

# EX-POW BULLETIN

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American Ex-Prisoners of War

501(c)3 Veterans Service Organization

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October~November~December 2021



*We exist to help those who cannot help themselves*



*November 11 ~ Veterans Day 2021*



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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 11<sup>th</sup> 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.

*Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukkah! Feliz Navidad! Happy Holidays!*  
*from the AXPOW Board of Directors*

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# national commander



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## ENDING WELL OR POORLY?

The wars in which we fought have had spotty endings with lingering undesirable consequences. The Treaty of Versailles did not result in global peace following the “war to end all wars” and instead set the stage for the Nazi takeover of Germany a mere generation later. World War II was more conclusively ended, but the Allied agreement to restore French

Indochina to colonial status set the stage for the rise of Communism in Hanoi. The Korean War has never been concluded with a formal treaty, only an armistice or cease-fire, leaving a desperate and despotic dictatorship in the northern half. The Paris Peace Accords of January 1973, while it resulted in the release of prisoners of war, was little more than a holding action for the next two years.

Our 20-year undeclared war in Afghanistan is ending as I write this, and the events of the ragged withdrawal and evacuation are strongly reminiscent of the swift and ignominious fall of Saigon in 1975. Even though American fighting men and women successfully turned back evil forces and held them at bay in both Vietnam and Afghanistan, American diplomats ultimately tired of the conflicts and called us home without thinking through or planning for our honorable exit and for the stability of the nation we left behind.

Those of us who fought, died, or nearly died in the service of our nation and that of our allies can hold our heads high knowing we acted with valor, honor, and dignity. I suspect we feel the greatest amount of grief at the tragedies we see befalling the nation we tried to protect. The

rest of our fellow countrymen may be grateful that we are gone and feel no remorse for those we leave behind – and they are to be pitied. If we do not examine our motives, our actions, and our consequences, we will not be able to capitalize on our successes or to learn from our mistakes. If our civilian leaders and commanders do not learn, they will eventually send another generation of brave Americans into the fog and friction of war with foolish rules of engagement and no real exit strategy.

When combat troops come home from war, we have been profoundly changed. While some of that change is not so good, some of it can actually lend us a greater understanding of who we are, what society is about and what international relations are about. Our wartime experience can bring a wealth of understanding to apply to the important work to fully utilize the positive aspects of those days in our life back in the world as we step forward to take leadership in government, business, and our faith communities. We must never stop serving those who serve today by advocating for good and thoughtful government as well as for the benefit of those “who have borne the battle and for his widow, and his orphan.”



## from the CEO

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It's a cool September morning here on Cape Cod...I can feel the difference in the air as we make the transition to fall. My next column will probably be filled with "I HATE WINTER!"...but right now I'm enjoying the weather.

Normally in September, I'm busy packing my helmet and planning to meet Marsha, Debbie and Mom in Georgia for the POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies with The Ride Home. It was a disappointment that this year's event was canceled – due to COVID concerns at Warner-Robins and the serious injuries sustained by our National Director Moe Moyer, who runs The Ride each year. Please keep Moe and his wife Ginnie in your prayers. We hope to see him in April in Texas for our board meeting.

We've had a lot going on this summer at AXPOW. Guidestar finally realized that we were, in fact, a 501(c)3 and that opened a lot of donation doors. I don't know how many of you are spending time on the Internet, but for those of you who are, we've got opportunities for you to make painless donations.

The first is Amazon Smile. We've got a notice on the home page of our website: [www.axpow.org](http://www.axpow.org) that allows you to click on and make AXPOW your charity. If you want, you can also check on our unique link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/94-1430564> Make any purchase through the Amazon Smile charity portal, and they'll make a donation to AXPOW—at no cost to you! Just use the link on the website, and designate part of your purchase price to help fund our POW support activities. Try it next time you make a buy on Amazon. It's painless. It makes shopping more satisfying. And you'll help a great cause!

The second is Facebook. I had no idea they participated in a program that let friends and family (or even total strangers) make a birthday/anniversary/important date donation. We just received our first check from Facebook from friends who wanted to honor me on my birthday. Again, it's an easy process. When my birthday was coming, I received a notice from Facebook that I could ask for donations to my favorite charity. Naturally, it was AXPOW, and a number of friends did make a donation.

Of course, we are always happy to receive your donations by mail as well. Your support enables us to maintain our programs. It also shows us that the future of AXPOW is important to you.

Speaking of Guidestar, you may have noticed our Gold Seal of Transparency on the home page of our website as well as on the front cover of each EX-POW Bulletin. Your officers spend days each year filling out the requirements for us to obtain this very special recognition. It tells potential donors that we are transparent in our finances, goals and plans.

One donation we decided to make again this year was to sponsor wreaths for the National Cemetery at Andersonville...the site of our National POW Museum. As you know, Andersonville is our legacy – ensuring your experiences and your stories are never forgotten. There is more information on Wreaths Across America in this Bulletin, and if you decide you would like to contribute, your wreath will also be placed at Andersonville. Our special link is; [www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/AEPW](http://www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/AEPW)

The POW Museum itself is only newly reopened as we recover from COVID. Programs that had been put on hold last year should be restarted in 2022. This year, our board voted that unused funds be used for oral transcriptions and a wayside exhibit near the Park entrance to tell visitors about the POW Memorial Grove.

From my family to yours, we wish you a very happy holiday season – running from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day. Please stay safe and healthy and pray for our military always.

Fondly  
*Cheryl*

## Your feet



Patients often seek advice first from their primary care physicians regarding the diagnosis and treatment of their foot problems. The role of the physician is to recognize and treat the underlying condition, prevent further injury or deformities, and educate the patient about his/her disease. In order for this to occur, physicians require a basic understanding of the anatomy, pathophysiology, and biomechanics of the foot. This article focuses on three of the most common conditions of the foot seen by primary care physicians in the ambulatory setting: bunion, plantar fasciitis, and Morton's neuroma.

Evaluation begins by taking a thorough history which includes questions regarding the quality, location, radiation, severity, duration, and exacerbating and/or relieving factors related to the pain. A family history of congenital or acquired disorders of the foot should be sought. Additional information should include a history of previous injuries, occupational and recreational activities, and any recent changes in the type or

amount of activity. The physician should also inquire about the effectiveness of current or previous treatment(s). Observation of the patient's gait and foot position and inspection of his/her footwear should be performed since tight fitting shoes may exacerbate the foot condition, and modifications may prevent further injury.

### Common Foot Disorders

#### Bunion

Bunion is derived from the Latin word meaning turnip. It is a bursa sac that develops over the first metatarsophalangeal (MTP) joint as a result of a hallux valgus deformity of this joint. Hallux valgus refers to the lateral deviation of the first toe. However, in common parlance, "bunion" has come to denote any bump or associated deformity of the first MTP joint with deviation of the lateral great toe. Bunions can be primary in the absence of any known underlying diseases

or secondary to a variety of metabolic, structural or inflammatory disorders.

The pathophysiology of bunions is poorly understood, but is thought to be secondary to both hereditary and environmental factors. The fact that bunions occur commonly in families suggests a genetic predisposition from ligamentous laxity and hyperpronation of the foot. The higher incidence in women compared to men is believed to be due to tightly fitting women's footwear. However, footwear alone is not sufficient to explain this condition. The complex relationship of the first ray biomechanics and hindfoot mechanics influence bunion development. Additionally, any disorder resulting in first MTP joint inflammation may weaken MTP soft tissue restraints, predisposing to bunion formation.

The pain associated with a bunion is caused by pressure and frictional force exerted on the skin, soft tissue, and bursa at the medial prominence of the first MTP joint. Over time, callous formation and progression of the foot deformity cause internal

subluxation with abnormal mechanics resulting in articular deterioration. A painful callous may also occur under the lateral subluxed medial sesamoid.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, changes in the biomechanics of the foot result in an imbalance which causes the patient to shift his/her weight laterally and, in turn, increases pressure and pain at the head of the metatarsals (metatarsalgia). Progressive lateral great toe deviation produces a retrograde load on the first metatarsal, which deviates medially allowing for great toe shifting, and begins a vicious cycle. Subsequently, the great toe may either override the second toe or, more commonly, go beneath the second toe. Elevation of the second toe may result in significant second MTP joint pain and a hammer toe deformity of the second toe. Frequently, the hammer toe may be the greater source of discomfort. Relief of hammer toe pain may require addressing an associated bunion deformity simultaneously. Initial treatment is primarily conservative and must first address the patient's footwear. Foot padding, taping, night splints, foot exercises, orthotic devices, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications, or a combination of these treatment modalities may be prescribed. Allowance should be made for adequate space in the shoe to prevent further injury. Orthotic devices may provide short-term symptomatic pain relief for mild to moderate hallux valgus deformity,<sup>2</sup> although there is no evidence to support their effectiveness in preventing its progression.<sup>3</sup> Surgery should be

considered if pain or functional disability persists or progresses despite conservative measures.

## Plantar fasciitis

The plantar fascia or plantar aponeurosis is a fibrous band of connective tissue located on the plantar surface of the foot. This fascia assists in forming the longitudinal arch of the foot. The plantar fascia originates near the medial process of the calcaneal tubercle and inserts onto the plantar ligamentocapsular complex of the first through fifth metatarsal heads. The origin of the plantar fascia is the most "fixed" point of this structure, and it is this site that is most prone to injury. It should be noted that heel spurs or calcaneal osteophytes have no relationship to plantar fasciitis. In fact, heel spurs occur in 15% to 20% of the asymptomatic population and are absent in many people with plantar fasciitis.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the plantar calcaneal spur originates at a different anatomic layer of the foot than the plantar fascia.

Plantar fasciitis is a clinical diagnosis that is most commonly seen in younger runners and patients between the ages of 40 and 60 years of age<sup>5</sup> who are often slightly overweight and may be deconditioned. Other contributing factors include obesity, recent weight gain, and occupations that require prolonged standing. Recently, it has been demonstrated that individuals suffering from plantar fasciitis develop a secondary contracture of the gastrosoleus complex that may perpetuate the inflammation of the plantar fascia. Rarely is it associated with a systemic inflammatory condition such as spondyloarthritis or infection.

Examination shows focal plantar medial pain over the medial process of the calcaneal tubercle that may extend throughout the longitudinal arch. This pain may be exacerbated by the forced dorsiflexion of the toes that stretches the aponeurosis. Pain that is located posteriorly to the medial calcaneal tubercle or which occurs with compression of the calcaneus from a medial to lateral direction suggests another diagnosis such as stress fracture, a heel pad disorder, a plantar nerve entrapment ("jogger's foot"), or periostitis.

Foot pain associated with plantar fasciitis occurs immediately after standing or walking, especially when preceded by prolonged sitting ("start-up pain"). Thus, patients will complain of pain, particularly in the morning, occurring after taking their first step. During the early phase of the disease, pain often improves or resolves with continued walking. When pain occurs at night or persists in the prone position, other causes of heel pain should be sought, including stress fracture or a nerve entrapment syndrome. Additionally, symptoms that persist despite treatment for plantar fasciitis should prompt a search for alternative diagnoses that affect the heel.

Plantar fasciitis may be caused by overuse and/or other biomechanical factors. The pathophysiologic mechanism, particularly in runners, is thought to be due to overuse caused by repetitive microtrauma of the plantar fascia. In this group of patients, plantar fasciitis has been attributed to changes in footwear, running on hard surfaces, excessive or increased running distance, or anatomical

## medsearch, cont'd...

abnormalities such as a pes cavus, high arch deformity, or a shortened Achilles tendon.

Patients with biomechanical abnormalities affecting the leg and thigh (e.g., excessive femoral anteversion, lateral tibial torsion, or leg length discrepancy), ankle (e.g., equines), arch (e.g., pes planus or pes cavus), or hindfoot (e.g., flexible rearfoot varus) are at increased risk of developing plantar fasciitis.<sup>6</sup> These conditions cause abnormal pronatory forces that, in turn, translate into excessive biomechanical stress. This results in microtrauma to the plantar fascia leading to collagen degeneration. The end result, found pathologically, is a loss of collagen fibers and an increase in the vascularity and connective tissue matrix with chronic inflammatory changes.<sup>7</sup>

Diagnostic testing should be reserved for cases in which the diagnosis is unclear in patients who have failed to respond to appropriate treatment. Treatment typically proceeds in a stepwise fashion with more conservative, noninvasive mechanical approaches used initially. Recent evidence suggests that non-weightbearing stretching exercises to the plantar fascia provide improvement in pain and mobility compared to weightbearing Achilles tendon stretching exercises.<sup>8</sup> Patients should be instructed to avoid wearing flat shoes and walking barefoot<sup>5</sup> and started with a cushioned heel cup and Achilles and plantar fascia stretching regimen. Arch taping, heat, ice massage, and ice baths or packs may be added. These modalities

are continued for 6 to 8 weeks. For patients with continued symptoms, night splinting is added. Casts or inserts may help in certain patients with abnormal biomechanical examinations. For patients who are physically active, recommendations should include temporary avoidance of weightbearing exercises. Although nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication is commonly used, there have been no randomized, clinically controlled trials to support their benefit.<sup>5</sup> However, a short course of corticosteroids may provide short-term pain relief. Injections may be painful and may, inadvertently, result in plantar fasciia rupture. Custom semirigid orthotics with a silicone heel cup may be beneficial for patients with preexisting biomechanical abnormalities of the foot, such as pes planus or pes cavus deformities. For refractory patients, iontophoresis or casting treatment should be considered. For cases resistant to the above measures for 12 months, radiofrequency lesioning or surgical fasciotomy techniques are performed.

## Morton's neuroma

Morton's neuroma, initially described by Morton in 1876, is a reactive fibrosis of a communicating branch of the third nerve and, histopathologically, is not a true neuroma. The neuroma is believed to be mechanically induced and most commonly affects the third common digital nerve located in the region of the third webspace of the foot. Anatomic factors along with injury, irritation, or pressure from wearing pointed and/or high-heeled shoes result in

compression and irritation of the third common digital nerve and lead to nerve fiber degeneration, intraneural and juxtaneural fibrosis, and hypertrophy of the nerve. Anatomical factors that may contribute to this condition include excessive motion of the third and fourth metatarsals, juxtaposition of the third and fourth metatarsal heads and the branches of medial and lateral plantar nerves between the third nerve, and the third transverse intermetatarsal ligament overlying the third common digital nerve and its communicating branches.

Pathologic findings alone are insufficient to explain the symptoms of Morton's neuroma, since these same findings may occur in asymptomatic individuals. The diagnosis of Morton's neuroma is suspected clinically when patients complain of pain located in the webspace of their toes. Early in the course, patients may describe burning or tingling in this region. These symptoms may progress to the more typical paroxysmal, severe, sharp, lancinating pain that occurs with weightbearing and walking and is relieved by sitting, removing the shoes, and massaging and manipulating the affected region of the forefoot. The pain, as previously noted, typically involves the third and occasionally the fourth webspace and may radiate to the third and fourth toe.

The webspace compression test is used clinically for the diagnosis of Morton's neuroma and takes advantage of the pathophysiologic process responsible for this condition. With the patient in a sitting or prone position, the examiner squeezes the third and fourth

## medsearch, cont'd...

metatarsal heads together with one hand and, using the other hand, compresses the soft tissue in the involved webspace. A positive test results in pain. Ultrasonography may be used in cases of diagnostic uncertainty, however, Morton's neuroma remains a clinical diagnosis.

Treatment options for Morton's neuroma include avoiding pointed and/or high-heeled shoes, using metatarsal pads, and administering local corticosteroid injections, the latter of which must be approached with caution. Inadvertent extravasations into the toe adjacent to the MTP joint may result in significant MTP joint instability. In refractory cases, neurolysis, transposition, or surgical excision of the nerve is performed. Recurrence of symptoms must provoke a search for a "stump neuroma" or pathology of adjacent structures, such as the MTP joints. Recurrence after surgical excision is most commonly associated with incomplete nerve release or excision.

## Achilles Tendon Injuries

The Achilles tendon is a thick tendon located in the back of the leg. It connects the gastrocnemius and soleus muscles in the calf to an insertion point at the calcaneus (heel bone). It is the strongest tendon in the body and allows people to push off while walking, running and jumping.

Achilles injuries can occur in several places, but the most common area is at the muscle-tendon junction – the area where

the calf muscles join with the tendon. Injuries in this area often heal on their own but may do so slowly than injuries in the muscular area of the leg, since there is less of a blood supply to promote healing.

## Conditions and issues

Chronic, long-lasting Achilles tendon disorders range from overuse injuries that cause inflammation or degeneration, to acute traumas such as Achilles tendon ruptures. Pain along the back of the ankle or in the heel are often the result of distinct problems along the course of the Achilles tendon or at its point of attachment to the heel of the foot. This type of pain may also be caused by retrocalcaneal bursitis, which is sometimes called Achilles tendon bursitis. Learn about more specific Achilles tendon conditions in the articles shown below.

## Treatments

Most people who have injuries and inflammation related to overuse of the tendon undergo nonsurgical treatments. These can include:

- rest or other modification of activities
- physical therapy (rehabilitation)
- nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen
- (for some patients) platelet-rich plasma injections (also known as PRP injections)

In rehabilitation, a physical therapist or athletic trainer may employ ultrasound, electrical stimulation, cold therapy (icing) and massage to promote healing. They will

also teach the patient specific stretches and strength training exercises to regain function and prevent future problems. Less often, patients who do not benefit from these therapies may require surgery.

## Achilles tendon injury prevention

Since a lack of flexibility is a major cause of injury, proper stretching of the lower leg is the most basic way to prevent Achilles tendon strains or tears. As is the case with many other conditions injuries, it is important to stay as fit as possible during the healing and rehabilitation process. Swimming and other non-impact exercises are best, including bicycling, if that activity does not cause any pain (which would indicate a likelihood of reinjury). Running should be avoided at all costs until a rehabilitation specialist, trainer or doctor advises that sufficient recovery has taken place.

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A part of the U.S.  
Department of Health and  
Human Services, NIH is  
the largest biomedical  
research agency in the  
world.

# PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Public Law 97-37

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

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

## 1. ARTHRITIS, TRAUMATIC

Also known as articular trauma.

## 2. AVITAMINOSIS

The total lack of vitamins in the diet.

## 3. BERIBERI

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

## 4. DYSENTERY, CHRONIC

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

## 5. FROSTBITE

The actual freezing of tissue.

## 6. HELMINTHIASIS

Infection with any type of worms that parasitize the human.

## 7. MALNUTRITION

Merely means bad nutrition.

## 8. PELLAGRA

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

## 9. ANY OTHER NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY

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

## 10. PSYCHOSIS

A generic term for any of the insanities.

## 11. PANIC DISORDER

Characterized by discrete periods of apprehension or fear.

## 12. GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

## 13. OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

This may be either obsessions or compulsions.

## 14. POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

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

## 15. ATYPICAL ANXIETY DISORDER

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

## 16. DEPRESSIVE NEUROSIS /DYSTHYMIC DISORDER

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

## 17. PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

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

## 18. IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

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

## 19. PEPTIC ULCER DISEASE

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

duodenum (the first part of the small intestine).

## 20. CIRRHOSIS

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

## 21. STROKE & COMPLICATIONS

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

## 22. HEART & COMPLICATIONS

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

## 23. OSTEOPOROSIS

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

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

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

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

# legislative



Legislative officer  
Charles A Susino

Listening to the news, it would appear that Congress is totally preoccupied with COVID, COVID impacts, and infrastructure and of course Afghanistan. While those issues have taken the majority of attention, there has been some slow progress on issues facing America's Veterans. In June, the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs introduced comprehensive legislation on toxic exposure. The House bill is the Honoring our PACT Act and the Senate bill is the Comprehensive and Overdue Support for Troops of War Act of 2021 or the COST of War Act.

. If you haven't already done so, we encourage all veterans, family members, friends, and supporters to do their part and contact their Congressman. This issue is close to home for the EXPOWs where it took Congress until the 1980's to establish presumptives for America's. Sadly, very sadly, it still takes far too long for Congress to act on health issues facing our veterans during their time of service.

On August 2, 2021, the VA began processing new presumptive conditions for toxic exposures

with disability claims for asthma, rhinitis and sinusitis based on presumed particulate matter exposures during military service in Southwest Asia and other areas from open burn pits, sand, dust and particulate matter, oil well fires, etc. The Southwest Asia Theater of operations refers to Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the neutral zone between Iraq and Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, the Gulf of Aden, the Gulf of Oman, the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea and the airspace above these locations. Additionally, this includes veterans who served in Southwest Asia beginning Aug. 2, 1990, to the present, or Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Syria or Djibouti beginning Sept. 19, 2001, to the present. These conditions must have manifested within 10 years of a qualifying period of military service.

Researchers, including experts at VA, are actively studying airborne hazards like burn pits and other military environmental exposures. Ongoing research will help better understand potential long-term health effects and provide better care and services. Many health conditions related to these hazards are temporary and should disappear after the exposure ends. Other longer-term health issues may be caused by a combination of hazardous exposures, injuries, or illnesses experienced during your military service including blast or noise injuries. This ongoing research is vital to addressing our veterans health care needs.

The House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Health conducted a hearing on access to VA's home and community-based services. Ideally, these services

allow veterans to remain in their homes and receive support as they age. Executive Director, VA Office of Geriatrics & Extended Care Dr. Scotte Hartronft addressed VA's focus on expanding these services, as well as modernizing and improving systems for healthy aging including facility-based care, technological access, and geriatric expertise. Many of our members and their families have experienced the short comings of the current practices.

Other proposed bills worth watching are:

H.R. 2127: Toxic Exposure in the American Military (TEAM) Act

S 927: Toxic Exposure in the American Military Act

H.R. 2268: Keeping Our Promises Act

Keeping Our Promises Act  
This bill expands the list of diseases that are provided a presumption of service-connection for veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975.

H.R. 2569: Veterans Agent Orange Exposure Equity Act- To provide for a presumption of service connection for diseases associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents for veterans who served in close proximity to the Republic of Vietnam.

S. 1965: Planning for Aging Veterans Act of 2021, Add to List bill to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to improve long-term care provided to veterans by the Department of Vet



# andersonville



Andersonville NHS  
496 Cemetery Road  
Andersonville, GA 31711  
(229) 924-0343  
Gia Wagner,  
Superintendent

Greetings from  
Andersonville...

We had steady visitation during the summer months, and the weekends continue to see about 100-250 visitors as we move into the fall season. Mitigations remain in place to maintain one-way traffic, protect employees, and maintain cleanliness. The park films are being shown again in theater with limited seating for visitor protection. Work will begin to upgrade the museum lighting in the next couple of months.



On July 11th, author Mary Gorman presented a program on the raiders that was attended by 75 visitors. Park staff will be providing two programs on September 17th focused on POWs buried in the National Cemetery. The park is beginning design services for Section Q to best determine future burials and preservation of cemetery integrity. Potential funding for all NPS-managed National Cemeteries is being discussed at the national level. Park management will be providing needed information to support this combined effort.

AXPOW funds that were unable to be used last year are being used to fund an oral history transcription project. Proposals have been received, and staff are reviewing for award process. The current funding will provide transcription services for part of the base proposal (transcription of 99 interviews and copy-editing of an additional 25 interviews). Additional funds will be needed to complete this phase. The contract was also written with options to complete additional transcriptions and copy-editing. We also have a draft design for a new wayside exhibit for the POW Memorial Grove as part of the 2020 funds.

To help with physically distancing as part of COVID safety measures, two park employees

designed an assistive device for more efficiently digging headstone holes.



The Travelling Exhibit is at the US Army Airborne and Special Operations Museum at Fort Bragg in North Carolina and will remain there through end of September. We have been unable to find a location for the exhibit from October forward. Any assistance would be appreciated as the park is struggling to find interested and size-appropriate venues. We are interested in discussing the future of the Traveling Exhibit as a result and ideas to continue sharing stories.

Phyllis Hine traveled to the park to donate her father's POW canteen and photographs. Philip Daniel Tolan was a POW for 42 months during WWII and helped build the Sack of Cement Cross that is featured in the National POW Museum.

As always, we hope you and yours are well, thriving, and plan to visit us soon.

*Wreaths Across America  
Coming to Andersonville  
National Historic Site  
December 18, 2021*

# namPOW news



Paul Galanti  
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paulgalanti@mac.com

## 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 optimist. 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 50 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."

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!

# pow/mia

Mary Schantag, Chairman  
P.O.W. Network  
info@pownetwork.org

## If tomorrow never comes

No one is promised another tomorrow.

But what if the kiss good night, tonight, is the last one? Or the "I love you, be careful" as we close the door as a loved one leaves, is the last time we get to say that, or hear the response?

In the desperate, alone darkness that envelops us immediately after a loss, can your loved one take the first steps to survive as a widow or widower? The shock, the grief, the fog, the pain, overtakes every need we have to survive, for a very, very, long time.

Do they know where to find the Will, Life Insurance Policies, car titles, mortgage papers, keys to lockers, bank deposit boxes, or the safe? Do they have access to your DD214 and an accurate listing of awards and decorations if needed? Can they find a copy of your birth certificate, social security card, and marriage license?

Will they have the answers as to parent's names, grandparents, siblings and spouses, schooling, jobs, military, hobbies that the funeral home will ask?

Do you have best friends that need to be told of your passing?

Email friends that need to be notified?

If Arlington is under consideration, they can only accept "entire" remains or cremains. The trend to keep a vial, or small container of ashes may sound like a way to ease the grief, but there are consequences.

Do they have the phone number to call Social Security or the Veterans Admin to stop checks? Do they know that if a check is cashed (SSN/VA) and a loved one dies, that latest check may be WITHDRAWN from the bank without notice, leaving checks to bounce or bills to pay if there is not sufficient monies in the account?

If you are 100% VA disabled, they will need a Service Officer to apply for spousal benefits. There will be paperwork, and a very long wait before benefits are approved if they qualify. They will need to change their ID card if you were their sponsor. It's too late to file a disability claim AFTER you pass, no matter how ill you were.

They need to call Social Security and see what your death does to their benefits. There is more paperwork.

Did you get meds by mail – they need to be stopped. Do they know how to dispose of the meds in the home that can no longer be used? Please – do not flush and contaminate the water supply. Drop off at a police station or consult your pharmacy or the VA for ways to dispose of properly.

If you have special needs did you know that glasses, braces,

wheelchairs, scooters, CPAP machines can all be donated to veterans organizations? Hearing aids can be reprogrammed for those less fortunate at a very low cost when donated to someone in need.

Are there ID cards that must be cancelled (military retirement or disability), or even concealed carry or firearms permits? If you own firearms, what are they to do with them? Is there a list of kind, serial number, value, even a picture?

Do they have phone numbers and account numbers to access, change or close bank accounts, utility accounts, car payments, mortgage payments, credit card accounts, or cell phones? Do you receive paper bills to make this easy, or are all your bill copies received by email or only online after you access an account? Do they have the passwords for the computer and passwords/account numbers for access to those online sites and accounts?

Do they know how to gas the car? Or how often to have the oil changed in the car? What oil to use? What trusted mechanic to take it too? Do they know how to use a GPS or even an old fashioned map?

Will they know how to turn off the breaker in the electrical box or how to turn off the main water supply? Know that you need not turn off the whole house to turn off a toilet's water supply? How to flush a toilet when the water is shut off? How to relight a hot water tank, or fill a water softener? Who to call if the plumbing, furnace or A/C needs repairs? How to change a furnace filter?

How about the lawn and weed or snow removal? If there is storm damage, or a tree falls, is there someone you call?

Take the time to call their phone, and leave an unexpected "I love you" message they can keep to hear your voice when times are tough. Tuck an extra cologne or perfume aside so they can put a bit on their pillow at night and know you are still by their side. Tell them every penny they find when you are gone, is you walking with them, as it's an angel penny from heaven. Tell them not to be scared or surprised if they think they hear you or feel you on lonely nights.

Don't wait. No one is promised another tomorrow.

As of September 9, 2021  
 THE NUMBER OF  
 AMERICANS MISSING  
 AND  
 UNACCOUNTED-FOR  
 FROM THE VIETNAM  
 WAR IS 1,584



## THE CONTRASTING CASES OF AMERICAN AND JAPANESE-AMERICAN WORLD WAR II INTERNEES

by Martin Meadows

INTRODUCTION. It has been more than 76 years since I was among the nearly 4,000 American and other Allied-country nationals who were liberated from Manila's Santo Tomas Internment Camp (STIC) on 3 February 1945. Despite that passage of time, however, I continue to harbor two grievances concerning the U.S. coverage of two related but separate and distinct subjects linked to World War II (WWII): (1) The American public's virtually total ignorance of the subject of Japan's WWII American civilian captives, or internees; and (2) the sharp contrast between their lack of coverage and the extensive (and continuing) amount of attention accorded in the U.S. to the subject of U.S. government treatment of WWII Japanese-American internees. This analysis will discuss each grievance in turn, focusing on the main reasons for the contrasting nature of the coverage, and on how that difference contributed to the failures and successes, respectively, of the American and the Japanese-American efforts to achieve restitution. Lastly, this study will examine certain neglected aspects of the subject at issue in the concluding section.

Before proceeding, several distinctions and clarifications should be cited, for the sake of accuracy (and to forestall potential criticisms); but brevity dictates that not all of them will be used here. They include the following: (1) In the context of this survey, the term "Japanese-American" is not always appropriate, as not all those of Japanese descent in the U.S. and in the then Territory of Hawaii were U.S. citizens during WWII. (2) The word commonly used to include all diaspora ethnic Japanese, regardless of their citizenship, is *Nikkei*; a term used herein, though not comparable, is "Japanese-American community." (3) Because not all Japanese-Americans were interned, it would be inaccurate to refer to them — although I do so — as "internees" (as distinguished from military prisoners, or "POWs"). (4) To simplify, instead of using the terms "former internees" or "ex-internees," they will be referred to simply as "internees." Finally, a note to emphasize that my grievances are *not* personal; this survey is the outcome not of prejudice, antipathy and/or bitterness, but rather of an examination of the historical record.

GRIEVANCE #1. The reasons for the ignorance of the American internees' case in my opinion result largely if not entirely from deliberate policy decisions by both the Japanese and the American governments. The principal reason Japanese leaders always have desired to conceal the facts of their handling of WWII captives (both military POWs and civilian internees) needs no explanation

## civilian, cont'd...

— they simply do not want it known how brutally they treated their prisoners. As evidence of that mistreatment, here are some illustrative facts and figures:

Among American POWs in Europe, slightly more than one percent died while prisoners; among Japan's American POWs, about **40%** died in captivity. Among American internees in Europe, 3.5% died in prison; among American internees of Japan, **11%** died in captivity — more than triple the European rate. (Fewer than **0.02%** of Japanese-Americans died as internees.)

Moreover, Japanese motivation to suppress the facts has been greatly reinforced by the post-WWII growth of right-wing ultra-nationalism in Japan. As a result, Japan has always refused even to discuss — let alone to award — reparations payments to its American internees, citing the provisions of the 1951 peace treaty with the U.S. And in that regard, it is important to underscore the fact that the American government at every step of the way has sided with Japan against any and every attempt by the American internees to seek reparations from Japan. The reasons for that stance are examined next.

The motivations of the U.S. government both to conceal the facts, and to side with Japan, in my opinion include (in addition to the provisions of the aforesaid peace treaty) these three major ones: (1) The desire to cover up the government's role in actually *preventing*, not merely discouraging, American civilians from leaving the Philippines prior to the Pearl Harbor attack (for instance, by refusing to furnish required travel documents). (2) The desire to avoid any negative reaction that might have resulted from Americans' knowledge that a foreign enemy had captured the

greatest number of American civilians in U.S. history, and that the U.S. government was at the least partly responsible. (3) No doubt most important, the desire to ensure that Japan would be an ally against the Soviet Union in the rapidly-developing cold war. And, to support the view that the U.S. government did not treat American internees equitably, note that it provided them only minimal compensation for their internment (a maximum of \$2,200 per STIC adult), especially so in comparison with reparations from WWII Allied countries to their own internees (an average of at least \$15,000 each).

GRIEVANCE #2. And now to the second grievance, concerning the grossly disparate treatment within the U.S. of the two categories of internees, a situation for which the U.S. government and the Japanese-American community bear primary responsibility. First, just as the U.S. government has been mainly responsible for Americans' ignorance of the American internees' case, so too it has contributed considerably to the disparity of coverage, since ignorance of the issue obviously has led to its lack of coverage. On the other hand, however, the U.S. government could not have prevented widespread knowledge, and thus extensive coverage, of the Japanese-American case. That is because the government could not legally have censored any, let alone all, of the numerous efforts to publicize the Japanese-American case, and also because those efforts were led not only by the Japanese-American community but also by what could be called the civil rights community, which is often an influential factor in such instances. Conversely, though the government could not suppress awareness of the Japanese-American case, it was able to do so in the American internees' case, because that occurred outside of the U.S. and thus beyond public notice, did not involve either civil rights violations or the civil rights community, and affected a *far* smaller number of individuals (a few thousand as against more than 100,000).

As for the Japanese-American community, its lengthy pursuit of restitution achieved complete success in 1988, when the U.S. Congress formally apologized for the government's WWII actions, and passed the Civil Liberties Act. That Act, and its later amendments, awarded \$20,000 in reparations to almost all WWII-era Japanese-Americans (of whom more than 80,000 were still alive), *regardless of their wartime status* — that is, regardless of their citizenship, their treatment (e.g., internment, relocation, or neither), their ages, or even whether they had been repatriated to Japan *or had actually fought for Japan*. The Act also authorized creation of a Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, which has served to insert the Japanese-American point of view into the country's educational system as well as into the historical record. And the Japanese-American case has continued to receive public attention as well as to achieve further successes, which need not be cited here.

In short, ever since WWII, Americans have displayed the sharpest possible contrast in their knowledge of and interest in the two categories of WWII internees discussed in this study.

## civilian, cont'd...

CONCLUSION. The contrasting outcomes traced above — resulting from contrasts in awareness, and thus in coverage — seem destined to be more or less permanent; thus a more complete analysis than so far provided is needed to produce a fuller explanation, and judgment, of those contrasting results.

The standard explanation — which is espoused by the Japanese-American community — follows conventional lines:

In accordance with “the American dream,” Japanese-Americans “worked hard and played by the rules” — particularly the rules of the American political system, including in particular the election of Japanese-Americans to the U.S. Congress. Thus they were much more able to promote their cause and influence public opinion than were the virtually unknown, ignored, and numerically insignificant American internees. While that explanation has merit, it is not the whole story; there is a darker side to consider. A detailed account of that aspect, briefly summarized next, can be found in an unpublished article-length manuscript by John J. Stephan, professor emeritus of history at the University of Hawaii, who is fully conversant with Japan's language and history. (Complete citation: John J. Stephan, “Injustice Contrived: Wartime Internment as Political Theater,” Honolulu, 2021. Stephan currently is updating the cited version and hopes to soon upload it to the site [ResearchGate.net](https://www.researchgate.net) where one can search for it by name and/or title.)

To cite only the barest essentials, among other things Stephan outlines the pre-Pearl Harbor beliefs and actions of a minority (approximately one-fourth) of America's Japanese-American community, almost all of them located in the then Territory of Hawaii. According to Stephan, that minority harbored a “racist-nationalist virus”; actively supported Japanese expansionism in Asia; did not intend to settle in the U.S.; made trips back to Japan; and on several occasions hosted visiting members of the Japanese military. Their actions were so potentially incriminating that, after Pearl Harbor, they sought to dispose of evidence of their sympathies. Thenceforth, Japanese-Americans in general made — and continue to make — similar efforts to discourage any and all references to the aforesaid minority's compromising pre-WWII history. Stephan also pinpoints the various deficiencies — simplifications, distortions, etc. — in the Japanese-American version of their relationship with the U.S. government. In view of such flaws, one may well wonder why the Japanese-American story, as presented to the American public since WWII, has never been successfully challenged. The reason is simple; as Stephan pointed out in a personal email, any criticism of the Japanese-American community's presentation of its history is virtually impossible to publish. In his words, that history is based upon “a civil rights narrative that the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 turned into orthodox enforced within the government, media, and academe.”

In summary, thanks in part to the less savory side of its history, the Japanese-American community not only ultimately achieved its objectives, it is virtually invulnerable to attack. Conversely, the American internees who were victims of Imperial Japan's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere appear destined to remain invulnerable as well — except that they are invulnerable to the public attention and support Americans bestow on the Japanese-American community. Their efforts to achieve restitution were unable to gain traction within the American public and were aimed primarily at the U.S. government — which itself, however, undercut their efforts, as explained earlier. Thus, by comparison with the efforts of the Japanese-American community, those of the American internees proved to be pitifully feeble. And there the story of these two sharply contrasting histories must rest, for now if not forever. That is, unless the remnants of the American internees, and/or their descendants, can somehow muster the will, the energy, and the financial and political support to gain public recognition and thereby at least modify their side of the story for the better.

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CPOW  
Civilian Ex-Prisoners  
of War  
[www.cpow.org](http://www.cpow.org)  
Sally Meadows,  
Commander

# News & Information

On Aug. 25th, President Joe Biden signed into law the Puppies Assisting Wounded Servicemembers for Veterans Therapy Act (H.R. 1448). The U.S. Senate unanimously passed the bill earlier this month after initially being passed by the House in March.

As the nation's largest provider of trained Service Dogs to military veterans, K9s For Warriors acknowledges the bill being signed into law as an encouraging step in the fight against veteran suicide:

"We commend the White House for supporting this bill as a critical step in combatting veteran suicide, and we're confident in the path ahead for Service Dogs ultimately becoming a covered VA benefit to veterans with PTSD," said Rory Diamond, CEO of K9s For Warriors. "In communicating with veterans and their healthcare providers, it's more imperative than ever to embrace the lifesaving impact of a Service Dog and to raise

awareness for this treatment option as a proven method for mitigating debilitating symptoms of PTSD and suicidal ideations."

The law will require the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to enact a five-year pilot program to provide dog training to eligible veterans diagnosed with PTSD. The law additionally will:

Designate eligible veterans to receive dog training instruction from nongovernmental accredited 501(c)(3) nonprofit Service Dog training organizations (i.e., K9s For Warriors)

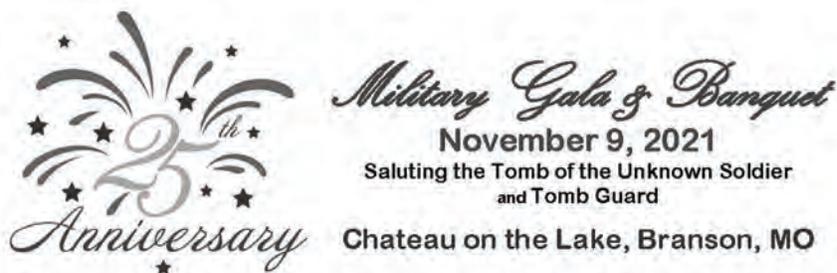
Allow eligible veterans to learn positive reinforcement training in skills that are unique to their own needs to help address or alleviate their PTSD symptoms

Provide veterans participating in the program with the opportunity to adopt a dog that they actively assisted in their training, provided that the veteran and their health provider determine it to be in the best interest of the veteran.

A 2021 VA study found that veterans with post-traumatic

stress who were paired with Service Dogs showed less suicidal ideation and more symptom improvement compared to veterans paired with an emotional support dog. Given that roughly 20 veterans die by suicide each day, the finding underscores the notion that properly trained Service Dogs can be instrumental in battling this public health crisis.

K9s For Warriors has long advocated for veterans experiencing PTSD symptoms to be eligible to receive a Service Dog under their VA benefits. While the implementation of this new law fails to establish that universal benefit, the pilot program is an integral first step in this becoming reality. The law also will mark a critical step forward in connecting veterans with nonprofit organizations equipped to train Service Dogs in performing specific tasks that mitigate symptoms of military-related trauma. Additionally, the law will support organizations (such as K9s For Warriors) that primarily receive their Service Dogs from high-kill shelters, a distinction that effectively saves two lives with every pairing between veteran and Service Dog.



**Cocktail Reception 5:00 pm**

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

**GALA tickets, \$55 each. Reservations required.**

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

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

# My Father's Wings

by Betsy Hays Gatti

*The replica "Gunnery Wings" my father Edwin Hays fashioned out of Nazi bullets at the last German prison camp where he was held at the very end of WWII.*



My father Edwin "Red" Walter Hays grew up an only child during the Great Depression in New Jersey, roaming the rivers and woods in search of birds, fish and game. He learned early from his father and uncles how to hunt, fish and climb trees, and became an expert on birds as a tender age. Dad gave up hunting in favor of photography in his forties but continued to be an avid fisherman and knowledgeable bird watcher for the rest of his life. Dad was always spotting interesting birds in the sky, especially hawks, and I often think he would have preferred to have wings, to be able to soar above the trials and tribulations of the world.

Over the last decade or so of my father's life, I thought I had heard most of his stories from his service as a U.S. Army Air Force B-17 "Flying Fortress" tail-gunner and subsequent war prisoner in three German POW "Luft" camps (camps reserved for the Allied air force prisoners): Stalag VI Heydekrug, Stalag IV Kiefheide and Stalag I Barth. Mind you, for almost 50 years he had been mostly close-mouthed about his war experiences, like millions of other WWII veterans. While I was growing up, occasionally he'd tell an amusing story, "Hogan's Heroes"-style, such as how the prisoners would cook up fake escape plans out of sheer boredom and to bait the guards, but he had spared my siblings and me the terrifying and brutal reality of flying bombing raids and his crash and subsequent 15 months as a POW.

Things changed on a February day in 1995 when my father received a call from Denmark from the now-grown farmer who as a 15-year-old boy had come to his aid when Dad's B-17 had crash-landed in a Danish field on its way back to England from a bombing raid over Poland and Germany. Two of his crewmates perished in the crash, Dad suffered a fractured skull and broken ankle, and their pilot had a lifetime of medical issues from

severe burns obtained while trying to save his mortally injured crewmates. This farmer, Johannes Ulrich, invited Dad to travel to Denmark for the 50th Anniversary of that country's liberation from German occupation.



*This photo of the stone monument in Oster Hoist, Denmark, where my father's B-17 crashed-landed, honors the crew of "Just Elmer's Tune" was taken in 1950 when the monument was dedicated by the DSK, the WWI Danish Underground organization. Two of the ten crew members of "Just Elmer's Tune" died in that crash after being fired upon by a ME 109 that also crashed nearby. The local Danes honor the crew and all war veterans each May for their Danish Liberation Day. As a Nazi-occupied country, the Danish people knew and bravely paid the price of freedom.*

~~~~~

So my father, along with his former crewmate and ball turret gunner, Bob Joyce, and Bob's son Gary all went, and were treated like royalty by the Danish veterans, officials and public, thus starting a long and meaningful

## wings, cont'd...

chapter of Dad's life that only ended with his death in early 2007. After this trip, Dad became involved with the local chapter of The American Ex-Prisoners of War organization, opened up about his experiences, and went to rap sessions with other former POWs. He dedicated his remaining years to public education and locating and working with Ex-POWs on obtaining benefits for them and their wives. He and many other Ex-POWs from the European and Pacific WWII fronts, along with a few Korean War and one Vietnam War former prisoners of war, worked tirelessly to "Help Others Who Cannot Help Themselves," which was their American Ex-POW's local chapter motto.



Along the way, interest in Dad's and other Ex-POWs' stories resulted in several newspaper articles, television interviews, an Academy-Award nominated documentary, two oral

histories and a few books recounting the story of Dad's service. Although he never returned to England, Dad always spoke fondly of being stationed in Horham with the 8th Air Force's 95th Bomb Group, and of the RAF prisoners he encountered in the prison camps, many of whom had endured years of captivity and unimaginable hardship. Dad became devoted to Denmark and the many people he met along the way during two subsequent trips back to that country, on one of which I and my husband accompanied my parents. While there, we visited the stone monument erected to the crew of "Just Elmer's Tune" in 1950, the Danish Underground Museum and the farmhouse where Dad's schoolboy rescuer took him on that day a half-century earlier.

He was honored by the Danish-American Society and by other organizations, including being inducted into his Ridgewood High School Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame, where he had been an outstanding athlete before graduating in 1942 and immediately enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Force. During his time in the service, he earned the rank of Staff Sergeant and obtained his Gunner's Wings and several other medals, including the Purple Heart, Air Medal with Oakleaf Cluster, New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal and Ex-POW Medal.

In addition to enduring starvation and mistreatment

in three different POW camps and 23 horrific days in boxcars being transferred between camps, he was subjected to a notoriously brutal march, the infamous "Heydekrug Run" (described in a documentary called "Behind the Wire," produced by the Eighth Air Force Historical Society), which was later classified as a war crime and investigated by a military tribunal during the Nuremberg War Crimes trials following the war. Ultimately, it was never prosecuted because the affected veterans didn't wish to return to Germany to testify.

In 1998, my parents, sister, niece and great-niece all traveled to Denmark, and due to the efforts of Johannes Ulrich's son Fritz, made a memorable side trip to Berlin, where they met with the former pilot of the German Messerschmidt ME 109 that had shot down Dad's B-17 on Feb. 24, 1944 on his 13th mission and, coincidentally, my mother's birthday. The two families exchanged polite if somewhat formal greetings, drove through Berlin and dined at this former German pilot's apartment. He and my father avoided discussing the worst aspects of their respective war experiences while connecting on a human-to-human level. Ironically, this pilot too had been a prisoner of war, of the Americans, after being shot down for the last time after many missions (German pilots were required to fly until they were killed, seriously injured or taken prisoner.) On 9/11, this

## wings, cont'd

German former fighter pilot and war time enemy placed the first phone call my parents received that day, expressing his dismay and condolences on our country's attack by foreign terrorists. We kept in touch until his death in 2019.

My father died after a short illness in 2007 at age 82, leaving my mother, myself and my two siblings, plus five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren to carry on and sort through his volumes of military books, correspondence, memorabilia, honors and photos, a lifetime's accumulation. My mother lived until early 2019, and since her death we have been distributing, reviewing and cataloguing all of their belongings. Recently on a visit back to the house, I looked down at a pile of photos and saw a pair of lead wings, mounted on a simple cardboard frame with the caption, "A pair of gunner's wings molded by Ed Hays from German bullets at Stalag Luft I, Barth, Germany, 1945". This stopped me in my tracks and struck me as something special. I took the wings home and attempted to research them, but could find nothing online or in Dad's documents. I knew from Dad that the prisoners in most camps had extraordinary capabilities: printing presses, radios, etc. but how he had come to a) obtain Nazi bullets while a prisoner and b) fashion a pair of gunner's wings out of them, I couldn't imagine. I knew from Dad's oral histories that Barth was his last of three prison camps, and had read all the articles and even gone to some of his talks, but somehow I had

missed the origin story of these wings.

As anyone who has outlived a loved one knows, one of the frequent pangs one experiences is not being able to simply ask the person a question like this. So unless another living veteran and Ex-POW or military historian can offer some insight into these "wings", I am left to conjecture. I can imagine that, at the end of over 15 months of imprisonment, deprivation and suffering, fashioning a pair of wings to match the ones he'd earned during his training gave him a sense of defiance of his captors and hope for the future, one that was by no means guaranteed. The specifics of how he managed to fashion them eludes me. Thankfully, it did eventually come to be that the Allied Forces prevailed, Dad and the other surviving European-held POWs were liberated, repatriated and came home to their loved ones and carried their physical and mental wounds for the rest of their days. One of over 95,000 POWs captured during WWII in Europe alone, my father weighed 90 pounds after liberation. He was 20 years old.

One of the worst aspects of being a POW is not being able to participate in your trained combat role anymore, of not knowing when or if you will be liberated, if your prison camp will be bombed by your own forces, and of course, if you will ever see your loved ones again. Any person who disparages the sacrifices of POWs is woefully ignorant of their bravery and resilience in the face of often unspeakable conditions. Thousands of those who served and were captured in WWII never got the chance to return to their

home countries. Dad was one of the lucky ones who survived, and we who benefitted immeasurably by that generation's willingness to sacrifice so much would best honor them by remembering that "freedom is not free" but has to be protected and cherished from those within and without who would destroy it. During these deeply troubled times in the United States and around the globe, I like to think Dad and his heroic crew are somehow watching us earthbound creatures who are struggling to find our own "wings" in order to elevate humanity to a more just, compassionate and peaceful world.



*The actual U.S. Aerial Gunner Badge (at top, center), which was only issued from 1943-1953, other medals received, and Prisoner of War medal*

## Replacing Military Medals

Medals awarded while in active service are issued by the individual military services if requested by veterans or their next of kin. Requests for replacement medals, decorations, and awards should be directed to the branch of the military in which the veteran served. However, for Air Force (including Army Air Corps) and Army veterans, the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) verifies awards and forwards requests and verification to appropriate services.

Requests for replacement medals should be submitted on Standard Form 180, "Request Pertaining To Military Records," which may be obtained at VA offices or the Internet at [www.va.gov/vaforms/](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/).

Forms, addresses, and other information on requesting medals can be found on the Military Personnel Records section of NPRC's Web site at [www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/index.html](http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/index.html). For questions, call Military Personnel Records at (314) 801-0800 or e-mail questions to: [MPR.center@nara.gov](mailto:MPR.center@nara.gov).

When requesting medals, type or clearly print the veteran's full name, include the veteran's branch of service, service number or Social Security number and provide the veteran's exact or approximate dates of military service.

The request must contain the signature of the veteran or next of kin if the veteran is deceased. If available, include a copy of the discharge or separation document, WDAGO Form 53-55 or DD Form 214.

Wreaths Across America is so pleased to once again join in partnership with the American Ex-prisoners of War to raise awareness for the mission to Remember the fallen, Honor those that serve and their families, and Teach the next generation the value of freedom, and raise sponsorship funds to help support the placement of veterans' wreaths at Andersonville National Historic Site.



I am often heard saying 'it would be disingenuous to say that we remember, honor and teach, and not support others that do the same.' The work American Ex-Prisoners of War is doing to advocate for former prisoners of war, and their families, is so important and the stories of these veterans need to be told so that our children learn what true sacrifice is and the understand the character of those willing to make these sacrifices.

Although Wreaths Across America is most known for placing wreaths on veterans graves during the holidays, our year-round mission is an opportunity for communities to come together to reconnect and share the comfort that that brings. Common ground is found in our respect and love for those who fought for our freedom. Common ground strengthens communities.

I encourage you to come together to support the efforts of American Ex-Prisoners of War and to join them on National Wreaths Across America Day this year – Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021.

Remember. Honor. Teach.

Karen Worcester  
Executive Director  
Wreaths Across America



# WREATHS *across* AMERICA

## Wreath Sponsorship Form

Sponsored wreaths are placed on grave markers at state and national veterans' cemeteries, as well as at local, community cemeteries each December.

Wreaths may also be sponsored online at [www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org](http://www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org). If you wish to make your sponsorship with a credit card, please visit our website for a secure online transaction.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:  
**Wreaths Across America**  
PO Box 249  
Columbia Falls, ME 04623

Call 877-385-9504 with any questions.  
*Thank you for your sponsorship and joining us in our mission to Remember, Honor and Teach!*

| Sponsorship Type                                                                                                                                                                              |            |                    |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------------|--|
| <b>Individual</b> = 1 Wreath                                                                                                                                                                  |            |                    |  |
| <b>Mailed "In Honor" card</b> = If you wish to send a physical honor card telling someone of your sponsorship, please see "In Honor" section below. The \$2 fee is required for this mailing. | \$2.00     |                    |  |
| <b>Family</b> = 4 Wreaths                                                                                                                                                                     | \$60.00    |                    |  |
| <b>Small Business</b> = 10 Wreaths                                                                                                                                                            | \$150.00   |                    |  |
| <b>Corporate</b> = 100 Wreaths                                                                                                                                                                | \$1,500.00 |                    |  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                               |            | <b>Grand Total</b> |  |

**\*GRAVE SPECIFIC REQUESTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED ON THIS FORM\***

**In Honor of:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*Below, please provide email or mailing address of "In Honor of" recipient so we can notify them of your sponsorship in their honor. If you have a specific message please write it on the back of this sheet.*

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

**In Memory of:**

\_\_\_\_\_

*This name will be listed on our online memory wall. Below, please provide name, rank, branch of service and state resided.*

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rank: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_

Please note, **ALL** sponsored wreaths are shipped directly to the location and **NO** wreaths are sent to the individuals purchasing sponsorships.

Location ID: 3171-Andersonville National Historic Site Fundraising Group ID: 165786-AEPW

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**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Cash: \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
Total No. Checks: \_\_\_\_\_ Reconciled: \_\_\_\_\_  
MO: \_\_\_\_\_  
Entered: \_\_\_\_\_

GEN: \_\_\_\_\_

# **'NEVER FORGOTTEN' - THE TAIWAN POWS' STORY**



After 24 years of research and more than three years in production, we are happy to introduce the long-awaited book by Society director, Michael Hurst MBE, titled –

## ***Never Forgotten. . .***

### ***The story of the Japanese Prisoner of War Camps in Taiwan during World War II***

'NEVER FORGOTTEN' tells the story of the Japanese prisoner of war camps on the island of Taiwan (Formosa) in the Second World War. It is the only book ever written that provides the complete story of all the Taiwan camps and the men who were interned in them from beginning to end.

#### **Description:**

Softcover Book: 23.5 cm x 16.5 cm (9 1/2 x 6 1/2 inch) format, with cover photo featuring the sculpture of the two POWs in the *Taiwan Prisoner of War Memorial Park* in Jinguashi, Taiwan. The book contains 620 pages of text and is lavishly illustrated with 850 photos, artwork and ephemera (many in color). Printed on high-quality glossy paper, they visually enhance this epic saga making its 32 chapters and appendices come alive for the reader.

#### **Summary:**

This highly researched history of the little-known Japanese POW camps on Taiwan in World War II traces the story of the allied soldiers, sailors and airmen - primarily British, American, Australian and Dutch - who were taken captive by the Japanese in Hong Kong, Malaya, Singapore, the Dutch East Indies and the Philippines and sent to Taiwan to do forced labour for their war effort. It features the accounts of former Taiwan prisoners of war through numerous interviews, the collection of materials supplied by them and their families, and thousands of hours spent poring over their diaries and letters, as well as other material from war records, regimental diaries and archives. It is their story, told in their words from what they have shared with the author and that which was discovered during 24 years of research. This is a must read for anyone interested in the history of World War II and the prisoners of war in the Far East.

The book is available directly from the **Taiwan POW Camps Memorial Society**. For more details and information on how to obtain a copy, kindly click on 'THE BOOK' page in the menu on the society's website at - [www.powtaiwan.org](http://www.powtaiwan.org). Full details as to cost, shipping and payment are outlined. You may also refer to the readers' comments listed below the purchase instructions.

This book is not only a valuable historical reference work but, more importantly, it is also the saga of men who triumphed over great adversity and who surely deserve a place in the annals of World War II history and should not be forgotten.

**We Will Remember Them!**

# new members

Daniel Hoffmann  
Scottsdale AZ  
Son of Edward I Hoffmann,  
PAC

Joseph Paul Dewoody  
Ft Worth TX  
Descendant of Revolutionary  
War POWs



National Headquarters  
PO Box 3445  
Arlington, TX 76007-3445  
(817)-649-2979  
axpow76010@yahoo.com

## Welcome!

## Request for membership application American Ex-Prisoners of War

Name:  
Address:  
City:  
State/Zip:

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

DO NOT send dues with this request for an application.

Mail to: American Ex-Prisoners of War PO Box 3445 Arlington, TX 76007-3445 (817) 649-2979  
email: HQ@axpow.org



## 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

## Certificate of Captivity

### \$25.00

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 theatre of operation. We will need your name, service number, branch of service, unit when captured, POW number (if known), camp names and locations. You may also include a picture with your order. To receive this certificate from AXPOW, please order from National Headquarters by calling 817-649-2979 or email: axpow76010@yahoo.com.

## The Meaningful Gift

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

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

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

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

Your generous support of our programs over the years has made a tremendous difference to ex-POWs and their families. Please take a few minutes of your time to help ensure our future. And feel free to contact CFO Marsha Coke at [axpow76010@yahoo.com](mailto:axpow76010@yahoo.com), or CEO Cheryl Cerbone at [axpowceo@comcast.net](mailto:axpowceo@comcast.net). Phone #817-649-2979.

## Thank You!

## Contributions



please send donations to:

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

### GENERAL FUND

Remembering the NamPOWs we met at AXPOW, by the Laznibats, Civilian Internees

Jack Pederson, Lakewood CO

In honor of Cheryl Cerbone, by Friends on Facebook

In honor of Norman & Darlene Rosholt, by Ben Rosholt & Meghan Coker

In memory of Florence Bernstein, by Bob & Phyllis Bernstein

In memory of Julie Gunn Bonanno, by Lisa Bonanno

In memory of Michael Mittsdorffer, by Barbara Miller

In memory of Paul L Letendre, by Neal Letendre

In memory of Valerie Shulman, by Andrea Lesser

In memory of Wm "Bill" Harrington, by Judy Hasenjager

### VOLUNTARY FUNDING

Remembering the hard work done for AXPOW's Chapter 49ers and the Cadwalladers, by the Laznibat Family

C Norman Gustafson, Scotch Plains NJ

Jeanne Breese, Sun City West AZ

Dee Stone, Fairview TX

Robert Smith, Tomahawk WI

### BULLETIN

Enoch (Nick) Scull



# taps



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

BASNIK, GILBERT B., of Glenview, IL passed away Aug. 5, 2021. He was 95. During WWII, he served with the 106th Inf. Div. He was captured during the Battle of the Bulge, and held in a POW camp in Zeitz, Germany. In April 1945 he escaped, reaching American lines to discover that he had stumbled upon his brother's unit. He was reunited with his brother Bill twenty minutes later. Gil was preceded in death by his first wife, Ethel; he is survived by his second wife, Ellie; 4 daughters, 9 grandchildren, and 2 great-granddaughters.

BRIGHTMAN, ROGER A., age 88, of Apache Junction, AZ died Sept. 10, 2019. He served with the 2nd Div., 38th Inf. during the Korean War; he was captured and held in "The Death House". He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Elizabeth, 3 sons, 1 daughter, 8 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren and 13 great-great-grandchildren.

BOURESSA, ROBERT DONALD, 97, of Citrus Heights, CA passed away November 1, 2020. He was captured in France while serving in the Army during WWII; he was held in Stalags 3A and 11A until liberation. Robert was an active life member of AXPOW and the VFW, taking part in local events and parades. Survivors include his wife of 75 years, LaVonne, 2 daughters, 1 son and 7

grandchildren. He will be dearly missed.

BUZBEE, ANNIE JEWEL TURNER, 81, of Ruskin, AZ passed away May 31, 2021. She was a wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and a friend to everyone. Annie was a seamstress, making clothes for her children, uniforms for the school, costumes for the church and school for their productions. She was preceded in death by her husband Lawrence (Bobby); she is survived by 2 sons, 3 daughters, 8 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, 2 sisters and a host of friends.

DeWILDE, EMMA S. 95, died June 1, 2021. She was the widow of M/Sgt Paul E. Reiss (USA, POW Korea 1950) and Jacob C DeWilde. Emma was an active member of the Liberty Bell Chapter, AXPOW. She leaves 1 son, 1 daughter, 1 granddaughter, 2 great-grandsons and many nieces and nephews. She will be missed by family and friends.

GARRIDO, BENJAMIN B., age 73, passed away Aug. 8, 2021 in Bullhead City, Arizona. He was born on September 24, 1947 in Guam, USA. Ben served with the U.S. Army from 1963 to 1995. He was a highly-decorated Sgt. 1st Class E7. Ben had a love for life

and family! He so enjoyed Karaoke, dancing, casinos and all that goes with that, anything Elvis, playing cards and spending time with family and friends. He was dedicated and supportive in all that he did. He tirelessly worked with fellow veterans after his retirement from military service as a National Service Officer. He was a Special Liaison for Military and Veterans Organizations. Ben also served on the Board of Directors of the AXPOW for many years. He is survived by his wife, Nancy, 2 sons, 2 daughters, 10 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and many family members and friends from Southern California, Guam, and Arizona.

HURON, HORACE, of San Antonio, TX passed away Jan. 19, 2021 at the age of 98. During WWII, he was assigned to the 390th BG, 570th BS. He was shot down and captured over Hamm, Germany along with 8 other crew members. He was held at Stalag 17B until liberation. He is survived by his wife of 77 years, Laura, 4 daughters, 3 sons, numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

KRENZ, DARRYL "DJ", of McFarland, WI died Sept. 3, 2021. He was 90. Darrell was stationed

## taps, cont'd...

in Southern Japan on Occupation duty assigned to Company L, 34th Inf. Reg., 24th Div. He was sent to South Korea in the first weeks of the Korean War when the North invaded the South; he was captured near Taejon and held for 37 months. Today less than 29 imprisoned with Darrell are still among the living. They are called Tiger Survivors.

REESE, VIE T., age 99, passed away June 30, 2021. She was predeceased by her husband of 67 years, Ex-POW Robert J. Reese. Vie is survived by 3 children and their spouses, 7 grandchildren and their spouses, and 5 great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. She was deeply loved and greatly missed.

SCULL, ENOCH "NICK", of Plano/Sandwich IL died July 19, 2021, 3 weeks shy of his 97th birthday. Nick was captured while serving with the 28th Inf. Div, 103rd Combat Engineer Btn. in the Battle of the Bulge and he was held until liberation. Nick was an active member of AXPOW and the longest-serving member of the Plano American Legion Post 7395 (74 years). He leaves his wife of 66 years, Patricia, 3 children, 14 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

STARK, LAWRENCE J., of Bethesda, MD passed away Aug. 4, 2021 at the age of 86. He was captured in Vietnam while working as a Navy Defense contractor. He spent five years as a POW in North Vietnam from February 1968 to March 1973. Larry dedicated his life's work to

continue to champion for the POW's and MIA's in Vietnam. He was the beloved husband of Pilar San Jose-Stark; he also leaves 2 sisters, 1 brother, nieces, 3 stepchildren and their families.

### SUSINO, LILLIAN BODNER



of East Amwell Township, New Jersey, passed away August 3, 2021 at the age of 95. She was the widow of National Commander Charles Susino, Jr. Her many hobbies included visiting New York City, watching American Ninja Warriors, and voraciously reading (especially 1940's love stories), Lillian also was an amazing crocheter, and did so for many years. She made many afghans, but her heart was really into making baby blankets, sweaters and hats for her grandchildren, great grandchildren, family, and friends. Music was an integral part of Lillian's world and she played the piano since she was a child. She even taught piano over the years to the neighborhood children to help the family make ends meet. Many children in the Menlo Park Terrace, NJ area benefitted from her caring and thoughtful teaching techniques. She was even playing piano until a few weeks ago, as music had the ability to allow her heart to be close to her dear Charlie. Lillian leaves her

children Diane and her husband, Ted Harrington III and Charles Anthony and his wife, Debra Steitz; her grandchildren, Ted Harrington IV and his wife, Bethann, Scott and his wife, Kerry Harrington, Nicholas and his wife, Maegan Harrington, Jeffrey Harrington, Jeanette and her husband, Richard DeNunzio, and Dana and her husband, Steve Kiess; her great grandchildren, Derek, Hanna, Eva, T.J., Max, Sofia, Violet, Dominic, Leo, and Alyssa; her grandson's faithful companion, a Doberman named Ruby, whose affection for Lillian was unmatched; several extended family members; and many dear friends. She loved the AX-POW organization and everyone she met. She has been reunited with Dad.

TAYLOR, MILDRED GOOD, descendant of one of the original pioneer families that settled north Texas, passed away May 4, 2021. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, she worked at the FBI in Washington DC as an artist, drawing sketches of suspected spies from witness descriptions. She was a life member of Art Students League of New York, a charter member of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, the Optimist Club of Fort Worth and the First Baptist Church of Arlington, Texas.

She was preceded in death by her husband, EX-POW Robert P Taylor. She is survived by 1 son and his family, 4 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren.

WILLCOX, PUETT LaFAYETTE, JR., of Longview, TX died Aug. 21, 2021. He was the last Commander of the East Texas Chapter, AXPOW. During WWII, he served with the AAC, flying B-24s out of Italy. He was shot

## taps, cont'd...

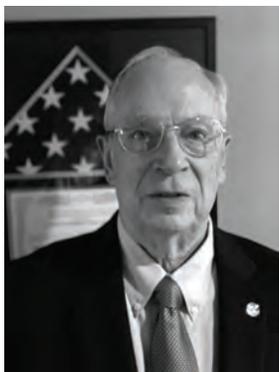
down over Austria, captured, and held in Stalag Luft IV. He was held 1 year until liberation. He married his high school sweetheart, Doris Jean and they had three children. Survivors include his children and their spouses, 1 brother, 6

grandchildren, great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

WITHERSPOON, E.D., of Gadsden, AL, passed away July 21, 2021. He was 96 years old. During WWII, he served in the 15th AF, 451st BG, 727th BS, mostly out of Castelluccia,

Italy. He was shot down and captured while on a mission over Ploesti and he was held in Stalag Luft IV, then marched across Germany. He was preceded in death by his wife, Nora; he leaves 1 daughter, 3 sons, 4 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren and 1 brother.

## Chaplain



Keith Lewis  
2205 Overbrook Drive  
Jasper, AL 35504  
(205)275-9035  
zpadre@icloud.com

This has been a month filled with disasters. Twenty years ago, September 11, 2001, the Twin Towers and the Pentagon were bombed and set ablaze by a Kamikaze attack. This was a wakeup call for America. This year we are experiencing devastation from Hurricane IDA. Also, I saw on television that the Afghanistan soldiers raised their flag like the US Marines raised OUR flag over Mt. Suribachi, mocking our great accomplishment in World

War II in the Pacific. Finally, we have shamefully left behind our military members in Afghanistan. At least the Viet Nam POWs were repatriated!!!

All of this, especially leaving behind our military, has given flashbacks of my military experience of the Viet Nam war. I have been diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder but am able to manage with prayer and sharing with others. Now, I am upset and angry plus having an extremely hard time sleeping. This will pass with more sharing and prayer (many others are praying for me).

I've read many articles on the VA website. They have many suggestions and practices helping veterans to recover from – drug addiction, alcohol addiction, depression, suicide, nightmares and PTSD. The VA has come a long way helping veterans in many ways and they are very effective.

Stay connected with family, friends, and those you have served with from your association while in the military. Some suggestions I have used and/or suggested are: keep talking – share your

experiences, keep helping – volunteer, call, visit, email, face time your buddies, get help, get counseling (if needed), join a support group, and avoid negative thinking.

I have been reading even more scripture lately. I have just finished the book of Job. Job was devastated from the very beginning with many catastrophes. He lost everything. He wanted to ask God WHY! When GOD met with him, Job understood. Job said in verse 42:5 "My ears have heard of You, but now I have seen you with my own eyes."

With prayer, reading and meditation we too can come to a more peaceful understanding.

G. B. U.

*Keith*

Ch, Col, Keith H. Lewis, USAF, (ret)





American Ex-Prisoners of War  
**MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION**  
 To honor a loved one or a former member  
 (Donations are tax-deductible to the extent of the law)



Please feel free to make copies of this form and use when making donations

IN MEMORY OF:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Death \_\_\_\_\_

GIVEN BY:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code

To be contributed to the \_\_\_\_\_ Fund

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO THE SENT TO:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Address

\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip Code

Contributions should be sent to:  
 American Ex-Prisoners of War  
 PO Box 3445  
 Arlington, Texas 76007-3445

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



## AXPOW Website Biography [www.axpow.org](http://www.axpow.org)

If you are not a current member of AXPOW, you must submit documentation of your POW status.

If you are requesting a biography for a family member, please include your contact information.

Contact person\_\_\_\_\_

Email/Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Nickname\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

Conflict and Theater of Operation\_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service Unit\_\_\_\_\_

Where were you captured? Date captured\_\_\_\_\_

POW camps you were held in\_\_\_\_\_

How long were you a POW? Date liberated\_\_\_\_\_

Medals received\_\_\_\_\_

Job in the military\_\_\_\_\_

After the war\_\_\_\_\_

Submit 1 or 2 photographs (color or black and white).

Biography: please type or print.

SEND TO: American Ex-Prisoners of War

PO Box 3445

Arlington, TX 76007-3445

If you have any questions, please contact John Skelly, Webmaster,  
[jj5kels@hotmail.com](mailto:jj5kels@hotmail.com)

# 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

Name  
Address  
City/State/Zip  
Phone #

Please make checks payable to American Ex-Prisoners of War - Voluntary Funding  
Mail contributions to: National Headquarters, American Ex-Prisoners of War  
PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445



JEFFERSON BARRACKS POW-MIA MUSEUM  
JEFFERSON BARRACKS POW-MIA MUSEUM

*N is for Never Forget* is a child -friendly book that takes readers on a compelling journey through wartime history. Poignant illustrations and stories capture key people, concepts, and memorials to help readers understand and honor the sacrifices endured by men and women prisoners of war and missing in action on behalf of freedom .

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