pownetwork.org 417-336-4232**



Aug. 6-7, 2021. Department of Ohio Annual 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. Group #2420868 Or www.druryhotels.com and enter group #2420868. 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!!

September 16, 2021, The American Ex-Prisoners of War National Board Meeting will be held in conjunction with The Ride Home at Warner Robins, Georgia. For more information, please email: HQ@axpow.org.

Sept. 16-18, 2021. The RIDE HOME, in support of the National POW/MIA Recognition Day events, will be held in Warner Robins, Georgia. Registration form is in this issue. More information will be in the July-Sept. issue of the EX-POW Bulletin.

Sept. 20-23, 2021. USS Yellowstone AD 27 Association reunion will be held at the Westgate Branson Woods Resort. For more information, contact Karen Bowen, 603-948-2821; pkbowen@atlanticbb.net.

Past national commanders

Virgil McCollum 1948-1949	Alfred "Joe" Galloway 1984-1985
Kenneth Day 1949-1950	Orlo Natvig 1985-1986
John Walker 1950-1951	William Curtis Musten 1986-1987
Ray O'Day 1951-1952	Albert Bland 1987-1988
Robert Geis 1952-1953	Milton Moore, Sr. 1988-1989
William A. Berry 1953-1954	John Edwards 1989-1990
James S. Browning 1954-1955	Francis W. Agnes 1990-1991
Roger Bamford 1955-1956	John Krejci 1991-1992
Walter Yosko 1956-1958	Charles Minietta 1992-1993
Leo J. "Moose" Maselli 1958-1959	William E. Bearisto 1993-1994
Paul Richter 1959-1960	Charles Prigmore 1994-1995
George Coates 1960-1961	Lawrence S. Moses 1995-1996
Jack Warner 1961-1962	Wm. "Sonny" Mottern 1996-1997
Alex Salinas 1962-1963	Wayne Hitchcock 1997-1998
Pat Wheat 1963-1964	Dick Throckmorton 1998-1999
Ralph Rodriguez 1964-1965	Zack Roberts 1999-2000
Rufus W. Smith 1965-1966	William "Bill" Schmidt 2000-2001
Calvin Graef 1966-1967	John W. Klumpp 2001-2002
DC "Bull" Massey 1967-1968	Maurice Sharp 2002-2003
Chuck Towne 1968-1969	F. Paul Dallas 2003-2004
John Lay 1969-1970	James Cooper 2004-2005
Grady Inzer 1970-1971	Gerald Harvey 2005-2006
Juan Baldanado 1971-1972	Warren King 2007-2008
Harold Page 1972-1973	Jim Clark 2008-2009
Walter Pawlesh 1973-1974	Kenny Hanson 2009-2010
DC Wimberly 1974-1975	Morris Barker 2010-2011
Joseph Perry 1975-1976	Carroll Bogard 2011-2012
Melvin Madero 1976-1977	Charles Susino, Jr. 2012-2013
Joe Schisser 1977-1978	James Lollar 2013-2014
Joe Upton 1978-1979	Milton "Skip" Moore 2014-2015
Herman Molen 1979-1980	Ed Dement 2015-2016
Stanley Sommers 1980-1981	Charles Susino Jr. 2016-2018
Charles Morgan 1981-1982	Jack Warner 2018-2019
Charles Miller 1982-1983	Bob Certain 2019 - present
C. Earl Derrington, Jr. 1983-1984	

A Brief History of the American Ex-Prisoners of War



It all began on December 24, 1941. General MacArthur had designated Bataan as the center of American resistance to the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. On Christmas Eve, he ordered his forces to withdraw and prepare for a last stand. The conditions of the peninsula – jungle, swamp and mountains – that were ideal for repelling the invaders, also made Bataan almost impossible to supply, and shortages of food and medicine plagued the forces throughout the siege.

Fierce Japanese assaults began on January 9th, and gradually forced American and Filipino troops deeper into the jungles. When the US ordered General MacArthur to leave the Philippines in March, his armies appeared to be holding the Japanese to a draw, but dwindling supplies of food and medical supplies weakened them. MacArthur insisted the Americans could hold out until May. They could not. On April 9, 1942, they surrendered. And the most horrific death march in history began.

The Bataan Relief Organization (BRO), originally conceived of by two mothers from New Mexico became a reality soon after. The mothers were Mrs. Charles W. Bickford and Mrs. Fred E. Landon, whose sons, members of the 200th Coast Artillery (CA) were captured by the Japanese. On April 10th, these women spoke with the father of another 200th CA prisoner and asked him to preside over a meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to form an organization to send aid to the captured men on Bataan.

That historic meeting was held on April 14, 1942 and the Bataan Relief Organization was created with headquarters in Albuquerque, NM. The name Bataan Relief Organization was suggested by Dr. V. H. Spensley, the first chairman of the organization. Spensley pointed out that the initials BRO are a shortened form of the word "brother" and that all the imprisoned men were their brothers. The group adopted as its motto: "We will not let them down."

The Bataan Relief Organization was made up of the mothers, fathers, wives and sweethearts of the captured men who very actively worked to get relief to their loved ones. They gathered every bit of information about the men that they could find and exchanged this information with others prisoners' families. Mrs. M. I. Bradley of Albuquerque had a standard listening

Happy 79th Birthday!

post set and received messages daily from the Tokyo station. A group of volunteers worked with her to type and mail out these messages.

The BRO made financial contributions to the US government. Money was brought in by BRO-sponsored state-wide Bond and Stamp sales drives; other contributions included aid to the American Red Cross and the National Red Cross.

As word spread about what the New Mexico organization was accomplishing, chapters were quickly formed throughout the United States.

In 1945, the control of the Bataan Relief Organization was turned over to the liberated members of the New Mexico's 200th Coast Artillery Regiment at an annual meeting held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In 1946, the name was changed to Bataan Veteran's Organization.

The first National convention of the BVO was held May 14, 1948, in Albuquerque. The second National convention was held in Hollywood, California, in April 1949. At this convention, it was voted to change the name to American Ex-Prisoners of War. The reason for the change was so veterans from the European Theater would realize that they were eligible for membership. By changing the name to American Ex-Prisoners of War, it would welcome all former POWs, Civilian Internees and their families and descendants from any war. There were 800 at the 1949 convention.

The AXPOW emblem was designed as a lapel pin by former prisoner of war and National Director, Bryan T. Doughty of Denver, Colorado, in 1949. The heraldic symbols, representing Justice, are balanced on swords. The curves at the top of the shield portray the two massive military defeats suffered by the United States Armed Forces in World War II: Bataan and the Belgium Bulge. Later, the Ex-POW motto was adopted: NON SOLUM ARMIS, Latin for "Not by Arms Alone."

It has been a long process from these two mothers to the members we now have from ALL wars, but we have not forgotten our roots. We are families. And we are unique in that respect. We believe that our former prisoners survived because they were loved. And they came home to stand arm in arm with the ones who loved them to help ensure that their experiences would not be forgotten next time Americans paid with their freedom to fight for ours.



Families are our strength. It is the family that provides the unwavering love and support for all of us. And it is the family that makes it possible for us to live up to our slogan: "We exist to help those who cannot help themselves."

VA Adds New Features on Veterans Legacy Memorial Website in Time for Memorial Day

In time for Memorial Day 2021, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA) has upgraded the capabilities of the Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM) website (<https://www.va.gov/remember>). The new VLM experience includes a complete redesign for a fresh look, better usability, and more ways to submit content. And for the first time, VLM visitors may upload photos and documents to a Veteran's VLM page.

The Veterans Legacy Memorial website is the nation's first digital platform dedicated entirely to the memory of the 3.7 million Veterans interred in VA national cemeteries. Launched in 2019, the site gives every Veteran interred in a VA national cemetery his or her own dedicated web page, with information such as dates of birth and death, military branch, highest rank held, conflicts in which the Veteran served, and significant military awards received. The site also includes headstone photographs and mapped locations for most Veterans, with more being added every day. Last May, family, friends, and visitors gained the ability to leave "Tributes" or comments on a Veteran's personal page.

Coming this May, visitors to VLM will be able to submit photos and biographical summaries of a Veteran's life, along with historical documents such as award citations, letters, and newspaper clippings. Another feature will allow visitors to follow their Veteran's page and receive email alerts when new content is posted.

In the past year, more than 9,000 tributes have been shared on Veterans' VLM pages. The site has become a place for families, friends, and fellow Veterans to remember those who have gone before them. For many families, it has become a way to show the impact a Veteran has had on their lives long after their military service had ended, as we see in this tribute to a Veteran interred at Puerto Rico National Cemetery:

"Grandpa, thanks for everything. For providing for a family and bringing us so much happiness. For always taking care of us until your last breath. For always having a smile and laughing at your grandchildren. We love you and we thank you so much not only for your years of service to the country but to your family. Love you grandpa."

All content submitted to VLM is reviewed by Veterans Legacy Memorial administrators before being posted to the site to ensure dignity and decorum consistent with VA national cemetery standards. Visitors to the site can also flag any questionable content for further review by administrators.

The National Cemetery Administration operates 155 national cemeteries and 34 soldiers' lots and monument sites in 43 states and Puerto Rico. For Veterans not buried in a VA national cemetery, VA provides headstones, markers or medallions to commemorate their service. Information on VA burial benefits is available from local VA national cemetery offices, online at <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/> or by calling VA regional offices toll-free at 800-827-1000. To make burial arrangements at any open VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 800-535-1117.

'Unsolvable':

Forensic sleuth says he's identified a long-dead WWI doughboy, but whose job is it to bring him home?

By Wyatt Olson, Stars and Stripes staff writer

Editor's Note: The following story is being reprinted with the permission of Stars and Stripes, which retains all rights. PHOTO CREDITS: Beverly Dillon

When Beverly Dillon's home phone rang on a late summer evening in 2019, she ignored it. She didn't recognize the number and assumed it was a pesky marketing call to her home in a small Montana town near Glacier National Park.

But as the caller began leaving a message on her old-fashioned answering machine — mentioning the surnames Vincent and McAllister — Dillon raced to pick up the phone.

"Yes! I was a Vincent before I was a Dillon, and my grandmother's maiden name was McAllister," the self-described "genealogy nut" recalled saying. "I nearly jumped out of my skin I was so excited."



On the other end of the line was Jay Silverstein, a forensic anthropologist who said he believed he had identified the remains of Pfc. Charles McAllister,

her great uncle who died in battle during World War I.

Silverstein had just retired from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency in Hawaii, the U.S. government's official agency tasked with bringing home the remains of the nation's missing war dead, but this was the one case he could not bear to leave unresolved. The remains had been stored at the agency's Hawaii lab for 15 years.

Dillon, now 80, and her son, Sean, submitted DNA samples to the Department of Defense DNA Registry in August 2019, for which she received a letter of receipt a few weeks later. It was the last contact she had from the government concerning the samples, she said. More than a year later, the case has gone nowhere.

Silverstein, who now teaches forensic anthropology in Russia, is frustrated with what he regards as DPAA's foot-dragging on a case he insists could have — should have — been completed years ago.

Silverstein's criticism of how the Defense Department operates its accounting effort is nothing new. He had been among the internal whistleblowers who complained of failings of the agency's predecessor, the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, sending a

memo, for example, to the agency's commander in 2012 describing shortcomings in efforts to recover World War II remains on Tarawa.

His complaints were among those that led the Defense Department to reorganize the effort to account for the nation's missing warfighters by creating the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, or DPAA, in 2015.

In a civil lawsuit he filed that same year in U.S. District Court in Hawaii, Silverstein alleged that certain agency personnel had retaliated against him over his complaints and other matters, a case he lost by jury trial in 2017.

Nevertheless, when Silverstein was leaving the agency last year, he was presented the Meritorious Civilian Service Award by Rear Adm. Jon Kreitz, then deputy director of DPAA.

'Not authorized by statute'

DPAA Director Kelly McKeague outlined the agency's position on the World War I case in a Nov. 23 letter to U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., in response to the lawmaker's query.

The agency, McKeague wrote, is not authorized by statute to account for remains in conflicts before World War II.

“unsolvable”, cont’d...

“At the same time, acknowledging Dr. Silverstein’s efforts, DPAA is coordinating with the [Defense Department] components to hopefully facilitate an identification,” he wrote. More DNA samples are required from “other known family members,” but the U.S. Army Casualty and Mortuary Affairs Operation Center had not yet located them, he wrote.

Silverstein contends that DPAA has an overwhelming amount of physical, circumstantial and historical evidence indicating the remains are those of Charles McAllister. He also argues that the agency has an obligation to account for pre-World War II remains that come into its possession — as has been done in past cases.

“Once these remains are accessioned into the laboratory, in my opinion, the agency has accepted responsibility to treat them with the dignity, respect, diligence, and honor due their sacrifice for our nation,” Silverstein said in a Dec. 5 email to Stars and Stripes in response to the McKeague letter. “I am frankly befuddled by the dancing around of scientific and bureaucratic excuses for years, rather than vigorously seeking a way to do what is a moral imperative and what should be an honorable tribute to someone lost as [missing in action] while fighting for our nation.”

‘Unsolvable’

McAllister’s remains have been stored in a box in DPAA’s Hawaii laboratory since 2004 after being exhumed, along with a second

set of remains, from a construction site by archaeologists in France the year before.

In 2005, Silverstein successfully identified that second set of remains as being those of Pvt. Francis Lupo, a case resolved in part because a wallet embossed with Lupo’s name had been found among the artifacts.

The first set of remains defied quick identification. Silverstein completed his analysis and passed the case to a historian at the lab, which at that time was part of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, or JPAC.

“He said it was unsolvable,” Silverstein said during an interview via Skype this fall.

In response to a query about the case from Stars and Stripes, DPAA spokeswoman Maj. Leah Ganoni said in an emailed statement that Silverstein’s recollection was accurate.

Silverstein’s attention over the following years turned to recovery efforts in North Korea, Vietnam and Tarawa, but as America approached the 100th anniversary of its entry into World War I in April 2017, he pulled that unsolved case out for another look.

“The case always bothered me because I felt there was enough information there to follow up on,” he said.

He scoured the available clues, including uniform insignia that indicated the soldier had been a member of the Washington National Guard. He retrieved and reviewed a history of that Guard unit.

He used geographic information system mapping to reconstruct the Second Battle of the Marne, which coincided with the site on which the archaeologists had found the remains. For cross reference, he searched the American Battle Monuments Commission website for soldiers missing from World War I.

He narrowed the search by considering where and when Lupo had been killed, surmising that their deaths had commonality. He came up with a list of 30 missing service members fitting the general criteria for the remains — but considered only five to be real possibilities.

At this point in his career, Silverstein was heading up a geographical information systems unit for DPAA, and he could not get official authorization to work the case, he said. His requests for records from the National Archives for the men on the list were repeatedly rejected by the contractors working for DPAA at the archives.

Ganoni said in the statement that Silverstein’s recollection of these events is accurate.

“In 2017, Mr. Silverstein’s supervisors did not want him to work on this incident using government time because DPAA is not authorized under relevant laws and DPAA’s charter to work on WWI cases,” she said.

Narrowing the list

Silverstein said he spent his own time and money retrieving National Archives records in an effort to identify the remains. Volunteers helped with genealogical work to track down

“unsolvable”,
cont’d...

descendants of the five service members on his list.

McAllister and Pvt. Rudolph Ulrich possessed the closest physical matches to the remains. Silverstein crossed Ulrich off the list when a DNA sample from one of his descendants did not match.

A dental record for McAllister stored at the National Archives set him apart from others on the short list: his first and second molars from both sides of the lower jaw were missing.

“He had very distinct tooth extractions that matched up to the skeleton perfectly,” Silverstein said. “I don’t recall seeing that particular dental pattern previously.”

The height and build between the remains and records also “matched perfectly,” he said.

But McKeague said in his letter that “there are a number of individuals who could be associated with the remains.” That necessitates the use of nuclear DNA testing, as opposed to the mitochondrial DNA testing used on samples submitted by Dillon and her son, he said.

The genetic code in mitochondrial DNA is passed from mothers to children in almost unaltered form through generations. But nuclear DNA possesses roughly 3.3 billion more base pairs than mitochondrial DNA, making it a vastly more unique identifier.

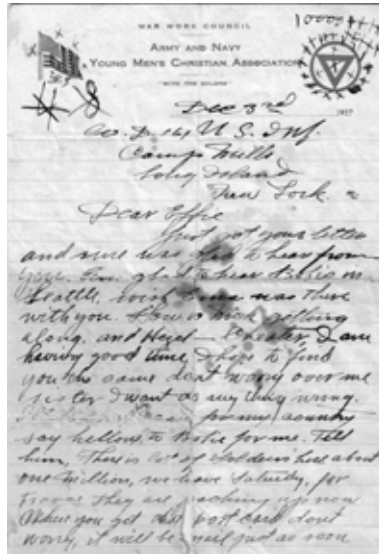
Ganoni, the DPAA spokeswoman, told Stars and Stripes that the mitochondrial sequence found in the samples from Dillon and her

son are “fairly common and not unique to make an individual identification.”

Silverstein said a process of elimination has winnowed the list down to only McAllister, making further DNA testing unnecessary.

“The statistical coincidence of the biological profile, the dental record, and the circumstances of loss of soldiers from the Washington State National Guard, 2nd Regiment, Company D, makes it highly improbable and next to impossible that these remains could belong to someone else,” Silverstein wrote in the Dec. 5 email. “Certainly, the cumulative evidence in this case is consistent with the highest level of legal and forensic precedent for accepting the identification of an MIA.”

An innocent letter



The case took on greater meaning to Silverstein after his initial hourlong conversation with Dillon last year.

On Dillon’s family room wall hangs a framed letter that her great uncle sent to his sister Effie — Dillon’s grandmother — on

Dec. 3, 1917, from New York before shipping out for France. She read it to Silverstein during that first call.

“I’ll do everything I can for my country,” wrote McAllister, who enlisted at 23 while living in the Seattle area. He concluded, “From boy gone away to war, remember me in the sweet by and bye and I’ll come home when the war is over.”

“Poor Jay was almost in tears by the time I finished reading the letter,” Dillon said. “It was just such an innocent letter.”

As of early December, Dillon had not been contacted by anyone from the Defense Department seeking leads on family members or additional DNA samples, she said.

Silverstein said in his Dec. 5 email that if DPAA has determined it is unable to “fulfill the responsibility our nation owes to Pfc McAllister, it is incumbent upon them to transfer the remains to another military mortuary authority as expeditiously, transparently, and respectfully as possible.”

“I don’t think the family is concerned about what government authority oversees the identification of Charles McAllister,” Silverstein said. “They do, however, think that his remains sitting in a cardboard box for 16 years in Hawaii is simply unacceptable and that further hesitation or indecision on how to treat the remains is intolerable.”

olson.wyatt@stripes.com
Twitter: [@WyattWOlson](https://twitter.com/WyattWOlson)

National POW/MIA Recognition Day

The RIDE HOME

3818 Litchfield Loop, Lake Wales, Florida 33859-5410
September 16-18, 2021

YES, I will attend **NO, I will not attend**

Please return this form by June 30, 2021, to the RIDE HOME address above.

POW or MIA Name: _____
Have you been awarded/received a POW Medal? Yes No (Circle One)
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: _____
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* your request. Room accommodations will depend on availability at the hotel/motel you are booked in 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 (check all that apply):

Thursday, September 16 _____ Bed Size: Queen/King: _____ Two Doubles: _____

Friday, September 17 _____ All Rooms are Non-Smoking!

Saturday, September 18 _____

Special Requirements: (Handicap accessible, handicap shower, etc.?) _____

Are you interested in being a passenger on a motorcycle at either of the Escort Rides? Yes ___ No ___

Concerns or Questions –

Contact Ginny; moegin@verizon.net or Moe; moehog@verizon.net – 407 448 1181



new members

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Daughter of Edward Hoffmann,
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Welcome!

Request for membership application American Ex-Prisoners of War

Name:
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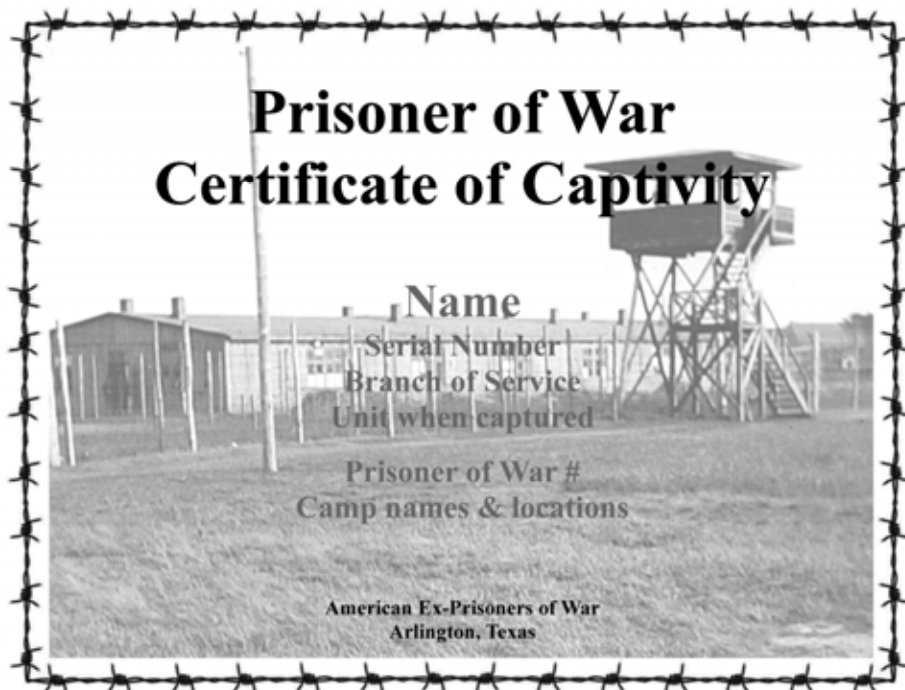
Membership is open to US Military
and Civilians captured because of
their US citizenship and their
families/descendents.

DO NOT send dues with this
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Mail to: American Ex-Prisoners of
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Prisoner of War Certificate of Captivity



Certificate of Captivity

\$25.00

Suitable for framing, this
certificate of captivity, printed
on 8½ x 11" quality paper,
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certificate from AXPOW,
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Headquarters by calling 817-
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Contributions



please send donations to:

National Headquarters, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445. Checks must be made payable to AXPOW or American Ex-Prisoners of War.

GENERAL FUND

In memory of Ann Goodwin, by
Great Oaks Church of Christ
In memory of Edgar Lloyd, by Therese Lloyd
In memory of Gary Ousley, by Edie Ousley
In memory of Gary Ousley, by Pamela Ousley
In memory of Gary Ousley, by Barry & Karen Ousley
In memory of Gary Ousley, by Sandra & Robert Jones
In memory of Gary Ousley, by Jean Hudson
In memory of Gary Ousley, by L M Day
In memory of Gary Ousley, by Leslie Broughton
In memory of James Wells, by Rick & Deborah Howard
In memory of Lt Leonard Prosnick, by Paul Thompson
In memory of my husband, James Kelly,
by Juanita Kelly
In memory of my husband, Maurice Sharp,
by Bonnie Sharp
In memory of my parents Edward and Theresa
Hoffmann, by Mary Rumer
In memory of Peter Kolodziej, by Thomas Hivko
In memory of R C Wakefield, by Sheri Horner
In memory of Richard Jeffries, by Elaine Hardman
In memory of Rose M Blasko, by Arleen O'Brien
In memory of Theresa Hoffmann, widow of Edward
Hoffmann, by Friends and Family
In memory of Warren E Wright, by Sandra DuBois
In memory of William Johnson, by Anthony Johnson

VOLUNTARY FUNDING

Irving Lautman, Norristown PA
Robert Smith, Tomahawk WI
Sybil Garver, Evergreen Park IL
Ted Cadwallader, Elk Grove CA

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 our future 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 AXPOW. More recently others have done the same. Support for our programs became the beneficiary of their generosity.

You, too can take action today to help ensure that the American Ex-Prisoners of War remains 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 continue our transition to a true 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 ensure our future. And feel free to contact CFO Marsha Coke at axpow76010@yahoo.com, or CEO Cheryl Cerbone at axpowceo@comcast.net. Phone #817-649-2979.

Thank You!



taps



Please submit taps notices to:
Cheryl Cerbone, 23 Cove View Drive, South Yarmouth, MA 02664

Past National Commander William E Bearisto 1924-2021



Bill Bearisto was inducted into the Army in April 1943. Upon completion of training, he was sent to England where he joined the 28th Division, 110th Regiment, 109th Field Artillery Battalion Headquarters. He was assigned to Liaison I and sent to Radio School in England as part of an exchange program with English troops. His unit practiced for the invasion of Europe; the 28th Div. was a reserve for the Normandy Invasion.

Tech/Sergeant Bearisto went to Normandy on D-Day and saw combat at St. Lo, France in June 1944. He directed field artillery cover as a forward observer for the 110th Regiment and fought across

France where his group participated in the liberation of Paris. They continued fighting in France, Luxembourg and Belgium, then returned to the unit where the Germans had started the Ardennes Campaign. In November, he was at the Belgian-German border where he fought in the Hürtgen Forest. The Book "Follow me and Die" was written about the 28th Inf. Div. combat actions there. When reporting to regimental headquarters, it was overrun by Germans; he withdrew to the cellar of the hotel where he was captured by the Germans in the early part of the Battle of the Bulge. He was then imprisoned in Stalag 8A at Gorlitz, Germany, then later 11B, Fallingbostal, where he was eventually liberated by the British.

Bill survived the 500 mile winter death march across Germany which claimed many allied lives.

Among his military awards and decorations he received the Purple Heart for being wounded in combat.

When he returned to the US, he was assigned to the Caderie Company at Camp Edwards, MA until his separation from the service.

In 1948, he married Ethel Walsh and they had three children – Robert, Paul and Mabel. Ethel predeceased him in 2020.

In October, 1993, he was elected National Commander of the American Ex-Prisoners of War at the national convention in Knoxville, TN. There were a number of bills that came before Congress during his year as National Commander. The POW Commemorative Coin bill passed and was signed by President Clinton. The raise for disabled veterans Cost of Living Allowance bill was passed and signed by Clinton.

As a Past National Commander, he was on the Andersonville Committee which raised funds and oversaw the construction of the National American Ex-Prisoner of War Museum in Andersonville GA which was dedicated in 1998.

Bill is survived by 2 sons, 1 daughter, 4 granddaughters, six great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandson and one brother.

BALAZA, Marie A. age 93, passed away December 6, 2020. Marie was married to the late Charles Balaza for 67 years. Charles served with 59th Coast Artillery on Corregidor during WWII, where he was captured and held as a POW for 3.5 years. Marie is survived by 4 children and their spouses, 8 grandchildren and their spouses, and 6 great grandchildren, numerous nieces, nephews and friends. She was deeply loved and will be greatly missed

taps, continued...

BOOTHROYD, Owen, of Chicago, IL passed away November 4, 2020. He was 100 years old. He served as a member of the USS Canopus (AS-9) in the Philippines. After the ship was severely damaged on Dec. 29, 1941, and subsequently scuttled to prevent the vessel from falling into enemy hands, he and his surviving shipmates joined the groundforces in defense of Bataan and Corregidor. He was captured and spent 3 ½ years as a POW. His wife, Anna, survives him.

BRODY, David I., age 95, passed away January 15, 2021. He was captured while serving in the Army during WWII; he was held in Stalag 2A Neubrandenburg, Mecklenberg 53-13. After retirement, he and his wife travelled the world together. The two loved their retirement years that they spent in Boca Raton, Florida. He is survived by his wife of 71 years, Shirley, 3 sons, 7 grandchildren and their families, and many nieces and nephews. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, uncle, and friend.

CHITTENDEN, William H. of Wheaton, IL died Jan 16, 2020 at age 100. He was the last of the 203 US Marine Embassy Guard detachment captured 8 Dec 1941 in Peking and Tientsin, China (North China Marines). He was held in slave labor camps at Woosung and Kiangwan in China and Kawasaki and Niigata in Japan where he was liberated on 5 Sep 1945. Howie graduated from Notre Dame in 1949 and worked for Sears and Roebuck for 32 years. He is survived by his daughter Peggy Montgomery and grandson Joseph Chittenden.

COZBY, Leonard, 97, longtime member of the Fresno Chapter, AXPOW, died Jan. 8, 2021. He served with the 80th Inf. Div., during WWII and was captured in the Battle of the Bulge near the German border. Survivors include one son.

DRENNAN, Richard D., 88, passed away January 24, 2021 in Huntersville, NC. Dick enlisted in the US Army in October, 1950. Following training, he was assigned to Company E, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Div. in Korea. On May 19, 1951 he was captured by the North Koreans and remained a POW for 27 months (Camps 1 & 3) until release. After a short time back in the US, Dick re-enlisted and served another 3 years in Korea on the DMZ from 1956 to 1959. He is survived by his two children and six grandchildren. He was proud to have served and will be missed.

JONES, Charles Edward, of Niceville, FL passed away Nov. 26, 2020. He was 96. Serving with the 28th Inf. Div., he was captured in the Battle of the Bulge and held until liberation. Both Charles and his late wife of 70 years, Rachel, were life members of AXPOW and the Panama City Chapter. He leaves 2 children, 3 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren and their families.

JONES, Homer E. Sr, died Oct. 27, 2020., a WWII Veteran and ex-POW, along with his loving bride of 74 years, Jo, Oct. 24th. During WWII, Homer was stationed in Foggia, Italy, with the 8th AF. He was shot down in December, 1944 over Salonika, Greece and taken prisoner. Homer and his engineer escaped on foot across Hungary, Romania and Sofia Bulgaria until they made it back to their base in Italy Jo and Homer were life-long West Texans, born, reared, and

married in Slaton, before living in Wellman for 52 years, then moving to Lubbock in 2000.

HAMANN, Leta, of Omaha, NE died Feb. 11, 2021. She was the widow of Ex-POW Merle (11th AF, 404th BS). Leta leaves 1 daughter, 1 grandson, 3 grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews.

GRONBECK-KLUMPP, Ruth Mae, 91, of Nashville, TN passed away Jan. 13, 2021. She lived a long, fulfilling life, full of travel involving many cross country moves and adventures, and she made friends wherever she went. She was a bowling champion in Wichita, Kansas and Panama City, Florida, and volunteered in her children's activities over the years as a den mother, Girl Scout Leader, football booster and band booster; she also volunteered for and advocated for causes she was passionate about well into her late eighties. She was active in and served in many capacities in the Tennessee and National chapters of the American Ex-Prisoners of War. Ruthie and husband Romer (ex-POW, WWII) had ten children After his death, she married another ex-POW, John Klumpp, who also predeceased her. In addition to her children, she is survived by 19 grandchildren who she adored, 14 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren, as well as her beloved Jack Russell terrier, Pepper.

MADISON, Charles Thomas, 95, died July 15, 2020 in Ankeny, IA. He was inducted into the Air Force on July 6, 1943. He served with the 15th AF, 744th BS, 456th BG. He was captured and held in Stalag 3A until the camp was liberated by the Russians. Survivors include 1 son, 2 granddaughters, 1 brother and many nieces and nephews.

taps, continued...

McINTYRE-ALLEN, Elizabeth, of Brownsburg, IN passed away Nov. 22, 2020. She was predeceased by her husband, Ex-POW Joseph McIntyre (WWII, held in Germany) and her second husband Charles Allen. Betty leaves 1 son, 3 granddaughters, 3 great-grandchildren and their families.

McKINNEY, Joyce Ann, of Amarillo, TX died Jan 16, 2021. She was 90 and the wife of Ex-POW Dan L. (Korean War). Both Joyce Ann and Dan were life members of AXPOW. She leaves her husband Dan, 2 daughters, 2 grandchildren and 2 great-grandsons.

MILLS, James M. of Vandalia, OH passed away Jan. 16, 2021. He was an Army Veteran of WWII serving with the 106th Inf. Div., 423 Reg., Company I at the start of the Battle of the Bulge where he became a prisoner of war. He was assigned to a work Kommando now known as Slaughterhouse Five located in Dresden, Germany, and survived the deadly 1945 firestorm bombing raids. Jim was a life member of AXPOW, Dayton Chapter #6 and the 106th Infantry Division Association. He is survived by his beloved wife of 36 years Janice, 1 daughter, 4 sons, 1 stepson, 6 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren, 1 half-sister and their families.

NIX, Cowan Glenn, passed away December 9, 2020 at age 83 at the Wahlen Veterans Home in Ogden, Utah. He joined the United States Air Force as an Aviation Cadet in January 1958 and received his wings and a commission as a 2/Lt on April 30, 1959. From August 1965 to October 1, 1966, he was with the 67th and 44th Fighter Squadrons, Okinawa, Flying F-105s. Prior he spent 3 years with the 44th flying F-100s. He was

shot down in his F-105 and on October 1, 1966, he became a POW in North Vietnam. He was held for 7 years. Cowan leaves 1 son, 1 daughter, 2 grandchildren, 1 sister and their families.

NIXON, Harry W. of San Antonio, TX died Nov 2, 2020 at the age of 97. He served in combat with the 103rd Inf. (Cactus) Div. in France during WWII, and was captured by the German Army; he spent five months as a prisoner-of-war in Germany. In 1954, he married Estelle Stanzel. They had four sons, He also leaves 4 grandchildren.

OUSLEY, Gary L., of Hoschton, GA passed away Jan. 1, 2021. He was 90. A veteran of the US Army, he was a life member of AXPOW. During the Korean War, he was captured by the Chinese and held in North Korea for 33 months. Gary is survived by his wife of 67 years, Edna, 1 daughter, 1 son, 2 brothers, 1 sister and their families.

PALE, Vincent, 97, of Villas, NJ died January 11, 2021. He served in the AAC, 453rd BG during WWII. His plane was shot down, he was captured and held in Stalag 17B until liberation. Vince is predeceased by his wife Marguerite; he leaves 3 daughters, 2 sons, 17 grandchildren, 28 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great-grandchildren.

PEDEVILLANO, John Robert, of College Park, MD died Dec. 2, 2020. He was 98. John served as in the US Army Air Corps with the 306th Bomb Group's 369th Bombardment Squadron "Fightin' Bitin'" during World War II. His plane was shot down over Germany; he was captured and held in 7A and Luft 3 until liberation by Patton's Army. His beloved wife Gloria passed away in 2014. He is survived by 3

daughters, 5 grandchildren 3 great-grandchildren and their families.

PELLETIER, Rosalie M., widow of Ex-POW Richard (101st AB, held in 4A, 4B) passed away Nov. 11, 2020. She was a very active member of the Central MA Chapter, AXPOW and a life member of National. Rosalie leaves 1 daughter, 1 son, 4 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren and a large and loving extended family and circle of friends.

PERKINS, Ruth Rose Margaret, age 96, of Naperville, IL passed away in Dec. 2020. She was the wife of the late Russell J. Perkins (Ex-POW, WWII). Ruth and her late husband were active with the Fox River Valley Chapter, AXPOW. She is survived by one daughter, 1 son, 9 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren, 18 nieces and nephews, 1 brother, 1 sister.

ROOF, Carl D., 98, of Armstrong Township, PA died Dec. 3, 2020 at the age of 98. He was captured while serving with the US Army during WWII. Carl leaves 2 daughters, 2 sons, 1 brother, 9 grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren and a host of loving nieces and nephews.

SORTILLO, Elliott, of Cypress, TX died January 1, 2021. He was 86. Sortillo joined the U.S. Army at age 15. At 16, he joined the 31st Inf. Reg. and participated in the landing at Inchon, South Korea. On Nov. 30, 1950, at the Chosin Reservoir they were surrounded and captured by the Chinese. He was held for 31 months. After his release, he re-enlisted and eventually served in Vietnam with Co. "B", 5th Special Forces group (Airborne). Elliott served on the DVA Advisory Committee on Former Prisoners of War and was active in the Korean War Ex-POW Association as President (1998-1999) and Site Selection Committee Chair. Surviving him are his loving wife of

taps, continued...

60 years, Sondra, 1 son, 1 daughter, 9 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, 1 sister, numerous cousins, nieces, nephews and friends.

STOLTZ, Frank Frederick, 96, of Miles City, MT passed away Nov. 9, 2020. He was captured while serving with the 44th BG, 506th BS, 8th AF. His B-24 was shot down over Germany, captured near Wetzler and held until liberation. Frank was always a friendly face at our National Convention, usually traveling with his daughter. He was a life member of AXPOW. Frank is predeceased by his wife of more than 66 years, Patricia; he is survived by 2 daughters, 3 sons,

11 grandchildren; 24 great grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

WATTS, Lowell H. of Sun City West, AZ passed away Jan. 7, 2021. He was 100 years old. In During WWII, he served with the 388th BG as a B-17 pilot. On his 25th mission, the plane was shot down and he was captured and held in Luft 1, Barth. Lowell returned to service during the Korean War serving in the US Air Force. Lowell was a past commander of the Sun City Arizona Agua Fria Chapter of American Ex-Prisoners of War. He is survived by 2 sons; 2 step-children; 6 grandchildren; 4 great-grandchildren; and 4 great-great-grandchildren.

YOSS, Ray, of Manti Utah, died Oct. 25, 2020. He was 89 years old. In the Korean War, Ray was assigned to K Company, 34th Inf. Reg., 24th Inf. Div. He joined the division in Japan on Occupation Duty and came to Korea with his unit. He was captured by the North Korean Army on July 20, 1950 in South Korea. He was imprisoned with the Tiger Survivors. Ray's wife, Ila, predeceased him; he is survived by his son, Terry Michael Yoss, who was his caretaker till his death and 1 sister.



Chaplain



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This past year, it seems that a lot of control has been taken away from us. The pandemic, the political strife, civil unrest, and social injustice – they all have

taken a toll on us. There is much uncertainty in the midst of us. It has been especially hard on us just by being older. One thing I have found, over the years, has been taking a “stock” of ourselves. We need to reflect on our past and see what we can still do to find inner strength and peace.

By this time, I believe that all of us have had the opportunity to have the vaccine. To take it or not is a personal decision. My wife and I have had both shots. I had the Pfizer and had very little soreness the next day; and my wife had the Moderna and had soreness for several days.

I'm writing this in the Christian season of Lent. Although this is a Christian season it has a lot of dynamics for living a full and complete life for everyone. It is a time of reflection, prayer and forgiveness. This can help us organize ourselves to live into the future. Instead of worrying we can be proactive for our lives and others. We can continue to be

friends and help those who mean so much to us. We learned that as POW's. We helped each other in times of need. It gave us a reason to look forward when times were tough.

I'm reminded of a quotation from Paul Tillich, a philosopher and theologian born in August of 1886 and died October 1965.

"He who risks and fails can be forgiven. He who never risks and never fails is a failure in his whole being."

His quote shows us good reasons to be involved in our communities to help our community be a better place – “when the situation gets tough - the tough get going.” I pray that you are living your life to the fullest.

Keith



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STATUARY HALL...APRIL 9, 1992

THE AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR WERE HONORED BY CONGRESS AS WE CELEBRATED OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY.

SPEAKERS INCLUDED SENATOR AND AXPOW MEMBER JOHN McCAIN, REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERS SAM JOHNSON, & PETE PETERSON, MAJORITY LEADER SENATOR GEORGE MITCHELL, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE TOM FOLEY, AND MY DAD, AXPOW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHUCK WILLIAMS.



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