

EX-POW BULLETIN

the official voice of the
American Ex-Prisoners of War

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November/December 2012



We exist to help those who cannot help themselves





Carroll "Pete" Gouger, of South Yarmouth, MA served with the 8th AF, 401st BG. He was held in Luft I with my dad. Pete and his son had gone to Barnstable Airport (Cape Cod) to see the vintage WWII B-17 and B-24 brought in by the Collings Foundation as part of the Wings of Freedom Tour. Pete is in the picture on the left with the Flying Fortress...a picture of my dad with his crew is shown on the right inside the B-24 Liberator.



LEFT: Active members of the Capitol City Chapter, AXPOW (L-R): Harvey Gann, Paul Anderson, Raymond McKee Sr., Don Husienga, Joe Bloomer, Jim Manford, Robert Albresch, Andy Bardagjy.

RIGHT: POWs and spouses from the Steel Valley Chapter #13, Youngstown, OH at their annual picnic. A gracious donor presented all the ladies with long-stem red roses and all the men with gift certificates to a local eatery.



LEFT: Central Missouri Chapter Commander Wilburn Rowden presented a copy of "Prisoners of Hope" to MO governor Mel Carnahan in his office. 119 ex-POWs have had articles in this book about their lives.

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Deadline for the Jan/Feb 2013 issue is Dec. 1, 2012.

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

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On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, an armistice, or temporary cessation of hostilities, was declared between the Allied nations and Germany in the First World War, then known as "the Great War." Commemorated as Armistice Day beginning the following year, November 11th became a legal federal holiday in the United States in 1938. In the aftermath of World War II and the Korean War, Armistice Day became Veterans Day, a holiday dedicated to American veterans of all wars.

Veterans Day is intended to honor and thank all military personnel who served the United States in all wars, particularly living veterans. It is marked by parades and church services and in many places the American flag is hung at half mast. A period of silence lasting two minutes may be held at 11AM. Some schools are closed on Veterans Day, while others do not close, but choose to mark the occasion with special assemblies or other activities.

Renewal Notice! Annual Members!

The January, 2013 issue will be the last one you receive if you don't renew. Take a minute and send your 2013 dues to National Headquarters.

Don't miss out on all the benefits membership in AXPOW offers!

Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukkah! Feliz Navidad! Happy Holidays!



*from the AXPOW Staff
Clydie, Marsha, Donna, Cheryl
and Mom*

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**National Commander
Charles Susino, Jr.**

REMEMBER

Each year, America recognizes a solemn day, POW/MIA Recognition Day. This day was established to remember those veterans - both living and deceased - who served this country and became Missing-in-Action or a Prisoner of War in the hands of the enemy. Across our nation, it is a day for all Americans to remember the sacrifices of the POW/MIAs for our country's freedom.

It is something we all know about.

The feelings and the emotions, anxieties, loneliness, inhumane treatment by the captors, I revisit many times.

With more than 83,000 veterans still missing in action or prisoners of war on foreign soil since WWII, as a nation we are not whole. The everyday plight of all POW/MIA veterans see no future. Seeing guards of different nations with only one thought in mind - making you suffer. Food, only enough to keep you alive, water - maybe, hygiene - none. Clothing on your back is wearing thin. The body



and mind weaken. Your visions of home fade.

For some, they have made it home. For others, this nightmare continues. When are they coming? Are we forgotten? Our voices must reaffirm the commitment of the Defense Department to bring closure for the veterans, their families and our country. With the use of the latest technologies, in recent years many veterans previously listed as MIAs have been identified. These efforts must continue.

Closure continues to come for many. In June of this year, Nick A Romeo, brother of Sgt. Vincenzo Dominick Romeo, a POW in the Korean War contacted me regarding receiving the Purple Heart medal his brother earned as a POW in Camp #5, North Korea, where he died on December 31, 1950. Sgt. Romeo had earned 8 medals for his service and Nick was presented with these awards in a low-key ceremony at the Soldiers and Sailors Monument in Cent Square in Sgt. Romeo's hometown of Easton, PA on the eve of POW/MIA Recognition Day. On that day, the citizens of Easton remembered and gave their thanks.

We as a nation have an obligation to seek those alive or deceased and bring them home.

Remember...
US Service member captured while supporting combat operations:
Army Spc. Bowe R. Bergdahi, 26,
June 30,2009, Afghanistan

God bless our troops
God bless America
REMEMBER

Charles Susino, left, national commander of the American Ex-Prisoners of War, presents eight service medals to Nick Romeo, of Easton, PA during a ceremony Thursday afternoon in Centre Square. The medals were in honor of Romeo's brother, Vincenzo, also of Easton, who was captured and died as a prisoner of war during the Korean War. Express-Times Photo | BILL ADAMS

news from hq



Happy Holidays, everyone.

It's the end of another year! Time passes so quickly.

Annual dues members, it's time to renew. This will be your last issue of the Bulletin if you don't get your dues in now. We would surely miss you.

There are a couple of great items we offer that would make great stocking stuffers. The POW/MIA postage stamp pin, the logo decals and the magnetic ribbons are all affordable and available. Check out the back of the Bulletin for details on how to order.

HQ will be closed the week of Christmas through New Year's Day. We wish all y'all a happy and safe holiday season.

Clydie, Marsha, Donna and Sally

UMB Credit Card

Every time a member - or member's family or friends - signs up for the new UMB credit card (which features our marching men on the face), AXPOW receives \$50.00. That's like making a \$50 donation to the organization when you sign up. We also get a percentage of every dollar spent if you use the card each month.

So won't you take a few minutes and apply for this card today?

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**For AXPOW National Service Officers:
VA FORM 21-22 has been updated**

The new form: "APPOINTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICE ORGANIZATION AS CLAIMANT'S REPRESENTATIVE" must be used for all new claims. To get copies, go to: <http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21-22-ARE.pdf>. There are also copies available at National Headquarters.

Aid and Attendance

often overlooked by claimants and their NSOs...

The Aid and Attendance (A&A) Pension provides benefits for veterans and surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in eating, bathing, dressing and undressing or taking care of the needs of nature. It also includes individuals who are blind or a patient in a nursing home because of mental or physical incapacity. Assisted care in an assisting living facility also qualifies.

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To qualify for A&A it needs to be established by your physician that you require daily assistance by others to dress, undress, bathing, cooking, eating, taking on or off of prosthetics, leave home etc. You DO NOT have to require assistance with all of these. There simply needs to be adequate medical evidence that you cannot function completely on your own.

The A&A Pension can provide up to \$1,704 per month to a veteran, \$1,094 per month to a surviving spouse, or \$2,020 per month to a couple.

A Veteran filing with a Sick Spouse is eligible for up to \$1,338 per month. Many families overlook the A&A Pension as it pertains to veterans who are still independent, but have an ill spouse. Keep in mind that in this situation, if the spouse's medical expenses completely depletes their combined monthly income, the Veteran can file as a Veteran with a sick spouse.

ELIGIBILITY

Any War-Time Veteran with 90 days of active duty, 1 day beginning or ending during a period

of War, is eligible to apply for the Aid & Attendance Improved Pension. A surviving spouse (marriage must have ended due to death of veteran) of a War-Time Veteran may also apply. The individual applying must qualify both medically and financially.

To qualify medically, a War-Time Veteran or surviving spouse must need the assistance of another person to perform daily tasks, such as eating, dressing, undressing, taking care of the needs of nature, etc. Being blind or in a nursing home for mental or physical incapacity, or residing in an assisted living facility also qualifies.

Eligibility must be proven by filing the proper Veterans Application for Pension or Compensation. This application will require a copy of DD-214 or separation papers, Medical Evaluation from a physician, current medical issues, net worth limitations, and net income, along with out-of-pocket Medical Expenses.

To qualify financially, an applicant must have on average less than \$80,000 in assets, EXCLUDING their home and vehicles.



Each December more than 500 sites participate in the national Wreaths Across America program

to remember and honor our military veterans. Sponsored wreaths will be laid on gravesites in National Cemeteries across the country, including Andersonville National Cemetery, on the second Saturday of December. The next Wreaths Across America ceremony is scheduled for Saturday December 15, 2012.

If you are interested in sponsoring a 20" Frasier Fir wreath with a red velveteen bow, you can learn more about the program and sponsor wreaths online at www.wreathscrossamerica.org.

Please note: The Wreaths Across America™ national office is not able to accommodate grave-specific requests. You may choose a specific location from the hundreds of our participating sites across the country. The leader for that location MAY be able to accommodate a grave specific request.

pow medsearch

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PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Public Law 97-37

(Layman's Terms)

Originally published

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

**updated by the Department of
Veterans Affairs**

All ex-POWs should keep these and/or make copies. 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. This disorder looks and is treated just like degenerative arthritis (arthritis associated with age) except it is caused by severe damage to a single or few joints producing early onset arthritis. Since it has a definite cause, it is called a secondary form of arthritis. This is an extremely difficult diagnosis to make, but in general one has to prove that a specific trauma occurred to a single or very few joints, and other changes consistent with degenerative arthritis are not present throughout the rest of the body at the same time. In short, these changes need to be localized.

2. AVITAMINOSIS

The total lack of vitamins in the diet. This disorder is a fatal condition unless it is supplemented with vitamins within a few weeks. There fore, most individuals suffer from hypovitaminosis, which is a relative deficiency of vitamins in the diet. The specific

type, intensity and duration of deprivation determines the long-term effects.

3. BERIBERI

Caused by a severe lack of vitamin B1 (thiamine) in the diet. This produces changes in the nerves (both in the brain and extremities) and the heart. Brain changes could produce dementia or psychosis. Nervous changes are usually associated with numbness and/or painful feet. Beriberi heart disease is an acute condition, similar to congestive heart failure, except that the heart pumps more blood than in normal congestive heart failure and it is associated with the presence of an excessive amount of lactic acid in the body. It is unknown at this time whether this can produce a chronic state.

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. This is an infection in the colon and can be caused by a multitude of different organisms, the most common of which is amoeba which can produce a mild or severe dysentery and possibly be associated with a chronic irritable colon. Bacillary dysentery is associated with the bacteria shigella, but will not cause a chronic state. There are multiple other bacteria that can cause dysentery which usually do not produce chronic states. Viral dysentery can also present like amoebic or bacillary dysentery and will not produce a chronic state.

5. FROSTBITE

The actual freezing of tissue. This is graded on a continuum with one representing mild to four

representing mummification of the tissue. The extremities furthest from the heart are usually affected, with primarily the nose, ears, fingertips, and toes being involved. This usually produces long-term side effects such as numbness, discoloration, excessive swelling, and pain in the affected area.

6. HELMINTHIASIS

Infection with any type of worms that parasitize the human. Most infections usually resolve spontaneously either with proper treatment or as the natural course of the disease. Strongyloides is known to persist in a permanent state in humans due to its ability to re-infect the host.

7. MALNUTRITION

Merely means bad nutrition. The nutritional depletion may be either caloric, vitamin, fatty acid, or mineral deficiency, or more likely a combination. Depending on the type, intensity, and duration, it may yield permanent side effects or no lasting side effects at all.

8. PELLAGRA

Literally meaning rough skin in Italian, also known as black tongue in dogs. It is caused by a virtual lack of vitamin B3 (niacin) in the diet, producing the classical trio of diarrhea, dermatitis, and dementia. All are easily treated early on with no side effects. The dementia, if left untreated, may produce permanent mental deficits.

9. ANY OTHER NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY

The lack of protein and calories

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medsearch continued...

in the diet generally produces no lasting side effects. However, vitamin deficiencies other than the aforementioned B1 (beriberi) and B3 (pellagra) can have very disastrous effects on one's body. Also deficiencies of certain fatty acids and essential minerals in the diet can have lasting and long term sequela.

10. PSYCHOSIS

A generic term for any of the insanities. Generally, it is thought of as a mental disorder causing gross disorganization of a person's mental capacity and his ability to recognize reality and communicate with others regarding demands of everyday life.

11. PANIC DISORDER

Characterized by discrete periods of apprehension or fear with at least four of the following during an attack: shortness of breath, feelings of heart skipping, chest pain, dizziness, sweating, fainting, trembling, fear of dying, or doing something uncontrollable during an attack. These attacks need to occur at least three times within a three week period, not associated with physical exertion or life threatening situations. Also there needs to be an absence of severe physical or other mental illness which could cause these symptoms.

12. GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

Characterized by generalized persistent anxiety and with symptoms of at least three of the following four categories:

- (1) Motor tension as characterized by shaking, jumpiness, trembling and restlessness;
- (2) Autonomic hyperactivity, such as sweating, cold or clammy hands, high or irregular heart

rate, dry mouth, etc.;

(3) Apprehensive expectations, anxiety, worry, fear, anticipation of misfortune to himself or others;

(4) Tendency to insomnia, hyperattentiveness, irritable.

All these symptoms had to have lasted at least one month. Also, there needs to be an absence of all other mental disorders and physical disorders which could explain the symptoms.

13. OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

This may be either obsessions or compulsions. Obsessions are recurrent, persistent ideas or impulses that are thoughts that invade consciousness and are experienced as senseless or repugnant. Attempts are made to ignore or suppress them. Compulsions are repetitive and seemingly purposeful behaviors that are performed in certain similar manners. The behavior is felt by the individual to produce or prevent some future event. Generally, the individuals recognize the senselessness of the behavior and do not derive pleasure from carrying it out, although it often relieves tension. Also, the obsessive or compulsive individuals are associated with a significant sense of distress in that it interferes with social or role functioning.

14. POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

The re-experiencing of a trauma of a past recognized stress or that can produce symptoms of distress. This re-experiencing needs at least one of the following:

- (1) Recurrent and intrusive recollection of the event;
- (2) Recurrent dreams;
- (3) Sudden feelings that the trauma was occurring because of an association, an environmental or ideational situation.

Also involved is reduced involvement with the external world beginning after the trauma, revealed by at least one of the fol-

lowing:

(1) Hyperalertness or exaggerated startle response;

(2) Sleep disturbance;

(3) Guilt about surviving when others have not;

(4) Memory impairment or trouble concentrating;

(5) Avoidance of activities that arouse recollection of the traumatic event;

(6) Intensification of symptoms by exposure to events that symbolize or resemble the traumatic event.

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. These depressive periods are separated by periods of normal mood, lasting a few days to a few weeks, but no more than a few months at a time. During the depressive period, too little sleep or too much sleep, low energy or chronic tiredness, loss of self esteem, decreased effectiveness or productivity at work, social withdrawal, loss of interest in pleasurable activities, excessive anger, inability to respond with apparent pleasure to praise or reward, less active or talkative than usual, pessimistic attitude about the future, tearful or crying thoughts about death or suicide. There are also no psychotic features present..

17. PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Literally Greek for the suffering of nerves outside of the brain and spinal cord. There are several dif-

medsearch, continued

ferent causes for peripheral neuropathy, and vitamin deficiency and possibly mineral deficiency are just two. Other causes to be considered are various toxins such as lead, copper, and mercury, a hereditary predisposition to neuropathy, deposition of amyloid or protein produced by one's own body mounted in response to an infection, infections such as by leprosy, which is the most common form of neuropathy in the world, and multiple other less common causes.

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. Some people with IBS have constipation (difficult or infrequent bowel movements); still others have diarrhea (frequent loose stools, often with an urgent need to move the bowels); and some people experience both. Sometimes the person with IBS has a crampy urge to move the bowels but cannot do so. Through the years, IBS has been called by many names - colitis, mucous colitis, spastic colon, spastic bowel, and functional bowel disease. Most of these terms are inaccurate.

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).

In addition to the pain caused by the ulcer itself, peptic ulcers give rise to such complications as hemorrhage from the erosion of a major blood vessel; perforation of the wall of the stomach or intestine, with resultant peritonitis; or obstruction of the gastrointestinal tract because of spasm or swelling in the area of the ulcer. The direct cause of peptic ulcers

is the destruction of the gastric or intestinal mucosal lining by hydrochloric acid, an acid normally present in the digestive juices of the stomach.

20. CIRRHOSIS

The liver, the largest organ in the body, is essential in keeping the body functioning properly. It removes or neutralizes poisons from the blood, produces immune agents to control infection, and removes germs and bacteria from the blood. It makes proteins that regulate blood clotting and produces bile to help absorb fats and fat-soluble vitamins.

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

Many people with cirrhosis have no symptoms in the early stages of the disease. However, as scar tissue replaces healthy cells, liver function starts to fail and a person may experience the following symptoms: Exhaustion, fatigue, appetite loss, nausea, weakness and/or weight loss. Cirrhosis may be diagnosed on the basis of symptoms, laboratory tests, the patient's medical history, and a physical examination. A liver biopsy will confirm the diagnosis.

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. Brain cells die when they no longer receive oxygen and nutrients from the blood or there is sudden bleeding into or around the brain.

The symptoms of a stroke include sudden numbness or weakness, especially on one side of the body; sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding speech; sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes; sudden trouble with walking, dizziness,

or loss of balance or coordination; or sudden severe headache with no known cause. Includes the three major types of stroke: ischemic, hemorrhagic, and embolic, as well as complications from stroke.

22. HEART & COMPLICATIONS

Heart disease includes atherosclerotic heart disease, and hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease, and hypertension). Ischemic heart disease and coronary artery disease are included within this provision.

Complications of atherosclerotic heart disease are included. Complications may include myocardial infarction ("heart attack"), congestive heart failure ("heart failure"), and arrhythmia ("irregular heart beat").

Hypertensive vascular disease refers to disease associated with elevated blood pressure. Complications caused by hypertensive vascular disease are included. Diseases arising from viral or bacterial causes are not included.

23. OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis is a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to break. If not prevented or if left untreated, osteoporosis can progress painlessly until a bone breaks. These broken bones occur typically in the hip, spine, and wrist.

Any bone can be affected, but of special concern are fractures of the hip and spine. A hip fracture almost always requires hospitalization and major surgery. Spinal or vertebral fractures also have serious consequences, including loss of height, severe back pain, and deformity.

POW MEDSEARCH PACKETS

Packet 1~VA Claim Information	\$8.00
Packet 2~Stresses of Incarceration & After Effects Extreme Stress- Covers the after effects on the nerves and body organs	\$8.00
Packet 3~After Effects of Imprisonment -Covers arthritis, alcoholism, visual, ulcers, varicose veins, impotency, brain damage, etc	\$8.00
Packet 4~After Effects of Imprisonment Part 1 - covers the heart, arteries and veins; Part 2 covers cancer	\$8.00
Packet 5~What Every Wife Should Know Before She Is Your Widow - Social Security, insurance, burial procedures, allowances, etc. including what pathologist should look for in an autopsy (includes shipping and handling charge)	\$15.00
Packet 6~Micro-Film Index: Asiatic Theater - Japanese Possible help in locating POW records	\$3.00
Packet 7~Micro-Film Index: European Theater - Germany	\$3.00
Packet 8~The European Story , History of POWs in Germany, and after-effects	\$8.00
Packet 9~The Korea Story , History of POWs in Korea, and after-effects	\$8.00
Packet 10~The Japanese Story History of POWs in Japan, and after-effects	\$10.00
Packet 11~NSO Director Answers Your Questions	\$11.00
Presentation Set ~(Packets 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10)	\$60.00
The Modern Day Tragedy ~medical & claims evidence in support of PL 97-37	\$4.00
POW: The American Experience ~overview on POW experience; reviews vitamin deficiencies, infectious diseases and service-connected statistics	\$6.00
Map of German POW Camps ~shows location of 76 camps	\$3.00
Map of Japanese POW Camps ~21" x 32" with camps featured in red	\$4.00

**Check packets you wish to order and send, with payment, to: AXPOW
3201 East Pioneer Parkway #40, Arlington, TX 76010**

Name _____ Phone () _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____

Amount enclosed \$ _____ (includes shipping/handling*) **MasterCard and Visa accepted (circle one)** (\$5.00 minimum charge)

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

***Shipping / Handling fees: In U.S.A.:** 1-3 packets, add \$6.00; 4 - 6 packets, add \$9.00; 7 or more packets, add \$12.00. **In Canada:** 1-3 packets, add \$9.00; 4 -6 packets, add \$14.00, 7 or more packets, add \$20.00. **Overseas:** 1-3 packets, add \$16.00; 4 - 6 packets, add \$22.00, 7 or more packets, add \$30.00

andersonville



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Remembering Sacrifice

by Brad Bennett, Superintendent, with contributions from Eric Leonard, Chief of Interpretation and Education and Bridget A. Beers, Museum Curator.

The third week of September is always a busy one at the park, and this year was no exception. On Wednesday, September 19, 2012, former Vietnam POW Bill Arcuri was the featured speaker for the seventh annual POW Convocation on the campus of Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) in the city of Americus, 10



Bataan survivor Phillip W. Coon (left) speaks with park volunteer Mickey Gallip (right)

miles from Andersonville. Speaking before a standing room only audience, Bill shared his story with students, faculty, and members of the local community.

The following day, on Thursday, September 20th, Rolling Thunder escorted honored POWs and MIA families to the area for “The Ride Home,” returning the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall to GSW for the second year.

On the very foggy morning of National POW/MIA Recognition Day on Friday, September 21, 2012, park staff, Rolling Thunder, and former POWs gathered in Andersonville National Cemetery to lay wreaths at the memorial markers for two Vietnam MIAs: US Army S/ Sgt Stephen Geist and US Air Force Major Bobby Jones. Following the service, former POWs and members of Rolling Thunder spent much of the remainder of the day in the National Prisoner of War Museum.

The following week, a new temporary exhibit, Recent Acquisitions, debuted at the Prisoner of War Museum. This exhibit features items donated to the museum collection by former POWs, their families, and others in recent years, relating to the Civil War, World War II from the European and Pacific theaters, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

The objects on display were used for eating, recording daily activities, and personal items used by American service members during their captivity as well as items used to remember POWs. Among the artifacts on display for the first time are a knife made by Korean War POW William Borer, a pair of socks knitted by World War II POW Larry Dennis, and a poem by Vietnam War POW Theodore W. Triebel.

Andersonville National Historic Site would like to thank the following contributors who made this exhibit possible: Donna Jo Woollen, William F. Borer, Mr. and Mrs. Rich-

ard Murphy, John H. Anderson, Paul F. Hannan, David G. Rawlings, Theodore W. Triebel, Lawrence J. Dwyer, Joseph Casano, Betty Cozens, Laurence Dennis, Rita Grenier, Muriel King, Virginia Niebrand, Faye Lowe, Marilyn Hodges, Robert W. Phillips, and Midway Village Museum.

In the meantime, production continues on the traveling exhibit, “Victory From Within: the American POW Experience.” As of this writing, the multimedia component (newly edited audio-visual recordings of POW interviews) is under final review. Construction of the exhibit panels and display mounts will follow in the last stage of fabrication. The exhibit is expected to be completed and ready to tour the country by the summer of 2013. Simultaneously, a separately-funded project made possible by the Friends of Andersonville to develop accompanying curriculum-based educational materials is also nearing completion. These lesson plans, intended to help teachers prepare students for visiting the traveling exhibit, will be available on the park’s website. Learn more at: http://www.nps.gov/andephotomultimedia/pow_traveling_exhibit.htm

Wreaths Across America

Each December Andersonville National Historic Site participates in the national Wreaths Across America program to remember and honor our military veterans. Sponsored wreaths will be laid on gravesites in National Cemeteries across the country, including Andersonville National Cemetery, on the second Saturday of December. The next Wreaths Across America ceremony is scheduled for Saturday December 15, 2012.

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Paul E. Galanti
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Christmas in Hanoi (x7)

Heartbreak Hotel interrogation prison. Hanoi December 25, 1966. It was bitter cold and damp. I'd been a POW for a little more than six months with much of it in a sweltering solitary confinement. Fifty of us had been paraded through Hanoi's city streets as thousands of Vietnamese chanted obscenities and threw various objects at us at the urging of their communist political commissars. I'd had several brutal interrogation sessions that had left my emaciated body screaming in pain. Our daily meals of watery pumpkin gruel and rice had recently changed to sewer greens and rice twice a day.

A mouth-watering scent wafted through the boarded up windows momentarily eclipsing the harsh, sewer smell of the toilet bucket. Wow... What was that? The smell of onions? Of actual meat? Of an exotic oriental smelling aroma of fish sauce?

To digress slightly and for purposes of total disclosure, I am and have always been an opti-

mist. Totally, unrepentant and without any hint-of-shame optimist! From the day in June 1966 when I'd parachuted into North Vietnam from my burning A-4 Skyhawk and been immediately captured, I was convinced my internment would last six months to a year (at most).

So now I was approaching my first Christmas in Hanoi. Last year my squadron and ship had been at sea flying combat missions off the coast of South Vietnam but we'd had a "stand-down" for Christmas day, itself. The meal aboard ship had been a traditional Christmas dinner. And now with delightful aromas emanating from the usually pungent cellblock, my morale skyrocketed - and mouth watered. My emaciated 100 lb. frame longed for something that tasted as good as the aroma that drifted through the window boards.

When the meal came, it was a small chunk of turkey flavored with *nuoc mam*, the Vietnamese fish sauce. And some white rice. And a banana. And even a few sips of beer. It's obviously a good sign. We'd be going home soon! And I was never going to complain about food again.

We didn't go home that year but, for whatever reason, the communists went through this charade every year. It served as a way to mark time. Infrequently, they'd bring in their "Catholic priest" who'd serve communion to a few "believers" (as the Communists called them) while dutifully recording the event with their propaganda cameras.

In the Son Tay prison camp, I remember hearing the Christmas story according to Marx & Lenin on the camp P.A. system. Summarized with apologies for a 40 year-old memory: Jesus was a poor working man who was being exploited by the capitalistic foreign

invader Pontius Pilate, But Jesus rallied the masses against the imperialist colonialists and for that he was martyred by the criminal invaders. Moral. We are all the same. Only the U.S. government exploiting its lackeys in South Vietnam, like the Roman imperialists, are attempting to enslave the heroic "Vietnamese people." A long diatribe against "Johnson, McNamara and Dean Rusk" would follow followed by exhortations to "side with the Vietnamese people" as opposed to following blindly "The U.S. Government." (Note the similarity between the verbiage of the Communists at Christmas time and our present day morally relativistic Fourth Estate.)

Each year the Christmas "celebration" in four or five different prisons went about the same. In 1972, several hundred of us were in a mountain camp near Lang Son near the Chinese border. It was somehow different. I remember thinking about the last eight Christmases - 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972 - all of them in WESTPAC on cruise or in POW Camps. I thought, "You know, I've been here a long time. (But felt better when I realized that I was a newcomer. Good grief, Alvarez has been here 22 months longer than I have.) This is really a good sign."

I thought, for the thousandth time, "We should be out of here in six months to a year."

I was wrong. We were home in less than two months. The next Christmas was much better!

Save the date!
National Convention
in Arlington, Texas
~ June 26-30,
2013

va outreach



JVC Bill Jeffers
Chairman

The information provided in this series of articles is obtained from several creditable sources, including current updates and review by my partner in this effort, Doris Jenks. Like many of my age, it is relatively easy to store information, but very difficult to retrieve it from memory. Therefore, I suggest that you keep a file of these articles for ready reference. This could save you many hours of independently searching and phoning for answers.

My prior articles have dealt with some of the VA benefits available to widows and dependants of deceased veterans, particularly ex-POWs. This article will begin a series addressing VA benefits available to any veteran meeting eligibility requirements. Particular attention will be given to ex-POWs.

Any person who served in any branch of active military service and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable may qualify for VA health care benefits. Reservists and National Guard members may also qualify for VA health care benefits if they were called to active duty (other than for training) by Federal orders and completed the full period of ordered active duty. There are minimum duty requirements, but these may not apply to those dis-

charged for hardship, early out, or a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

Enrollment into the VA health care system begins by completing VA Form 10-10EZ, Application For Health Benefits. This form can be obtained from any VA health care facility or regional benefits office, on line at www.1010ez.med.va.gov/sec/vha/1010ez/, or by calling 1-877-222-8387.

There are four categories of veterans that are not required to enroll, but are urged to do so to permit better planning of health resources:

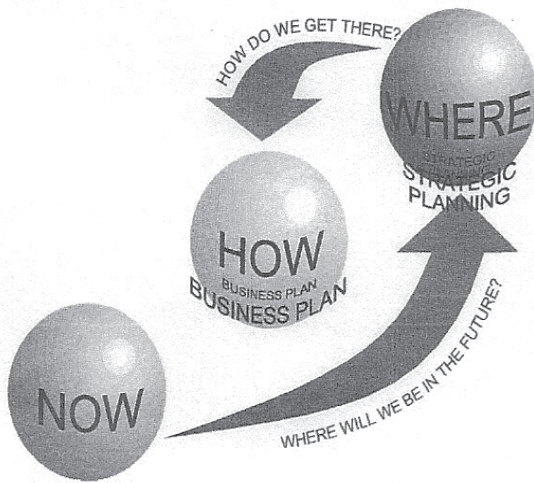
1. Those with a service-connected disability of 50% or more.
2. Those seeking care for a disability the military determined was incurred or aggravated in line of duty, but which the VA has not yet rated, within 12 months of discharge.
3. Those seeking care for a service-connected disability only.
4. Those seeking registry examinations (Ionizing Radiation, Agent Orange, Gulf War/Operation Iraqi Freedom, Depleted Uranium).

The VA assigns each veteran to one of eight priority groups in order to balance the demand for VA health care enrollment with resources. The highest priority is Group 1 for those with service-connected disabilities rated 50% or more and/or those determined by the VA to be unemployable due to service-connected disabilities. In Group 2 are those with service-connected disabilities rated 30 to 40%. Group 3 is for those with service connected disabilities rated 10 to 20%; Ex-POWs, Purple Heart recipients, Medal of Honor recipients for disabilities incurred in a VA Vocational Rehabilitation Program; those whose discharge was for a disability incurred /aggravated in

line of duty. Group 4 applies to those receiving aid and attendance or housebound benefits and/or those determined by the VA to be catastrophically disabled.

Group 5 includes those receiving VA pension benefits or are eligible for Medicaid programs, and non-service-connected and non-compensable zero percent service-connected veterans whose gross annual household income and/or net worth are below certain thresholds. Group 6 applies to veterans seeking care solely for certain conditions associated with exposure to radiation during atmospheric testing or during the occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki; illness associated with participation in certain tests conducted by DOD ; those with zero percent service-connected disabilities receiving disability compensation benefits; veterans who served in Vietnam between 1962 and 1975; veterans of the Persian Gulf War between certain dates; veterans who served in a theater of combat after November 11, 1998 in certain duty periods. Group 7 applies to veterans with gross household income below a certain threshold who agree to copay. Group 8 includes those with incomes/net worth above thresholds, and who agree to copay. A word of note: Although an Ex-POW is listed above as being in Group 3, if such a veteran is VA rated at 50% or more service-connected disabilities, he is automatically considered to be included in Group 1.

Women veterans are eligible for the same health care VA benefits as male veterans and this also includes female-specific health care issues.



On the Road to Where?

By John Clark

In noting the icon at the beginning of this article one sees that we start planning at “now”, go to “where” we want to be in the future and then figure out “how” to get there. This month I address part of the notion of “how”. Even though the Joint Strategic and NOK Committee is not generally responsible for executing an idea we thought the best way to present the idea of changing a couple of bylaws was to propose the changes in the form of a resolution. In doing so it affords those who will be voting on it an opportunity to study the specifics and to make specific changes. It will eliminate much of the misinformation, rumor, misunderstandings, and affords the specifics necessary for fruitful consideration.

At the last convention some members of the joint committee discussed the aspect of streamlining the complex voting process individually with members of the board to get their response and see if there was any support for it. We found strong support among most of them, with very few having any reservations at all.

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We discussed perhaps replacing the organizations huge bureaucracy intended to conduct business for a membership of 60,000 with one that is more practical and manageable while also reflecting today’s needs would be a good place to start our streamlining process.

As a beginning, perhaps even more as a “what if” we reduced the Board of Directors to 8 Directors elected from the whole membership it would cut the number of directors in half, most likely increase the percentage of Next of Kin members of the board and hence their influence, rid us of the need for zones (3) and regions (8) and the representatives that they often cannot or do not have the state departments to elect anyway. It is especially noteworthy here that of the 50 state departments only about 14-16 of them were represented in the last two national conferences and several of them by only one or two people.

The process could be greatly simplified if the directors to be elected were suggested by a nominating committee as well as nominations taken from the floor of the convention and elected by the general membership at the convention (one member attending the convention, one vote). Each director would still serve a two year term if 4 directors were elected each year.

The new PRESIDENT (no longer called a commander as the Next of Kin would relate much better to “president” than “commander”) who would also serve as the chairman of the board, would be elected each year also by the general membership attending the conference, thus giving the membership attending the convention the opportunity and authority to elect both their ceremonial and functional leader in the form of the same person. Thus the organization would look and act much as it does now except that all of the business would be conducted by the board of directors.

If the membership didn’t like what was being done by the board it could replace up to 4 directors and the president and chairman of the board in one year. Unburdened with the responsibility of conducting the often boring and repetitive business of the organization including trying to validate questionable numbers of votes and keeping voting delegates differentiated from the general membership which is not done now anyway, then the membership could enjoy the social atmosphere of a reunion and turn its attention to the youth, the history of POW’s, the AX-POW organization, and pursuing its goals. A business session could be accomplished in 2 hours plus or minus including a report from the board on the business conducted the proceeding year and cut at least a day off of the length of the convention.

Of course accomplishing this will require solving several smaller questions, rewriting Articles IX and XIII of the Bylaws, submitting it to the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee, and hopefully having a resolution to present to the Board of Directors at the mid year meeting in November.

It is important we remember we must do this with the existing voting process and so it will be necessary to have the support of the most states possible including the states with the largest numbers of votes to insure its success. We feel this is a necessary step to allow the American Ex-Prisoners of War to move into the next 5 years unburdened by complexities of the past organization, while encouraging the next of kin to take a leadership roll, and demonstrate to them that changes can be made in the way things have “always been done” without fear of disrespecting those whom they so highly respect.

*Lew Sleeper, Chairman
Joint Strategic Planning and NOK
Committee*

pow-mia



PNC John Edwards Chairman

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Pentagon Dedicated to Bergdahl's Return, Spokesman Says

By Karen Parrish

American Forces Press Service

The safe return of the only U.S. service member known to be in Taliban captivity remains a top Defense Department priority, Pentagon Press Secretary George Little said in early October.

Army Sgt. Bowe R. Bergdahl is someone Pentagon leaders "remember every day," Little told reporters at a news conference.

"We are taking steps on a regular basis to try to determine precisely where he is, and to secure his freedom," he added.

Reconciliation between the Taliban and the Afghan government remains an Afghan-led process, Little said in response to a reporter's question, and is not linked to the department's efforts to secure Bergdahl's release.

"We are strongly dedicated to getting Bowe Bergdahl home to his family in Idaho," he said. "We want to see that happen as quickly as possible. ... We never forget those who remain in the custody of those who should not be holding our soldiers."

Bergdahl, 26, from Hailey, Idaho, has been missing since June 30, 2009, when his unit in Afghanistan noted his absence from roll call. He is as-

signed to 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, based at Fort Richardson, Alaska.

Marines Missing in Action from WWII Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced that the remains of seven servicemen, missing in action from World War II, have been identified and were buried with full military honors.

Marine Corps 1st Lt. Laverne A. Lallathin of Raymond, Wash.; 2nd Lt. Dwight D. Ekstam of Moline, Ill.; 2nd Lt. Walter B. Vincent, Jr. of Tulsa, Okla.; Tech. Sgt. James A. Sisney of Redwood City, Calif.; Cpl. Wayne R. Erickson of Minneapolis; Cpl. John D. Yeager of Pittsburgh, PA; and Pfc. John A. Donovan of Plymouth, MI, were buried as a group, in a single casket representing the crew, on Oct. 4, in Arlington National Cemetery. Six of the Marines were identified and buried as individuals previously this year. Lallathin, also individually identified, will be interred individually at Arlington on the same day as the group interment.

On April 22, 1944, the Marines were aboard a PBJ-1 aircraft that failed to return from a night training mission over the island of Espiritu Santo, in what is known today as Vanuatu. None of the seven crew members were recovered at that time, and in 1945 they were officially presumed deceased.

In 1999, a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) survey team traveled to the location. The crash site was located at an elevation of 2,600 ft., in extremely rugged terrain. To identify the remains, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) evaluated circumstantial evidence and mitochondrial DNA — which matched that of the Marines' family members.

Today, more than 73,000 Americans

remain unaccounted-for from the conflict.

Marine Missing in Action from Korean War Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a serviceman, missing in action from the Korean War, have been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Marine Pfc. Richard S. Gzik, of Toledo, Ohio, was buried at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, DC. On Dec. 2, 1950, Gzik and the other Marines of M Battery, 11th Artillery Regiment, 1st Marine Division, came under attack on the west side of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. It was during this battle that Gzik was killed in action and his remains were buried alongside the road leading to Hagaru-ri. Later that month, the withdrawal of U.N. forces from the Chosin Reservoir region made it impossible to recover Gzik's remains.

In 1954, United Nations and Communist Forces exchanged the remains of war dead in what came to be called "Operation Glory." Those which were unable to be identified, given the technology of that time, were interred as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii — the "Punchbowl." In 2012, analysts from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) re-examined the case records and determined that advances in technology could likely aid in the identification of the unknown remains as Gzik. Once the remains were exhumed, scientists from JPAC used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, including dental records and radiographs, to validate Gzik's identification.

Today, 7,947 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War.

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vavs



PNC Morris Barker,
Chairman

It is my privilege to announce the awarding of VAVS Volunteer Hour Bars to two volunteers in the central Texas area. **Susanne Judd** began her volunteering career at veteran facilities in 1988, and has been credited with 10,000 hours of volunteer service. Her first assignment was at the VA Hospital in Temple, Texas, in the Surgical Family Waiting room. She then worked in several other areas, and in 1997 she was named VAVS Representative at the facility. After a short absence from volunteering she was again appointed as VAVS Representative for AXPOW by the current National Sr. Vice Commander of AXPOW, James L. Lollar, in February 2011. Susanne's most recent assignment is at the Veterans Center in Harker Heights. "I enjoy working at the Veterans Center, and I love *my guys*, (some of them are gals, but they are all *my guys*), all combat veterans," said Susanne. Susanne's most memorable and trying occasion as a volunteer occurred during month of November, 2009 after the shooting at Ft. Hood by Major Nidal Hasan at which time thirteen were killed and twenty nine wounded, mostly veterans. She worked ninety eight hours that month to assist in lessening the anxiety of the veterans under her jurisdiction. For

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her deduction of service to veterans during this time, Susanne was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation and later with a plaque by the facility Team Leader, Dr. Bob Gombeski. Susanne's dedication to veteran volunteer services, especially representing AXPOWs, is in honor of her father Colonel Roscoe Bonham who served in both WWI and WWII, and was a POW in Manchuria of the Japanese for thirty nine months.. Susanne is to be commended for her service to "her guys," combat veterans.

Ruby Williams, has assisted veterans in many capacities during the thirty two years she has served as a volunteer at the VA Hospital in Temple, Texas. In addition to her faithful service at the Temple VA facility, Ruby has also been very active in her assignment as VAVS Deputy Representative for *Help Hospitalized Veterans*. She worked in this assignment for six years. Her most recent assignment at the VA hospital is at the information desk as an information specialist. Ruby said, "I get to meet a lot of veterans and families in this assignment, which I enjoy." Ruby has been awarded a 5000 hour service bar for her untiring service to veterans. In addition to her volunteer service to veterans, Ruby has been active with the American Ex-Prisoners of War or-



VAVS Representatives Ruby
Williams and Susanne Judd with
Chairman PNC Morris Barker

ganization on a State level, where she served as Adjutant/Treasurer for four years.....Her work with the AXPOW organization is in honor of her late husband, Warren Williams, who was a POW of the Japanese during WWII for three and a half years.

Note on Volunteer Service Bars. I have recently received Volunteer Service Bars for volunteer hours worked, that are to be attached to your VAVS badge. The bars were sent to me from the daughter of Jean Thiede who served faithfully as National VAVS Representative for AXPOW for many years. The bars are available for VAVS volunteers representing AXPOW at the various VA facilities. The 200-300 bars received are for various hours of volunteer service, and I will attempt to match hours (some are missing) to the best of my ability as long as they last. Those VAVS volunteers representing AXPOW wishing to obtain service bars for the total hours worked as of October 31, 2012, should notify me, verifying the volunteer hours worked as of the October date.

It was reported by Robert Petzel, Under Sect. for Health VHA, in his Keynote Address, at the 66th Annual VA Voluntary Service National Advisory Committee Meeting in March 2012, that last year, 87,000 VA volunteers gave more than 12 million hours of service to veterans. In accordance to the Independent Sector Value of \$21.79 per hour for 2011, the volunteer hours worked is equivalent to approximately \$262 million. This is in addition to \$90 million in monetary contributions that came from the various organizations that volunteers represent. Dr Petzel further stated, "Together, VA volunteers are engaged in a quest to make the world a better place, one encounter, one veteran at a time. We salute their generous and selfless commitment."

civilians



**ND Alice Gollin
Chairman**

As most of our Civilian POWs are barely acquainted with the new phone system that the Dept. of Labor has installed, I thought it was time to share it with our people who are trying to utilize the compensation that Congress gave to the American civilian ex-POWs and their children.

There is no excuse for the turmoil it has caused our civilian ex-POWs and their families. Just telling us it was going to happen would have been nice. But I truly believe the DOL did not know until it was too late to get it out to all of us.

Their turmoil was evident in the fact that I had been given five different phone numbers and four different ways to get through to DOL and none worked. Well, enough of yesterday and on with now.

All people who have got their numbers in hand will be able to go straight through to your assigned examiner. Unfortunately for us, Annette Kaiser has been assigned to another department. A step up for her.

Thank heaven we have a crew and with the help of Roberta Podnar we will get through the hard times for those who are new to DOL.

From the lips of Supervisor David Woods: You will be calling his office at 216-902-5682. He will take you through the information you need to enroll and receive your number so you may have an examiner to help you from then on.

If he is away from his desk, leave your phone number and he will call you back within 24 hours. If you have any questions, please call or write to me. Alice Gollin, 37231 Turnberry Isle, Palm Desert, CA 92211; 760-610-1271.

Veterans Appreciation Parade



Grand Marshals: front seat-Vincent LoGiudice (POW) and back seat - Irving Schrom (POW).

VETERANS APPRECIATION PARADE

On September 21, 2012, VA HVHCS held a Veterans' Recognition Day Parade in memory of all MIA/POW's, sponsored by the Hawthorne Post 112, American Legion Inc. The parade consisted of the VA HVHCS Veterans from Freedom Center (6AB) and Home of the Heroes (6CD), the Hawthorne Post Color Guard and Post Members, Veteran volunteers assisting with wheelchair bound Veterans, the Patriotic Brass Band from New Jersey, and many VA HVHCS staff assisting.



at the Montrose campus of VA Hudson Valley Health Care System

Freedom Center and Home of the Heroes Veterans, VAHV volunteers & staff viewing POW/MIA ceremony.



Right to left: Home of the Heroes Veterans Junius Evans & David Adams, and Freedom Center Veteran Mark Singleman with volunteer escorts.



Freedom Center Veteran John Stroud with VAHV volunteer and Nurse Manager Eileen Hughes participating in lighting of candle during the POW/MIA ceremony.



March 14-16, 2013. USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association & Next Generations Annual Reunion will be held at: Hyatt Regency Houston Downtown. Contact: John Keith Schwarz Executive Director- USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association & Next Generations; contact@usshouston.org; 202-268-2261/703-867-0142.

June 27-July 1, 2013. The American Ex-Prisoners of War National Convention will be held in Arlington, Texas at the Hilton Arlington Hotel. We've got a great convention planned, so now it's your turn to start planning to attend. There will be more information in the Bulletin starting in Jan/Feb 2013.

looking for



I am writing to try and find anyone who may have been held prisoner with by great uncle **Ydilio Cubero**. He was born May 29, 1922 in Florida; he died July 4, 1983 in Florida. He enlisted Nov. 20, 1942 Camp Blanding Florida, Unit 339. I think May 12, 1944 was the date he may have been captured and June 14, 1945 may have been his release date. These were dates I found on the U.S. National Archives & Records Administration. He was detained in Germany at Stalag 2B Hammerstein, West Prussia 53-17. I appreciate your help. Angela Vetrano. angvetrano@msn.com; tel: 813-598-3583.

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I am writing a story about my stepfather **Willis Earl Bain who was a POW in Stalag III-C** (37 miles east of Berlin - now Gorzow), who was captured at the Battle of Mortain in August 1944. He was captured in August and escaped from the Stalag on New Year's Eve '44/'45 with two other men. They traveled from Gorzow to Naples, Italy and caught the S/S/ Mariposa (Matson Lines) on 8 April '45 to Boston. The trip took 3 months. (I am guessing the route would have taken them through: German/Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Yugoslavia, and down the Adriatic coast of Italy - over the mountains south of Rome where the U.S. airfields were to Naples. I am trying to locate the two men who escaped and traveled with him, and also any information about their time in Stalag III-C, including a schematic of the camp. I appreciate any information. Please contact me at: [Caroline Kennedy - cwkenned@aol.com](mailto:CarolineKennedy@cwkenned@aol.com) - 843.705.5654.

Information on **Vincent J. Byrnes**. The response to my request for my dad's story was overwhelming. As of this date I have spoken with at least 15 men who were with the 106th Div, 422nd Reg, and of course my Dad's Company, the 423rd Reg. In all of these stories I have been able to piece together a reasonable semblance of information regarding my Dad and his time in the Battle of the Bulge. It may be true he was not with his company at some point. But, in one story from another POW he witnessed my Dad's truck being blown up and on fire, after my Dad's comrade in the seat beside him was shot and killed, and my Dad managed to escape the inferno. From here his whereabouts is assumed from stories told to me. He was able to find his way and join up with the men of the 423rd & 422nd that were left to fight. I believe their location at their time of capture was Schnee Eiffel or Snow Mountain. On Dec 19, 1944 sometime around 2:00 PM these men were surrendered per order of Col Cavender. His final destination was Stalag 11A. My Dad was assigned to work on the railroad along the route to Magdeburg app. on the Elbe River. Since I believe it was a long trek be-

tween Stalag 11A to this area perhaps my Dad was held in one of the work camps outside of Magdeburg. From here is where I can only ascertain by my Father's DD214 on April 15 he was repatriated or liberated, some 19 days before the Russian forces liberated Stalag 11A. How he managed this is a mystery to me. Some reports given to my husband tell of some American Forces on the opposite side of the Elbe River managed to cross before the order was given to pull back. These men may have been detrimental in the rescue of my Dad and those nearby working on that end of the railroad. Alternatively, did these American POWs just walk away knowing the Russians were on a rapid advance? From here I can only guess where my Dad was taken. One can only assume he was sent to Camp Lucky Strike in France. His DD214 tells me he departed LeHavre, France on April 29th 1945 and arrive home on May 12 1945. He was not immediately sent home to his family. However I do not know where he was sent until he was given R & R in N. Hampshire perhaps in June 1945. Some facts, some only speculation based on stories told to me from other former POW'S and information my husband has been able to obtain. So as I gradually begin to find my answers, so many, many questions remain. I intend to put this together in my words, in an attempt at a biography of my Dad's time, during the B.O.B, his capture, and eventual release. But, I cannot in good faith do so, unless I have actual facts that are true to his time in the European Theater. ie: What happened to him, how did he become liberated, and by whom if anyone? Where did he go from there, and with whom? Did he just walk away, or was he rescued by the American Forces who managed to cross the Elbe River? I hope and pray somewhere there is someone who can answer these questions. In this I can truthfully and with all honesty complete My Dad's Story. The story he never told. If anyone was in this area around this time, please contact me. Karen Byrnes Fuoco, 120 Twinbrook Lane, Bellingham Ma. 02019; KMBFuoco25@aol.com, 1-508-657-1132.

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

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Certificate of Captivity

Prisoner of War Certificate of Captivity

Name

Serial Number

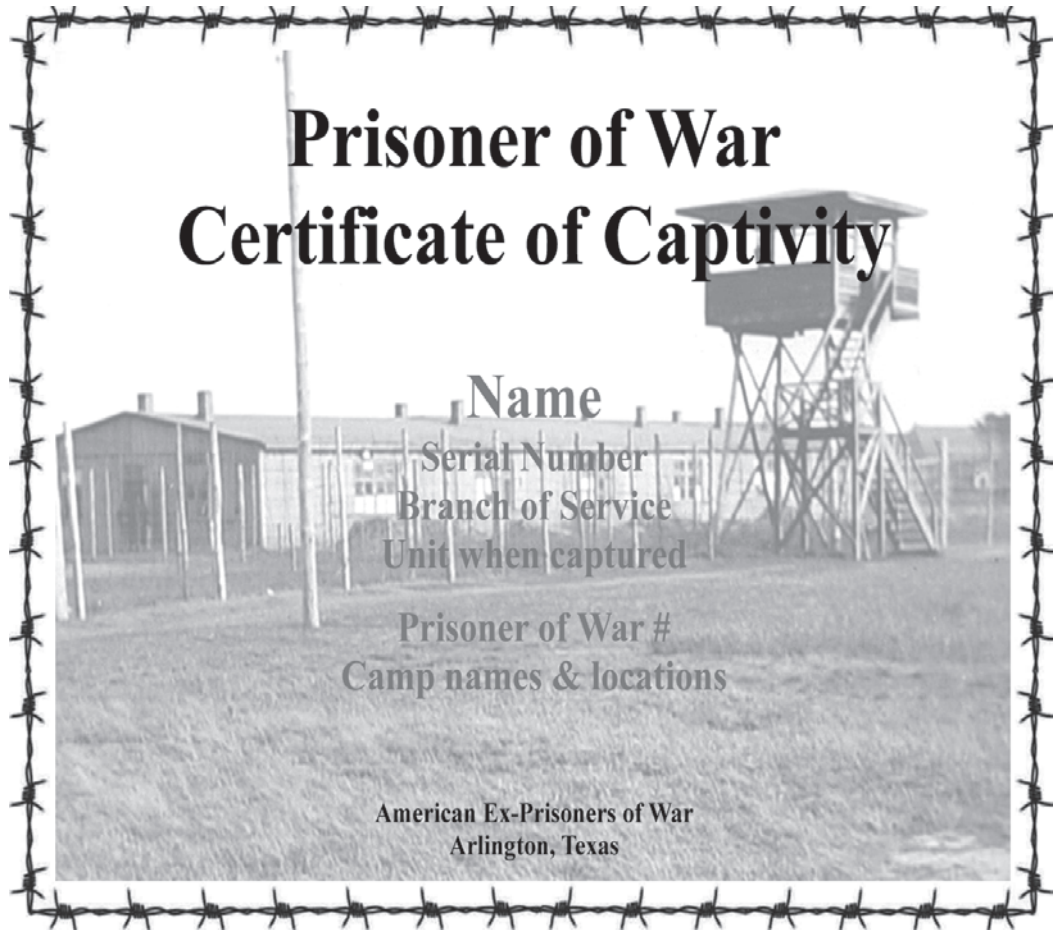
Branch of Service

Unit when captured

Prisoner of War #

Camp names & locations

American Ex-Prisoners of War
Arlington, Texas



News Briefs

Purple Heart Forever Stamp



The U.S. Postal Service continues to honor the sacrifices of the men and women who serve in the U.S. military with the issuance of the new Purple Heart Medal Forever stamp.

First issued as a 37-cent First-Class stamp in 2003, this new Forever Stamp differs from the 2011 Forever Stamp design displaying a slightly larger image of the Medal on a pure white background.

Available nationwide in sheets of 20, the stamps can be purchased online at usps.com/shop or by calling 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724).

“The Postal Service salutes America’s veterans for their selfless sacrifice in defending our great nation,” said Stamp Service Manager Stephen Kearney. “We hope Americans will buy and use these Forever stamps when corresponding with loved ones and friends to honor these courageous men and women, who in many cases gave the ultimate sacrifice.”

World’s Oldest Military Decoration
The Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United

States to members of the U.S. military who have been wounded or killed in action. According to the Military Order of the Purple Heart, an organization for combat-wounded veterans, the medal is “the oldest military decoration in the world in present use and the first award made available to a common soldier.”

Established by General George Washington during the Revolutionary War, the badge of distinction for meritorious action — a heart made of purple cloth — was discontinued after the war. In 1932, on the 200th anniversary of Washington’s birth, the decoration was reinstated and redesigned as a purple heart of metal bordered by gold, suspended from a purple and white ribbon. In the center of the medal is a profile bust of George Washington beneath his family coat of arms.

Awards

The Marine Corps Heritage Foundation is now accepting submissions for its annual awards program. Each year the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation presents awards honoring the outstanding, creative work of individuals in preserving and promulgating the Marine Corps’ history, traditions and culture. Marines and civilians alike may submit their own entries or the distinguished work of others for award consideration. Awards will be presented at the Foundation’s annual ceremony on April 20, 2013. Submissions deadline is January 9, 2013. For information, please contact: Susan Hodges, 703-640-7961.

Ride Home 2012

by Alice A. Booher



Each year the traditional Ride Home program (founded by the Rolling Thunder from Florida and Georgia) in honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day, seems to get better and more inclusive. For the September 20-23, 2012 event, for the second year, the Vietnam Traveling Memorial Wall set up shop at Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) in Americus, GA. The Rolling Thunder “and friends” parade made network television as it passed in front of the historic Windsor Hotel in Americus on its way to the MIA Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Andersonville National Cemetery. Some activities were held at Warner Robbins Air Force Museum Hanger, but many of the weekend’s activities were held at the spacious GWU Storm Dome including the “Keeping the Promise-We Shall Not Forget” program with myriad former POWs (from many eras) as honored guests, each recognized with a red, white and blue ribbon and medallion. In addition to the Candlelight and Recognition ceremonies in the Storm Dome, and with the co-sponsorships of GSU, the Andersonville National Historic Site and Friends of Andersonville, the annual Convocation was held in GSW Performance Hall.



Featured speaker was David W. Mills who enlisted in the Army on October 6, 1952, and was soon sent to Korea. A rifleman with F Co., 2nd Bat., 15th Inf., 3rd Inf.

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news, continued Fisher House



Div. holding at forward position, Outpost Harry, near Surang-Ni across from the Iron Triangle, Mills continued hand to hand combat, and shooting his weapons until they were inoperable, and was taken prisoner. At age 17, the new POW had 2 wounds to the head, 6 to the legs and 1 in the arm. His company had experienced 72 casualties out of 88 men; the statistics called him MIA, then KIA, and finally, POW. Mills would be held as a Chinese POW for 4 months during which time he received no treatment for his wounds. Repatriated August 2, 1953, he served the remaining term of enlistment as a military policeman. On return to civilian life, Mills graduated Wharton School of Business and became a senior financial adviser with Medical Centers in NY, FL and PA, and retired from his final position as CEO of the Odd Fellows Home of PA (1980-2001). In his Ride Home presentation, Mills related some combat stories, but perhaps most fascinating was recollection of meeting up more than once with another Outpost Harry survivor, Warren Settles, who had become personally acquainted with the chief interrogator for the 74th Chinese Infantry Division. Mills told Settles, when he next returned to China, to tell him: "First give him my regards. And secondly, thank him for not killing me". Mills told this story in the context of faith on both sides of the conflict, noting that the interrogator had been educated at a missionary school.

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Foundation

Breaks Ground on New Fisher House at Tennessee Valley Healthcare System-First House in State of Tennessee to be Completed in 2013

Tennessee Valley Healthcare System Director Juan A. Morales joined Fisher House Foundation President David Coker to break ground on a new 12-room Fisher House, the first in the state of Tennessee.

"Every Fisher House is special, but we're always excited when we build in a state we've never been to before, because we know we're reaching a new community," said Coker. "When they need it most, our military families will be able to count on this house as a place to find refuge when their world has been turned upside down."

"This is an exciting time for VA TVHS," said Morales. "Veterans and the community have worked for this project for quite some time and to see it become a reality demonstrates their commitment to Veterans and their families," he said. The 10,000 sq.-ft. "comfort home" will join the network of Fisher Houses operating in the United States and Germany, and will be gifted to the Tennessee Valley Healthcare System upon completion. The house consists of 12 suites, each with a private, handicapped-accessible bathroom, and common areas including a well-appointed kitchen; large communal living, dining and family rooms; and patio.

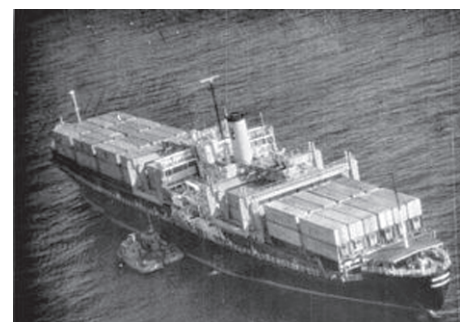
VA Mental Health Care Toolkit

The Department of Veterans Affairs has developed a new online Community Provider Toolkit available at <http://www.mentalhealth.va.gov/communityproviders> aimed at delivering support, therapeutic tools, and resources to community providers treating Veterans for mental health

concerns. "Many Veterans seek mental health care at VA, yet many also choose to go to providers in their community," said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki. "VA is committed to helping Veterans wherever they may seek care. This toolkit will enable those community providers who treat Veterans to better understand the specific issues Veterans face and help them access VA resources." The goal of the Community Provider Toolkit is to further enhance the delivery of mental health services to Veterans through increased communication and coordination of care between community providers and VA. It not only provides information about accessing, communicating with, and, if needed, making referrals to VA, but also provides effective tools to assist Veterans who are dealing with a variety of mental health challenges. The Community Provider Toolkit also includes sections intended to increase providers' knowledge about military culture.

Mayaguez' Marine Hero MIA Finally Comes Home

by Alice A. Booher



In international waters off Cambodia, in May 1975, many historians retrospectively characterized it as the last battle of the Vietnam War. The vessel had been launched in April 1944 as SS WHITE FALCON; after WWII she was renamed the SANTA ELIANA. In 1960, after serious refurbishing, she was converted into the first U.S. flag all container ship devoted to foreign trade, with a capacity of 382 containers below and 94 above deck. She was renamed

news, continued

SS SEA in 1964 and SS MAYAGUEZ in 1965. In that year, she began sailing a regular route for Sea-Land Service in support of American forces in Southeast Asia: Hong Kong-Sattahip, Thailand-Singapore. On May 7, 1975, she left Hong Kong for a routine voyage.

The MAYAGUEZ was in a regular shipping lane about 60 miles from the coast of Cambodia but only about 8 miles from Poulo Wai (Kao Wai), an island claimed by Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. She was surrounded by small gunboats, shots were fired across her bow and a Mayday message sent. Since the fall of Cambodia, gunboats were controlled by the Khmer Rouge who boarded the MAYAGUEZ and eventually forced Captain Charles T. Miller to follow the gunboats into Kampong Saom (formerly Sihanoukville) on the mainland. At about noon on May 13, anchored off Kaoh Tang, a small island 30 miles off the coast, American planes, watching over the vessel, saw smoke coming from the smokestack. In the confusion, and with obvious movements of men to the island, it was thought that the crew had been taken ashore. President Gerald Ford denounced the seizure as an "act of piracy", demanded immediate release, and ordered military action.



A Marine Corps detachment from Subic Bay was given the assignment, the first boarding of a ship at sea since 1826. The Military Sealift Command's (MSC) Admiral Sam Moore asked for additional civilian merchant mariner volunteers, to be controlled by the U.S. Navy. The 3-pronged Marine attack plan was: (1) overpower the Cambodian soldiers

and allow the MSC men to prepare and sail the ship to safety; (2) Marines in helicopters were to make an amphibious assault on Kaoh Tang island; (3) Navy aircraft from the USS CORAL SEA were to strike military targets on the mainland. However when the 48 Marines off the USS HOLT landed on the ship, they found no one aboard. Nonetheless, the MSSC men boarded, got the emergency diesel generator running, the Marines raised the American flag, and the USS HOLT began the tow.

In the meantime, they needed to retrieve the missing American crew. The Marines met heavy fire near Kaoh Tang from the Khmer Rouge, heavily entrenched in jungle bunkers. U.S. helicopters became few, and less than the full contingent of the Marines second wave landed, but the MAYAGUEZ crew was safe on the USS WILSON, and the Marines planned their withdrawal. The crew's release was unexpected and unexplained, but some said it may have been due to intervention by China or Israel and/or cooperation via various intelligence agencies.



As the last helo left the island, a head count showed 3 Marines had been left on the island. There had been a total of 15 U.S. troops killed, 50 wounded, 3 missing plus 23 non-combat deaths (due to mechanical failure of a Combat Security Police Squadron helo in Thailand). In 1999, a DoD investigator found that one of the Marines had been killed by the Khmer Rouge a few days later while trying to get food, and the other two Marines had been captured, executed while POWs and buried on Kaoh Tang island.



One of those gallant Marines on the rescue mission was Pfc. Richard W. Rivenburgh, Jr., age 21. Some 40 years later, his remains were recovered in March 2008 [with the help of locals and through efforts of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command], and identified in January 2012. Rivenburgh, a Marine assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, out of the 3rd Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, CA, was on one of the 11 Air Force CH-53 helicopters shot down as they neared the island with 26 men onboard. Half were rescued at sea, leaving 13 missing. In 1995, all but 4 of those were recovered. Rivenburgh was born July 1953 in Schenectady, NY. His family moved to San Diego in the early 1960's where he graduated Madison High School. He had joined the Marines in October 1974 in an effort to make a positive change in his life. On August 7, 2012, Richard Rivenburgh was welcomed home, buried with full military honors on a windswept bluff overlooking the Pacific in the presence of his siblings and other family and dozens of veterans, mostly of the Vietnam Era, some from his old unit (including the current commander with Iraq service, Lt Col Thad Trapp), and many bikers from Patriot Riders. There were men

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who served on the USS CORAL SEA which helped launch the rescue effort [Ronald Falls, Sr., 56 said they call themselves the Koh Tang Beach Club] and one, Tim Trebilm, a retired Minneapolis police officer, who had been onboard the ill-fated CH-53 but was rescued from the ocean off Cambodia.

The veterans held American flags at attention for the wooden flag draped casket carried by six Marines in dress blues. Newspaper accounts describe the hum of Naval aircraft in the background mingling with the 21 gun salute. His family members wore dog tags made by Robert, Richard's baby brother, age 6 when Richard died, who had put his big brother's picture on them. The MIA Marine's remains now rest in a gravesite at the Rosecrans Cemetery where his headstone has waited for him for years. Richard Rivenburgh's name was one of the last engraved on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington.

VA Lung Cancer Screenings

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs said it would embark on a "phased implementation" of CT lung cancer screening for veterans after taking inspiration from a national trial that found the scans could help save lives among certain high-risk populations. The department said the program would begin at six yet-to-be-named VA hospitals as a clinical demonstration project. A department spokeswoman said she could not give a start date for the project as it's still under development. The program was inspired by the National Lung Screening Trial, a landmark national screening trial that ended last year and found that after three rounds of screening, high-risk pa-

tients — in this case, current or former heavy smokers — were 20 percent less likely to die if they were screened with lung CT scans rather than simple chest X-rays. "The experience of veterans who undergo screening will be closely monitored to gather information about outcomes from the screening and follow-up," the VA said in its e-mailed statement. "Patients also will be asked about their experience with the process to help VHA understand the potential harms of screening, such as anxiety, fear, inconvenience and pain."

Posthumous Medal of Honor Awarded to Vietnam-era Soldier

By Karen Parrish
American Forces Press Service

President Barack Obama paid tribute on May 16, 2012 to a man who died defending his fellow soldiers 42 ½ years ago, and who the commander-in-chief said represents a generation's honorable and undervalued service.

During a White House ceremony, the president awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry, recognizing Army Spc. Leslie H. Sabo Jr., a rifleman with the 101st Airborne Division who was killed in eastern Cambodia during the Vietnam War. Sabo's widow, Rose Mary Sabo-Brown, accepted the award. His brother, George Sabo, also attended the ceremony.

Sabo is credited with saving the lives of several of his comrades in Company B, 3rd Battalion, 506th Infantry, when his platoon was ambushed near the Se San River in eastern Cambodia on May 10, 1970. Sabo shielded a comrade from an enemy grenade and silenced a machine-gun bunker before he was killed.

"Some 50 American soldiers were nearly surrounded by some 100 North Vietnamese fighters," the presi-

dent said, adding that other soldiers there that day remembered the enemy as "everywhere behind trees [and] up in the tress, shooting down."

Obama said, "Les was in the rear, and he could have stayed there. But those fighters were unloading on his brothers."

The president described Sabo's last moments: "Despite his wounds, despite the danger, Leslie did something extraordinary. He began to crawl straight toward an enemy bunker with machine guns blazing. ... [he] kept crawling, closer to that bunker, even as bullets hit the ground all around him. Then he grabbed a grenade, and he pulled the pin."

Sabo's fellow troops have said he held the grenade as long as he could, "knowing it would take his own life, but knowing he could silence that bunker," Obama said. "And he did."

The day he died, Sabo was 22 years old, part of a campaign in Cambodia aimed at preventing North Vietnamese forces from launching Attacks into Vietnam from there. The Army told his Hungarian immigrant parents, his brother, and his bride of eight months — all waiting for his return to Pennsylvania — that he had been killed by an enemy sniper while on guard duty.

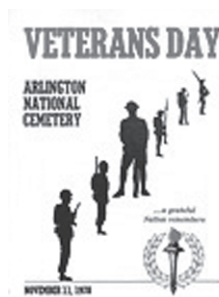
Though Sabo's leaders recommended him for the Medal of Honor after that day's fighting, the paperwork was never processed, Obama noted. Instead, another 101st Vietnam veteran, Alton "Tony" Mabb, discovered the award packet in 1999, during a visit to the National Archives.

Mabb sought to find answers, Obama said, and the result is that "Today, four decades after Leslie's sacrifice, we can set the record straight."

The nation's highest military honor, the Medal of Honor is awarded for risk of life in combat beyond the call of duty. Sabo's medal is the 247th awarded, and the 155th presented posthumously, for action during the Vietnam War.

Veterans Day

The Great War & Armistice Day



Though the Treaty of Versailles was signed on June 28, 1919, November 11 remained in the public imagination as the date that marked the end of the Great

War. In November 1918, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11 as the first commemoration of Armistice Day. The day's observation included parades and public gatherings, as well as a brief pause in business activities at 11 AM. On November 11, 1921, an unidentified American soldier killed in the war was buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.; the U.S. Congress had declared the day a legal federal holiday in honor of all those who participated in the war. On the same day, unidentified soldiers were laid to rest at Westminster Abbey in London and at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

On June 4, 1926, Congress passed a resolution that the "recurring anniversary of [November 11, 1918] should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations" and that the president should issue an annual proclamation calling for the observance of Armistice Day. By that time, 27 state legislatures had made November 11 a legal holiday. An act approved May 13, 1938 made November 11 a legal Federal holiday,



"dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be hereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day.'" In actuality, there are no U.S. national holidays because the states retain the right to designate their own, and the government can only designate holidays for federal employees and for the District of Columbia. In practice, however, states almost always follow the federal lead.

From Armistice Day to Veterans Day

American effort during World War II (1941-1945) saw the greatest mobilization of the U.S. Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force in the nation's history (more than 16 million people); some 5.7 million more served in the Korean War (1950 to 1953). In 1954, after lobbying efforts by veterans' service organizations, the 83rd U.S. Congress amended the 1938 act that had made Armistice Day a holiday, striking the word "Armistice" in favor of "Veterans." President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the legislation on June 1, 1954. From then on, November 11 became a day to honor American veterans of all wars.



The next development in the story of Veterans Day unfolded in 1968, when Congress passed the Uniform Holidays Bill, which sought to ensure three-day weekends for federal employees—and encourage tourism and travel—by celebrating four national holidays (Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Veterans Day and Columbus Day) on Mondays.



The observation of Veterans Day was set as the fourth Monday



in October. The first Veterans Day under the new law was Monday, October 25, 1971; confusion ensued, as many states disapproved of this change, and continued to observe the holiday on its original date. In 1975, after it became evident that the actual date of Veterans Day carried historical and patriotic significance to many Americans, President Gerald R. Ford signed a new law returning the observation of Veterans Day to November 11th beginning in 1978. If November 11 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the federal government observes the holiday on the previous Friday or following Monday, respectively.

Celebration

In the United States, an official wreath-laying ceremony is held each Veterans Day at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery, while parades and other celebrations are held in states around the country. Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day—a common misunderstanding, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Memorial Day (the fourth Monday in May) honors American servicemembers who died in service to their country or as a result of injuries incurred during battle, while Veterans Day pays tribute to all American veterans—living or dead—but especially gives thanks to living veterans who served their country honorably during war or peacetime.





AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR VOLUNTARY FUNDING PROGRAM

The AXPOW Voluntary Giving Program parallels that of other VSOs, whereby the entire membership, including life members, is given the opportunity to contribute to the operation of our organization, based on ability and willingness to contribute.

All contributions are to be sent directly to National Headquarters to be used for the operation of the organization. A complete accounting of contributors will appear in the Bulletin each issue.

I am enclosing my contribution to support the operation of the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

\$20.00 \$30.00 \$40.00 \$50.00 \$100.00 Other

Please circle one category:

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Please make checks payable to
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3201 E. Pioneer Parkway, Suite 40
Arlington, TX 76010

contributions



Please send donations to:

National Headquarters, 3201 East Pioneer Parkway, Suite 40, Arlington, TX 76010.

Checks must be made payable to AXPOW or American Ex-Prisoners of War. You can also make a donation with a credit card (MasterCard or Visa). Just call 817-649-2979. Thank you!

GENERAL FUND

Frank Dunkerly, Rockaway NJ
Jean McLane, Mesa AZ
Willis T Jones, Baytown TX
In memory of Joyce Sha, by Harold & Gloria Brick
In memory of Louis J. Staudenmeier, fellow crew member, by Herman Streitburger
In memory of Betty Agler, by the Northwest Central Ohio Chapter
In memory of Bill Jolliff, by the estate of Violet Jolliff
In memory of Charles V Webb, by Wallace & Bobby Brown
In memory of Hayes Barton's grandfather, Dr Leon Horowitz, by Judith Horowitz Barton and Family
In memory of Herbert Wells, by Joanne Miccile
In memory of Herbert Wells, by John Smith and Patricia Tengel
In memory of Herbert Wells, by Katherine Bolles
In memory of Herbert Wells, by Richard & Nancy Hardick
In memory of John Hutchins, by the Mile High Chapter
In memory of Leonard Deranleau, by Daphne Hull
In memory of Leonard Deranleau, by Roland & Ileen Schultz
In memory of Leonard Deranleau, by Ernie & Dotie Verlinde
In memory of Leonard Deranleau,

by amy Deranleau
In memory of Marsha Conklin, by Irving Lerner
In memory of Myra Greenberg, by Harold & Gloria Brick
In memory of Ruth Lucille Lerner, by Irving Lerner

BULLETIN FUND

In memory of Friends and Comrades, by Lincoln & Mary Hanscom

LEGISLATIVE FUND

In memory of Alvin Blair, by the Department of Maryland
In memory of Dr George Economos, by the Department of Maryland
In memory of John Andrew "Andy" Teano, by the Department of Maryland

MEDSEARCH

In memory of Charles 'Blackie' Blocksohn, by the Department of Maryland
In memory of PNC Herman Molen, by Joanne Molen
In memory of PNC Herman Molen, by the Las Vegas 7-11 Chapter
In memory of Ruth Vecchione, by the Department of Maryland

VOLUNTARY FUNDING

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In memory of Clarence Ackermann, by Kathleen Ackermann
In memory of deceased Past National Commanders, by PNC Jack & June Warner
In memory of Irene Scaglione, by Joe Scaglione

The Legacy of your love can live on after...

An important way you can help ensure that the American Ex-Prisoners of War is always there for returning POWs, their families and their dependents is through your will or living trust.

It's very simple to make a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. Just add the following to your will or living trust: "I give, devise and bequeath to the American Ex-Prisoners of War, 3201 E. Pioneer Parkway, Suite 40, Arlington, TX 76010, the sum of \$_____ or _____percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate."

Please take a few minutes of your time to help.



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new members

National Headquarters
3201 East Pioneer Parkway, Suite 40
Arlington, TX 76010; (817) 649-2979
Marsha.Coke@axpow.org



New Members "Welcome Home"



Robert A Schultz
Ruth
Buxton NC
Son of Arthur Edward Schultz,
ETO

Kenneth White
Arlington VA
Son of Mondell White, Pac

committee notes

From the Awards Committee:

Do you know a member who has done an outstanding job for AX-POW? Or a non-member who always gives that extra bit to help ex-POWs? Submit their names and give a short explanation of why you think they should receive an award. Send in your requests to JVC Bill Jeffers, 3522 Milbrook Way Cr., Green Acres, FL 33463. 561-969-6036.

From the Strategic Planning Committee:

All members are encouraged to send in your ideas for the national organization. They may be ideas to help the organization's finances, long-term planning or operations. Please send your thoughts to ND Lew Sleeper, 6636 E Villa Dorado, Tucson, AZ 85715; 520-751-9628; sleepjl@aol.com.

From Choir Director Deanie Schmidt:

THANKS AGAIN TO OUR NEXT-OF-KIN

The Next-of-Kin Chorus, which entertained their parents at the Commander's Reception in Arlington, Texas turned out to be another successful venture.

Director Deanie Schmidt, who made this happen the first time in Albany, GA, wants to thank all who participated. She was only sorry she had to miss this event. In her absence, they sang their hearts out and brought the 1960s to life for their parents. Get your kids to come join you at Convention in Arlington next year and we'll have even more to entertain everyone.

From the NOK Committee:

One of our main objectives is to help all of our next of kin to become familiar and become a part of the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

The more serious side of our committee will be to help out the POW's wherever we're needed. And we're playing a bigger part of doing the business part of the organization. We are doing this to help our POWs. We would very much like for your children to join our group.

If you don't know if you qualify as Next of Kin (NOK), if you are a spouse, child, grandchild or a spouse of any of these you are a NOK. I would love to hear from anyone who has ideas on the things they would like to see done, including things you would like to see or do while at convention.

If I can answer any questions for anyone about the organization or the NOK Committee please feel free to call me or email me.

Pam Warner Eslinger,
Jr. Vice Commander - Central Home phone 580-473-2783
Email: elib@hammon.k12.ok.us

From the Editor:

2013 schedule of Bulletin deadlines:

Jan./Feb. issue due Dec. 1.
March/April issue due Feb. 1.
May/June issue due April 1.
July/Aug. issue due June 1.
Sept./Oct. issue due July 25.
Nov/Dec. issue due Oct 1.

2013 HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

All AXPOW Offices will be closed on the following dates:

New Years Day January 1
MLK/Civil Rights Day January 21
Presidents Day February 18
Memorial Day May 27
National Convention 26-30
Independence Day July 4
Labor Day September 2
Columbus Day October 14
Veterans Day November 11
Thanksgiving November 28-30
Christmas December 25-31

If you have questions for any committee, please address them to the committee chair.



taps



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

ADAMS, Howard J., of Aledo, IL, died August 31, 2012. Howard was a master sergeant in the 8thAF, 384th BG, first engineer and top turret gunner on a B17 Bomber. Shot down over Holland and taken to Stalag 17B, he was the only surviving member of the original crew of ten. He is survived by his wife of 70 years, Norma; both have been AXPOW life members since 1981.

ADLER, Robert L. of Creve Coeur, MO passed away July 2, 2012. He was the beloved husband of the late Betty. During WWII, he served with the 390th Bomb Group and was held in Stalag Luft 3 and 7A.

BLOOMER, Vera Ruth, 89, of Round Rock, TX passed away May 12, 2012. She was a member of the Capital City Chapter, AXPOW. She is survived by her husband, Ex-POW Jo Bloomer.

BOTTOMLEY, WILLIAM JOSEPH, of Kansas City, age 90, passed away July 26, 2012. He was a light mortar infantryman (Corporal) captured during the Battle of the Bulge who served with B Company, 1st Battalion, 377th Regiment, 95th Infantry Division, and was in Stalag 4A.

BROWN, Kenneth Harold, of Scarborough, ME died Aug. 21, 2012 at the age of 81. During WWII, he served with Co. H, 422nd Inf., 106th Div. He was captured in the Battle of the Bulge and held until liberation in Stalags 9A and 9B. Ken is survived by 1 daughter, 2 sons, 3 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren, 1 brother and 1 sister.

CARLISLE, Nancy, of Houston, MS passed away July 16, 2012. She was 86. She was a very active member of her chapter and will be missed by all her friends there. Nancy was the wife of ex-POW James for 58 years; she is survived by 2 sons, 1 daughter, 1 brother, 1 sister, 9 grandchildren, 7 great-grandsons and many nieces and nephews.

CLARK, Rose, 87, of Colfax, IA died Sept. 18, 2012. Rose and her husband, ex-POW Robert, were active members of the Mid-Iowa Chapter, AXPOW.

COX, Mildred M., 93 passed away Saturday, June 16, 2012. She was the wife of Ex-POW Isaac Cox who preceded her in death.

CREAMER, Carl Edward "Ed" 91, passed away Aug. 23, 2012. He was captured while serving in the Navy as part of a crew flying in a PBY-5A that was shot down over the Bering Sea. He was rescued by a Japanese cruiser and spent the rest of the war as a POW. He was a life member of AXPOW and a frequent guest speaker at POW-MIA Recognition ceremonies at local military bases. Ed is survived by his wife of 57 years, Jeanette, 2 sons, 1 daughter, 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

DENNY, Donald Lee, of Clearwater, FL died September 3, 2012 at the age of 80. He fought in the Korean War with B Company, 38th Inf. Reg., 2nd Division, was captured and held in Camps 1 and 3. He volunteered at Bay Pines VA Hospital for more than 10,000 hours. He served the Florida Gulf Coast Chapter, American Ex-Prisoners of War as Commander for three years and continued to be active in the Chapter. He was also a member of the Korean Ex-POW Association. He leaves Jean, his wife of 58 years, 1 son, 1 daughter, a son Donald, a daughter Gayle, 12 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. He will be sorely missed.

DERANLEAU, Leonard J., age 91, of Gold Bar, WI passed away Sept. 3, 2012. During WWII, he served with the 376th BG, 513th BS, based in Italy. He was shot down over Austria, captured and held in Stalag Luft VI, then Luft IV. His wife of 66 years, Amy, 4 children, 4 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren survive him.

DUNCAN, James Roy, of Tupelo, MS died Sept. 27, 2012. He was 87. Roy was captured while serving in the Army during WWII. He was a POW until the end of the war. Survivors include 2 sons, 1 sister, 1 brother, 6 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

FRUMAN, Norman, of Laguna Beach, CA passed away April 19, 2012. During WWII, he served with the 42nd Infantry, Rainbow Division. He was captured and held in Oflag 13B and Stalag 7A. His wife, Doris, survives him.

GORMAN, Fred, of Columbus, Ohio passed away October 2, 2012. He served in the ETO with the 12th Armored Div. and was held in Camp 13D. He is survived by 2 sons, 7 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

GRIFFITHS, James, 96, of Adel, IA passed away Sept. 7, 2012. He served in the 34th (Red Bull) Division, Co. E, 133rd Inf. He was captured at Anzio Beach and held until liberation. Jim was a member of the Mid-Iowa Chapter, AXPOW.

GRUNIN, Jacob (Jack) of Parkland, FL died June 3, 2012. He was 89. Jack was captured while serving with the 3rd Armored Div., 32nd Reg. at Falaise Gap. He was a POW in Stalag 7B until liberation. Survivors include his wife of 67 years, Mildred, 4 children, 10 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

HORTON, Cortlin Benjamin of Meeker, Oklahoma, died Sept. 11, 2011. He served with the 5th Division, 2nd Infantry and was held in Stalags 7A and 12A.

JINDRICH, Audrey J., of Denver, CO passed away Aug. 29, 2012. She was

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taps continued...

89. During WWII, she served in the Army Nurse Corps. She and her husband, Richard (8th AF, Luft III), were members of the Mile High Chapter, AXPOW. In addition to her husband, she leaves 1 son, 2 daughters and 2 grandchildren.

KINER/LEICHTE, Meda M., member and treasurer of the Capital City Chapter (PA), AXPOW died in Sept. 2012. She was the widow of Gerald Kiner and Joseph Leichte. She is survived by 3 daughters and their families, 1 brother and 3 sisters.

LAKE, Cyril H. passed away on August 26, 2012. His wife Margaret preceded him in death. He served with the 1st Armored Division and was captured on February 14, 1943; he was held in Stalags 7A, 3B, and 3A. He was a past Commander of the Greater St Louis Chapter, AXPOW.

LIVELY, Henry M., of Wichita, KS passed away Sept. 16, 2012. He was 89. He was captured while serving with the 8th AF, 445th BG, 702nd BS and held in Stalag Lufts IV & VI and Stalag 11A, then marched until liberation. Henry was a life member of AXPOW and member of the Air Capital Chapter. Survivors include his wife, Nina, 1 daughter, 2 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

LOWE, Evelyn (widow of Charles "Charlie") passed away on July 14, 2012 in Colonial Heights, VA. She was a member of Capitol City Chapter in Austin, TX, her former residence.

McKALIP, Kenneth Sr., age 80, passed away August 4, 2012. He was preceded in death by his wife Shirley. He was a Korean War POW and served with Tank Co., 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry. He was held in Korean camps #5 & #3.

MORGAN, Ethel born Sept. 19, 1920, passed away Oct. 26, 2011. Her hus-

band, ex-POW Harold Morgan preceded her in death.

PAGE, Beverly, 92, of Palm Harbor, FL, died August 8, 2012. He was in the ETO, 8th AF, 95th BG, 336 BS. He was held in Stalag Luft III, VI, I and IV. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Margaret; 1 daughter and 1 granddaughter. He was a member of the Florida Gulf Coast Chapter, AXPOW.

PETERSON, Lione E., age 80, of Claremore, OK passed away May 18, 2012. He was captured in Oct. 1952 while serving with the USMC in Korea during a battle in an area known as the "Hook". He leaves 3 daughters, 2 sister, 7 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

POUSH, Gene, of Nevada, IA passed away Sept. 6, 2012. He was 98. During WWII, he was captured while serving in the Army; he spent 27 months in German POW camps. Gene was a member of the Mid-Iowa Chapter, AXPOW.

SAMUEL, Charles H., of Sussex, WI died Sept. 17, 2012. He served with the 82nd Airborne during WWII; he was a POW for 18 months. Sam was a member of the Milwaukee Barb Wire Chapter, AXPOW. Survivors include his loving wife, Hazel, 2 sons, 1 daughter, 3 step-children, 5 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren.

SCEPANIAK, Sophie M., age 83, of St. Stephen, MN died Aug. 31, 2012. She was a life member of AXPOW and active member of the Central MN Chapter. She leaves her husband, ex-POW Clarence, 3 daughters, 2 sons, 11 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

SCHMUCK, Elizabeth, of Hubbard, Ohio passed away Aug. 7, 2012 at the age of 89. She was the widow of ex-POW Joseph (Darby's Rangers). She is survived by 2 sons, 5 grandchildren and 7 great-grandchildren.

SHA, Joyce F., 86, of Cold Spring, MN passed away Aug. 11, 2012. She was a life member of AXPOW and the wife of ex-POW Henry Sha. Joyce had been an active office since the

beginning of the Central MN Chapter. Survivors include 5 daughters, 8 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

SHAFFER, Lloyd, of New Oxford PA, died in March, 2012. "Skip" served in the 38th Inf, 2nd Div. during the Korean War. He was captured Feb 13, 1951, and held for 2 ½ years, returned during Operation Big Switch. Survivors include his wife, Doris.

STONE, Bruce Marvin, of Frederick, MD passed away Feb. 26, 2012 at the age of 89. He was the husband of "Dolly" for 65 years. During WWII, he served with the 8th AF, 351st BG, 511th BS. He was shot down, captured and held in numerous POW camps. In addition to his wife, he leaves 1 daughter, 3 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren and 2 sisters.

TAYLOR, Howard B., 88, of Louisville, KY died July 25, 2012. He was captured while serving with the 54th Inf. Div. in Anzio, Italy; he was held in Stalag VIII B until liberation. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Grace, 1 son, 1 daughter, 4 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

THORSON, Alvin L., of Sycamore, IL passed away March 10, 2011. He was 88. Alvin was in the Army Air Corp and a gunner on the B-24 *Rubber Check*, assigned to the 44th BG, 506th BS at Shipdam, England. His crew was shot down on April 8, 1944; he was captured and held in Stalag 17B in Krems, Austria for 13 months. Survivors include his son, Allen.

WEBB, Charles Vernon, of Ballinger, Texas died Sept 12, 2012. A B-24 pilot, he was shot down July 7, 1944 on his 42nd mission. He was held in Stalag Luft III until being liberated by Patton's Army. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Mary Stella. Both have been AXPOW life members since 1983. He is also survived by 2 daughters, 1 son, 6 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

WIMMER, Jacqueline, of St. Louis, MO passed away Sept. 7, 2012. She and her late husband, ex-POW William (106th Div., held in Stalag IVB) were life members of AXPOW.

An Angel by Any Other Name

by Alice A. Booher



Her given name was Floramund Anna but most everyone called her “Ann”, born August 7, 1913 in Chicago, IL the youngest of 13 kids of German immigrants Gertrude Bertha (Stenzel) and Henry Aloysius Fellmeth. While she decided to become a nurse in 6th grade, actual medical adventures began with a nursing degree from Loyola University and post-graduate surgical nursing studies at Bellevue in NYC. Entering the Army Nurse Corps in August 1936, she was assigned to Ft. Warren, WY where she met the service pilot she would marry a decade later, Wallace E. Difford, Jr. Army nurses had to serve 2 years before requesting overseas duty and when all of her friends asked for Hawaii, she opted for The Philippines. On April 27, 1940, she and 4 other nurses, enlisted men, officers and families, set sail for the 3-week trip on the transport ship *USS GRANT*, carrying huge cans of popped corn to combat seasickness. Fellow nurses, Ruth Stoltz and Rose-

mary Hogan later had a very different WWII, but all would nurse on the way over and arrived intact in Manila Bay on May 18, 1940. Ann selected one of the available nursing spots at Ft. Mills Station Hospital on Corregidor while Hogan and Willa Hook went to Stotsenberg General Hospital. At Ft. Mills, Ann was met by WWI veteran, Chief Nurse Maude Davidson and shared a bathroom with Josie Nesbit. She worked 12 hour night shifts before assuming daytime charge over the surgical floor, Ann also assisted the counterintelligence group in passing on data and even found time to play the lead in a play at the Corregidor Club. That Corregidor Players October 1940 gig was done in henna rinsed hair, and at a later Defenders of Corregidor and Bataan POW reunion, someone remembered the natural brunette as that red-haired girl.

On the serious side, although families and wives had been ordered home, none really believed reinforcements would arrive to rebuff the Japanese, so medical duties involved maneuvers and field operations and moving litters, crates and boxes of supplies from the hospital down to the Malinta Tunnel. After the war, Ann was speaking of that duty with fellow nurse Hattie “H.R.” Brantley who quipped: “*Well you didn’t put enough in there*”. It had taken the Americans 10 years to build the 835-foot long tunnel, 24-foot wide, 18-foot high. Finished in 1932, it was stocked with ammunition, etc., but also equipped for use as a 1,000-bed hospital in case of war even while earthquakes regularly shook the concrete-reinforced site.

On July 1, 1941, Ann left Corregidor for Ft. McKinley, 7 miles southeast of Manila. Josie Nesbit and Maude Davidson had already transferred to Sternberg Hospital on the mainland. At

McKinley while sharing a cottage with Hattie Brantley, Earleen Allen and Mary Jo Oberst, Ann twice fell ill with dengue fever, and was hospitalized at Sternberg until well into October when she and Ruth Stoltz took a brief R&R trip to Baquio. Later that fall she met some of the Navy nurses who visited from Cavite to join in some of the parties, including Edwina Todd, with whom she would remain friends for decades. In the increased preparation for war, everyone was issued a WWI gasmask and helmet and made themselves dog tags by hammering their initials into metal discs. Ann was on night duty on December 8th when they heard of the raid in Hawaii. Japanese bombing quickly commenced at Clark Field and awakened nurses Brantley, Allen, Oberst and Fellmuth the following day at Nichols Air Field. Life in the war zone became filled with newly wounded patients, nurses exchanging the white uniforms for men’s khaki slacks and shirts. Bombs did not strike the hospital, but absent reinforcements, U.S. troops starting destroying supplies to keep them from enemy hands. Ft. McKinley was evacuated so Ann, Hattie, Earleen and the others packed into a borrowed car and checked into Sternberg in Manila to join fellow nurses like Willa Hook in dodging bombs and moving ambulatory patients around the grounds. Philippine Women’s University was converted into Annex D of Sternberg, the gym set up as the surgery headed-up by Ann, and patients left nightly by ambulance to Bataan to go to Corregidor.

Jungle Hospital No. 1 was set up by the nurses and staff at Limay on Bataan and Hospital No. 2 at Cabcaban south of Bataan Field.

angel, cont'd...



Patients diminished and on December 26, when MacArthur withdrew his troops to Bataan, they got orders to evacuate Annex D for Sternberg. The remaining nurses were preparing to evacuate when the phone rang and orders relayed that one nurse was to remain. Chief Nurse O'Neill said nothing when asked to name one nurse to remain, so the physician present ordered Fellmeth to stay while the other nurses left for Bataan. On 27 December, Ann was sent to Sternberg, which was overflowing with wounded. Ann told Josie Nesbit: "we are all going to go back home...to Corregidor". However, Josie, who had been a party to an earlier meeting, knew better. The senior surgeon in Manila, Col Perry Carroll called Ann in to give her the opportunity to volunteer for the then secret plans to try evacuate as many patients as possible, working under the auspices of the Red Cross, to Australia aboard a decrepit inter-island coconut husk steamer, the *Macatan*. One Army surgeon and a surgical nurse, 10 Philippine Islands Red Cross nurses and 6 Filipino doctors would accompany the wounded.

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The rest of the nurses left the following day, none knowing why Ann was not going with them and Josie, who was carrying all of their documents including 201 files, not able to tell them. In preparation for the *Macatan's* trip, Ann was given a document identifying her as a noncombatant and describing why she had been left behind. She prepared herself for being a POW. Little did she know that all of those nurses named herein, and dozens of others would become just that for the duration of the war. Ann waited virtually alone for several days until they embarked on the ship on New Year's Eve 1941.

Over the years, the extraordinary story of the harrowing journey of the *Macatan* to Australia has been told in many other volumes (e.g., Noyer's *Macatan: Ship of Destiny*). During that voyage, the media, Australian, American and Japanese wrongly described sinking the vessel. Coming full circle, the *American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) magazine* in February 2001, cited it as the single largest humanitarian evacuation of military personnel to date. The Columbiana, OH ALA chapter offered a nursing scholarship in 2012 for the essay written on Floramund Fellmeth Difford.

The "Angels" story has been well told in books by several of the POW women themselves and in Beth Norman's *We Band of Angels*. But one of the most intimate and detailed narratives including the *Macatan's* month at sea in hostile territory comes in Ann Fellmeth Difford's own extraordinary 2005 book, *An Angels Illustrated Journal*, subtitled "It has taken sixty years to explain why she was on the *Mactan* and not a prisoner". The book also provides a detailed and otherwise unrecorded history (and some unique photos) of many of those taken and not taken POW, and why, Army and Navy, plus an all inclu-

sive, detailed table of all of their names and identifiers.



Ann herself had remained in Australia where she set up the South Pacific Army Nursing Service with the huge anti-malarial program, designed uniforms and interacted with interesting folks such as Mrs. MacArthur and young son Arthur. In late 1944, Ann returned home and on February 5, 1945, married Wallace (Wally) E. Difford, Jr. to whom she would remain married for 65 years until his death. Her military awards included the Legion of Merit and Bronze Star. She continued her nursing, and became the mother of four, all of whom served in the military. She continued to keep in touch with "Angels", her beloved POW friends and attended many of their reunions CONUS and in the Philippines. Floramund Anna (Ann) Fellmeth Difford died on July 31, 2012 and was buried with honors on August 13, 2012 at the Tahoma National Cemetery, Kent, WA.



national chaplain



PNC Gerald Harvey

Psalm 23 :

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters,

He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The synagogues of Bible times did not have bibles, they had hand written scrolls with a few verses or maybe a chapter. Most of God's word was given to his people in song. The man who sang God's word in the synagogue was called the cantor. They did not have the privilege of having the bible in hand as we do. Songs made it easier for the people to memorize God's word.

I am very thankful that as a child, my parents took me to church and introduced me to God. As a child I learned a little poem that has stayed with me all of my life:

I will do the best I can
With what I have
Where I am
In God's name
Today.

I have been in bed at the VA hospital, and at home, for the past month due to a severely infected gall bladder, giving me a lot of time to think about my life. I want to share this poem with you because it has guided me through so much.

I was in high school when Pearl Harbor was attacked. Although I had already given my life to God's service, I felt the need to volunteer for military service to help my country. Eunice and I became engaged, but decided to wait till I returned from war to be married. After training in America, my crew flew to England to be assigned to a base. Very soon after we arrived we flew our first mission to Germany and were hit over target.

When our pilot saw that we would not definitely make it back to base, he offered us the choice of landing, or sticking with the plane as far as it would go. We all chose to keep going. We were only a few minutes over the North Sea when we knew we would have to crash in the water. In the process of ditching the plane, we remembered our training for this situation. The pilot dug the tail to slow us down, but when the nose hit, it was still like hitting a brick wall at a hundred miles an hour. The plane immediately broke in half by the radio room, giving us about a minute before it sank. We were only able to retrieve one raft for all nine crew. By the time we were away from the drag of the sinking plane, we were sitting in waist deep water. It was February. We had been warned that if we were wet in the North Sea, we would only have about 30 minutes to live. We kept moving our toes to keep them from freezing, but it was soon dark leaving little hope of rescue. We all prayed that night, that in some way, God would save us. My crew told me that I slipped into the sea a couple of times and

they had to pull me back into the raft.

When it seemed that all hope was gone, we heard a noise and saw a flare. After 12 hours at sea, we had drifted to the Netherlands shore where the Germans came out and picked us up. At the time, we were happy to see anyone. We quickly realized that we were now POW's. Once, in an air raid shelter with just our crew and hundreds of Germans, our guards told us they would do their best to protect us, but would not shoot on their own people. We were moved several times between warehouses and prison camps on trucks and trains. Once while crammed into box cars, we were strafed by our own planes, killing some of the prisoners. At the end, several thousand of us had to walk between camps. This was still winter, and moving was even more dangerous than being in camp. Then General Patton came through the gates and set us free.

God had his hand in it all. Just as the sheep totally depend on the shepherd, so we were completely dependant on God. All through life he is our shepherd, not just the hard times. Read the Psalm again and apply it to your life today. Don't wait till you are sick to remember the times he has cared for you.

All through my POW experience, and the rest of my life too, this little poem has guided me. Maybe it will also be useful to you.

I will do the best I can
With what I have
Where I am
In God's name
Today.

Gerald

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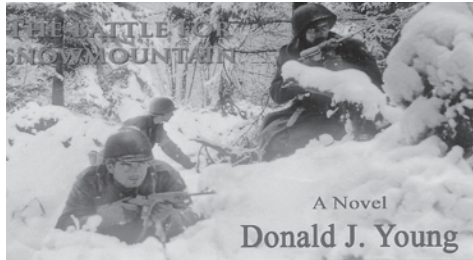
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The Battle for Snow Mountain by Donald Young may be purchased from Pocol Press, 6023 Pocol Drive, Clifton, VA 20124 (1-703-830-5862). It can also be ordered at www.amazon.com (ISBN 978-1-929763-48-1) **\$17.95**

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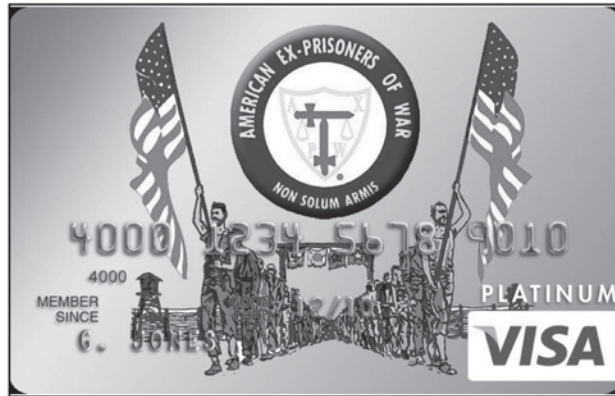
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National Headquarters
3201 E. Pioneer Parkway, Suite 40
Arlington, TX 76010-5396
(817) 649-2979/ (817) 649-0109 fax
e-mail: HQ@axpow.org
No collect calls, please

Bronze Grave Medallion with AXPOW LOGO

The Medallion is 4",
Bronze/Brown with
Lacquer. Hardware for
mounting is included.
Weight - approximately
1.25 lb.

*check with your local
cemetery before ordering
to see if medallions are
permitted.*

\$75.00

**plus \$15.00 shipping/handling/insurance.
Shipping costs on two or more is \$20.00.**

Thank you for supporting the American Ex-POWS with
your purchases of National Merchandise.



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Include your mailing label for address change or inquiry. If you are receiving duplicate copies, please send both labels. If moving, please give us your new address in the space provided.

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Please allow 4 weeks to make address corrections.

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Or e-mail: axpow76010@yahoo.com