

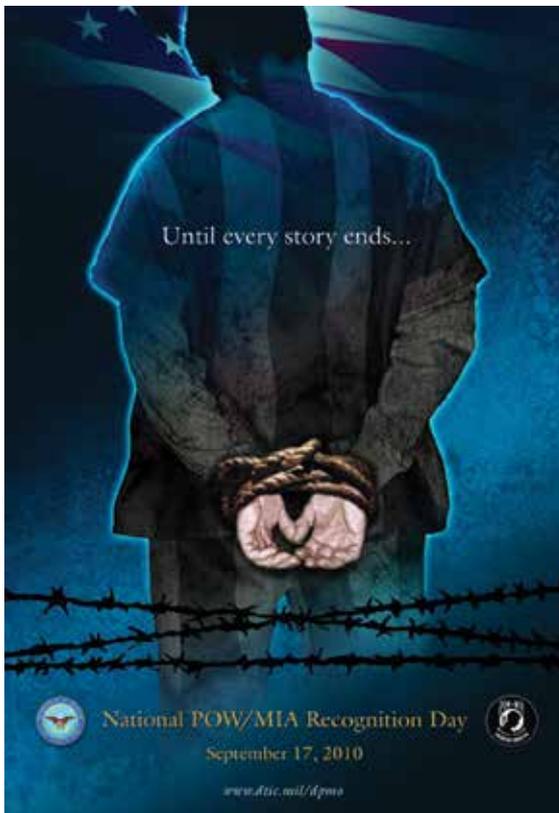
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Until every story ends...



National POW/MIA Recognition Day

September 17, 2010

www.dtic.mil/dpma



Illinois Soldiers Still Wait

Illinois POW/MIAs

WWII	1510
Korean War	417
Vietnam War	60

Rolling Thunder® Mission Statement
 "To Correct The Past and Protect The Future"

Rolling Thunder Inc.'s major function is to publicize the POW/MIA issue. To educate the public of the fact that many American prisoners of war were left behind after all past wars. To help correct the past and to protect future Veterans from being left behind should they become Prisoners of War/Missing in Action. We are committed to helping Disabled Veterans from All Wars.

**I KNEW I COULD FIGHT,
I HOPED I WOULDN'T DIE,
I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD STILL
BE HERE AFTER EVERYONE ELSE
HAS GONE HOME**

Above from a plaque at the National Vietnam Veterans
 Art Museum, Chicago, IL.

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Gold Star Pin



Just a tiny gold pin. A token from this country in return for the life given for our freedom. This pin is sent to the widow, parents and other next of kin of a military person killed in action or serving during a military conflict.

It began with WWI, from April 6, 1917 to March 3, 1921; WWII, from September 8, 1939 to July 25, 1947; Korea, from June 27, 1950 to July 27, 1954; military conflict from June 30, 1958 'till the Vietnam War July 1, 1958 to the present.

What is a Gold Star Mother?

What is a Gold Star Mother?

A Mother whose grieving heart reaches out to comfort another.

A Mother who feels compassion when casualty lists are read.

A Mother who suffered the heartache of hearing her son was dead.

A Mother whose dreams were shattered on a battlefield afar.

A Mother who has the privilege of wearing the little gold star.

A Mother who walks so bravely to a fallen hero's grave.

A Mother who loves the nation her son gave his life to save.

This is a Gold Star Mother —

A Mother with courage and pride, whose son went forth to battle and in line of duty died.

Author unknown



A Mother's Plea

*Please Mr. President,
I ask of you today,
Go to South East Asia,
And bring my boy home to stay.
It's been years of broken promises,
It's been torture day and night,
I want my boy dead or alive,
I beg you "Hear my plight."
And you my friends and neighbors,
Believe in my young son.
He went and served his country,
And the war was never won.
I ask you all to listen,
And heed this mother's plea.
Stand up and fight for freedom,
Of our sons across the sea.
A mother's love is strong and true,
But it's really getting late,
To save this precious son of mine,
Please help me learn his fate.*

Becky Coit

Most Decorated American Dies

Retired Army colonel Robert L. Howard died of pancreatic cancer in Waco, Texas, on Dec. 23. He was 70. Howard, the only modern war veteran recommended for the Medal of Honor three times, was regarded as the most decorated soldier of the Vietnam War. He received the Medal of Honor in 1971 for a daring December 1968 rescue of a fellow Green Beret under harrowing circumstances.



Also the recipient of two Distinguished Service Crosses, the Silver Star and four Bronze Stars for valor, Howard received eight Purple Hearts and was wounded 14 times during his five tours in Vietnam that began in 1965.

The native Alabamian joined the Army at age 17 in 1956, starting with the 101st Airborne Division. The act for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor also earned him a battlefield commission. His 36-year Army career ended in 1992. From then until 2006, he served as a VA counselor, making five trips to Iraq to provide inspiration to the troops. Howard was buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

"It is the Soldier"

***It is the soldier,
not the reporter
Who has given us
freedom of press.***

***It is the soldier,
not the poet
Who has given us
freedom of speech.***

***It is the soldier,
not the campus organizer
Who has given us the
freedom to demonstrate.***

***It is the soldier,
not the lawyer
Who has given us
the right to a fair trial.***



***It is the soldier
Who salutes the flag,
Who serves under the flag,
Whose coffin is draped in the flag,
Who allows the protester to burn
the flag.***

- Charles M. Province

Brad Braughton's 40-Year Shadow

A soldier's gift to his high school still inspires

BY GARY L. KNEPP

Amelia High School Athletic Director Tom Jones read the letter from 1966 graduate Brad Braughton. He was surprised—stunned actually—by the letter's content. By the time he had finished reading it, he was crying his eyes out. Jones immediately took the letter to Principal Vince Gilley. Both men knew Brad well. Braughton had lettered in football and volleyball. He was chosen as the "friendliest boy" by his classmates and was selected as Prom King. But neither man knew the depth of Braughton's devotion to his school until they read his letter.

Sergeant Braughton, now a squad leader with the 101st Airborne Division, had informed Jones in his letter that he was naming the Amelia High School Athletic Fund as the beneficiary of his \$10,000 government insurance policy. In his letter dated October 17, 1967—he asked Jones to excuse his poor handwriting because he was "scared shitless"—Braughton wrote:



Brad Braughton, 1966

Things are getting a little hot over here...I've seen a lot of guys die here and quite a few were good friends...It's a lot different over here than when I was in high school. I mean I used to think football games were rough but dam I'd give almost anything to be back in high school...Some of the seniors had better realize that in a year or less they might be here in my place dodging bullets instead of going out every weekend.

I sure hope that I have good luck for the next 9 months—if not the school can buy some new uniforms or something.

That weekend Brad's former football team, the Amelia Barons, was laying their cross-town rivals, the Goshen Warriors. Things weren't going well. The Warriors had a big lead at halftime when they went into the locker room, and the Barons players expected a "in your face" chewing out.

Instead, Coach Frank Conyers closed the locker room door and began reading Braughton's letter to the team. It was dead quiet as motion filled the room. Years later, team member Archie Wilson remembered the evening well: "That letter was a real eye opener. All of us knew guys going into the service, but it didn't mean a lot until we heard Brad's letter. The war in Vietnam became real to us. It meant a lot that he wrote to us with everything he had to deal with over there. The letter really pumped us up."

The Barons stormed back from the halftime deficit to win a

smashing victory, spoiling Goshen's homecoming. It wasn't the last time Brad Braughton would inspire others.

When Braughton graduated in 1966, Amelia, Ohio, located 12 miles east of Cincinnati, was a traditional American community with a long heritage of military service. It was only natural that the patriotic young man would enlist in the Army. He left for Fort Knox from the Old Armory Building in the Clermont County seat, Batavia. He sailed through basic until he was confronted by the gas chamber. He wrote to his parents about it in August 1966:

I'm not kidding it was so bad that it seems like you are going to die. Your eyes burn like hot peppers, your skin burns! I vomited so much that I didn't think I had any insides left. It was pure hell.

While undergoing training as a mortar man at Fort Gordon, Ga., Braughton was summoned by his captain. He wrote that he was "scared to death" when he was called into the captain's office, but instead of a dressing down, he was motioned to take a seat and was invited to attend Officer Candidate School. While honored, Braughton turned the captain down, explaining that he wanted to stay with his platoon.

Three months later, he volunteered for jump school at Fort Bragg. Despite his natural athleticism, jump school was no picnic for Braughton. He wrote his family:

Well I'm here and boy is it shit. They beat the crap out of us as far as exertion is considered. I already feel like I've been here a month.

Braughton finally arrived in Vietnam aboard USNS *General Weigel* at Cam Ranh Bay on October 22, 1967, as a member of the Curahes, the "Stand Alone Battalion" of the 506th Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division. Red Cross Donut Dollies greeted them with refreshments before they were convoyed by truck to their base camp at Eagle's Roost.

Braughton's first impression of Vietnam was that it was wet:

It's not real bad here in the South, but is sure raining here. The only thing I hate is being wet. I don't think I've been dry any longer than a 10 hour period since we've been here.

Braughton was promoted to sergeant, and the responsibilities of leadership began weighing heavily upon him. He wrote that his men thought of him as "a god or something":

We get into a fire fight, they look at me and say "what now sarge?" I've been lucky so far and only lost four men.



HOMETOWN HERO Always looking to get a laugh, Brad Braughton had his picture taken posing as a machine gunner on a Huey, even though he was strictly a "ground pounder." Few of his friends back home in Amelia, Ohio, had any idea how devoted Braughton was to his high school football team.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JESSIE SMITH

In the middle of January 1968, Braughton's battalion moved to LZ Betty, near Phan Thiet, to provide security for engineers working on Highway 1. It was good duty. Braughton had plenty of time to sleep and swim, but his nose was constantly sunburned. "It's peeled so many times I don't know where all the skin is coming from," he wrote to friends.

On January 30, Braughton was out on a night patrol with his company when a trooper was killed in a Viet Cong attack. It had been a very rough night, and the next morning a haggard Braughton inspected the dead trooper's pistol. He handed the .45 over to Sergeant Mike Herrington, who hadn't noticed that Braughton had put the clip back into the pistol.

As the two friends stood there talking, the pistol suddenly discharged. The slug tore through Braughton's stomach. Forty-five minutes later, cradled in Herrington's arms on board a dustoff en route to the hospital, Brad Braughton died. A distraught Herrington blamed himself for Braughton's death, but a subsequent investigation ruled the shooting an accident.

Brad Braughton was the first soldier from Amelia to be killed in Vietnam. The grief for this beloved son was palpable. For Braughton's family, the next few weeks were a blur as friends, neighbors and family converged on their modest home. Braughton, who was posthumously awarded a Purple Heart, was buried with full military honors.

The town's grief turned into awe and great pride when Braughton's generous gift to his old football team became known to the community. Braughton had suggested that Amelia High School buy new football uniforms, but Principal Gilley wanted to make sure that the young man's gift would be spent on something more permanent, assuring the community "that it would be something that will stand."

Amelia High School created the Brad Braughton Memorial Foundation, made up of students, teachers and community members, to figure out what to do with the \$10,000. After consultation with the community, the foundation decided to refurbish the stadium where young Braughton had played football. It planned to add a set of bleachers, a press box, a fence and possibly a new track.

The project's cost was larger than Braughton's gift, so the foundation started a fundraising drive to buy materials, and community members across Amelia stepped up to help with the labor. Amelia High School Athletic Director Tom Jones spent every spare moment he had on the construction project. The father of one of Braughton's friends volunteered to build a brick memorial to honor Braughton. Amelia athletic booster member Charles Ludlow took his vacation time to work on it.

Even with all the effort, however, in the fall of 1968, it appeared they couldn't finish up everything in time for the Barons' first home game. That's when more than 100 students, including Braughton's former teammate Archie Wilson, stepped forward to finish off the job and stain the bleachers.

The night of the stadium dedication ceremony, October 25, 1968, was cold and rainy. A student reporter noted "tears as well as drops of rain fell" that night. Braughton's sister, Debbie, remembers the excitement: "It was electric. When the name Brad Braughton Fie was read I swelled up with pride. I'll never forget that night."

Four decades later, the short life of Brad Braughton still inspires his community. In 2002 he was inducted into the Amelia Spot Hall of Fame, and students from his high school produced a powerful documentary of his life. Today, the Grant Career Center High School in nearby Bethel offers a class titled "The Brad Braughton Story." A local professional fundraiser invokes Braughton's example to inspire others to pre-plan gifts to charities.

Braughton's sister remains amazed by all of the honors and recognitions her brother has received in the last 40 years. More than that, she is proud that her big brother continues to inspire others. "He is still my hero." ☆

6 decades later, soldier killed in Korea is buried

By Jeff Long
TRIBUNE REPORTER

Nearly 60 years after the Chinese overran his division's position in North Korea, the remains of a Palatine Army corporal were laid to rest Monday next to his mother and father.

Three rifle shots echoed across the sun-swept graveyard at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Cemetery in Palatine. As the last notes of taps faded, a soldier presented an American flag to the brother and sister of Stanley Arendt.

"These three rounds represent duty, honor, country," the soldier told Dorothy Stewart, 83, of Sun City, Ariz., and her brother, Jim Arendt, 64, of Naperville.

Their brother was captured on Nov. 2, 1950, and executed in a farm field two weeks later. But his family never learned his fate until a recent call from Army officials told them his remains had been found. Teeth and parts of leg bone were confirmed through DNA.

"He was missing for a while," Stewart said after the ceremony. "Then we heard he was a prisoner. And then we just never heard anything."

Her mother, Frances Arendt, died six years ago and is buried next to her husband, also named Stanley. Now, the long-missing son has come home to join them.

The family had the option



Staff Sgt. Chad Vertz presents a flag Monday to Dorothy Stewart, sister of Cpl. Stanley Arendt, who died in the Korean War. DAVE SHIELDS/PHOTO FOR THE TRIBUNE

of a burial at Arlington National Cemetery, but knew this was where he belonged.

"She still had hopes, she still had dreams of him coming home," Stewart said of her mother.

Cpl. Arendt was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, which was stationed near Unsan on Nov. 1, 1950, when two Chinese divisions struck.

An article about the battle by Richard W. Stewart for the U.S. Army Center of Military History describes it this way:

"Thousands of Chinese had attacked from the north, northwest and west against scattered U.S. and South Korean (Republic of Korea or ROK) units moving deep into North Korea.



Arendt

The Chinese seemed to come out of nowhere as they swarmed around the flanks and over the defensive positions of the surprised United Nations troops."

Arendt was captured the next day, along with nine other soldiers, officials later learned.

After the brief memorial service, Jed Patterson remembered being a 20-year-old infantryman with Company I during those hectic days. He never knew Arendt, but felt a duty to attend the service.

"When that happened, it started a whole new war," said Patterson, 80, of Villa Park. "It took us a couple days to walk out. The only thing that kept them off us was our Air Force."

jjlong@tribune.com

History of the National League of POW/MIA Families' POW/MIA Flag

In 1971, Mrs. Michael Hoff, an MIA wife and member of the National League of Families, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida Times-Union, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice President of Annin & Company which had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the People's Republic of China, as a part of their policy to provide flags to all United Nations members states. Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he, along with Annin's advertising agency, designed a flag to represent our missing men. Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution.

On March 9, 1989, an official League flag, which flew over the White House on 1988 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, was installed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda as a result of legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th Congress. In a demonstration of bipartisan Congressional support, the leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony.

The League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever displayed in the U.S. Capitol Rotunda where it will stand as a powerful symbol of national commitment to America's POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting has been achieved for U.S. personnel still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

On August 10, 1990, the 101st Congress passed U.S. Public Law 101-355, which recognized the League's POW/MIA flag and designated it *"as the symbol of our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation"*.

The importance of the League's POW/MIA flag lies in its continued visibility, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIAs. Other than "Old Glory", the League's POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever to fly over the White House, having been displayed in this place of honor on National POW/MIA Recognition Day since 1982. With passage of Section 1082 of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act during the first term of the 105th Congress, the League's POW/MIA flag will fly each year on Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day and Veterans Day on the grounds or in the public lobbies of major military installations as designated by the Secretary of the Defense, all Federal national cemeteries, the national Korean War Veterans Memorial, the National Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the White House, the United States Postal Service post offices and at the official offices of the Secretaries of State, Defense and Veteran's Affairs, and Director of the Selective Service System.

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For more information visit www.pow-miafamilies.org



Rolling Thunder

by Marsha Burks Megehee

**A thundering vigil of truth, trust and honor
Of brothers chained, forgotten and denied
Thank God the sounds of Rolling Thunder
Grow louder than the presidents who lied.**

**Forgotten heroes, made to be remembered
By a nation that sacrificed their souls to war
This roaring fire of freedom, from just an ember
A brother's promise - brought from near and far.**

**A parade of truth, Memorial Bridge is sighted
Old Glory's promise flying in the wind
Tattooed Angels, CEO's, GI Joes united
Cry "Freedom! We have not forgotten them!"**

**The Run to The Wall where many secrets slumber
Names, roses, gifts and loved one's tears
On Capitol Hill they're only just a number
Lost names no politician ever hears.**

**They thunder past the bridge at Arlington
Phantom soldier coffins, row on row
False tombs holding paper fathers, sons
While secret sins of betrayal rest below.**

**Past the White House, flag of POW/MIAs
Somber Black, head bowed, a prisoner of the past
Rolling Thunder's promise will never go away
Until their missing brothers - come home at last. . .**

youngvets in focus

Guard Member Took Service From Public Office to Overseas

Kansas lawmaker Melanie Meier resigned her state representative post to deploy to Iraq. **By Kelly Von Lunen**

While Kansas State Rep. Melanie Meier was serving her fellow citizens in spring 2009 through her work in office, she was called up to serve in another capacity—as Lt. Col. Melanie Meier. She answered the call and left for Balad, Iraq, with the Kansas Army National Guard's 304th Sustainment Brigade.

When the 42-year-old Meier of Leavenworth, Kan., was called to active duty, she resigned so that her District 40 could have a representative while she was gone. She didn't want to leave her seat vacant, leaving her district without a vote.

"Whether fighting for her country in Iraq or fighting to save quality education in the statehouse, Melanie Meier embodies the spirit of American democracy," Kansas Democratic Party Chairman Larry Gates said in a statement.

In her short six weeks in office, Meier made a small piece of history: she got a law passed. *H.B. 2308* allows active-duty military personnel from other states to get a "concealed carry" license in Kansas. Prior to the amendment, service members had to first establish Kansas residency, which could have forced some to pay higher taxes.

"When they set up the law they didn't mean for it to work out that way," she said. "My amendment was just trying to fix that. A lot of military guys get a concealed carry license here in Leavenworth. I'm glad I got the law passed."

Meier's replacement, Rep. Don Navinsky, publicly declared his intention to relinquish his seat upon her return.

"I only squeezed in about six weeks of work before I had to leave for Fort Hood," Meier said. "I tried to volunteer [to go overseas] a couple years ago, but I had just been promoted. It's not common for a lieutenant colonel to get called up. So it was a shock—I was very surprised."

Prior to her 2009 deployment, Meier's active-duty and Reserve mobilizations



COURTESY MELANIE MEIER

Name: Lt. Col. Melanie Meier
Service: Kansas Army National Guard
Unit: 304th Sustainment Brigade
Location: Balad, Iraq,
February 2009 to January 2010
Married: Yes

since joining the Army in 1990 had all been stateside except for one stint in Korea, where she earned her VFW eligibility, from 1995-98. The recent deployment was her first time at war.

As the brigade inspector general in Iraq, Meier led a team of field-grade officers and senior NCOs.

"The work we are doing in Iraq is important," Meier said. "I am honored to be a part of the military's effort to help the Iraqi people defeat extremism, defend their nation and fully exercise their sovereignty."

During her R&R leave in July 2009, Meier said she was ready to return as a Kansas lawmaker.

"The guy who [was] filling in for me said he's going to retire, so it'll be an election year again," she said. "So I'll

"I am honored to be a part of the military's effort to help the Iraqi people defeat extremism, defend their nation and fully exercise their sovereignty."

— Lt. Col. Melanie Meier

have to start campaigning again as soon as that session's over."

A member of VFW Post 56 in Leavenworth since the fall of 2008, Meier graduated in 1989 from the University of Kansas as a distinguished military graduate with a bachelor's degree in economics.

She went on active duty in 1990 as an Army air defense artillery officer. In 1994, she transferred to military intelligence. "So I went from shooting down airplanes to analyzing loads of data," she said.

Following her eight-year active-duty commitment, Meier worked as a civilian for the Department of Defense. She currently works at Ft. Leavenworth as a defense contractor.

"I write manuals for the 'bad guys' in training exercises as part of TRISA, the TRADOC Intelligence Support Activity," she said. "Before that I played the bad guys during the exercises in the Battle Command Training Program and worked for Northrop Grumman."

Meier is the second Kansas House member to be deployed to Iraq since the start of that war. Rep. Lee Tapanelli (R-Kan.) left the House to lead a Kansas National Guard engineer battalion in 2004-05. Meier returned home from her deployment in January 2010. ☐

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VFW in action

VFW members and Posts demonstrating community service. By Kelly Von Lunen

Posts Honor POW/MIAs on Recognition Day

While VFW has long made accounting for missing service members a priority, Posts are doing their part in communities to keep their memories alive.

As POW/MIA Recognition Day was observed nationally on Sept. 18, 2009, Posts around the country stopped to honor these unaccounted for warriors from all U.S. wars.

Post 6022 in Cottondale, Ala., held a recognition ceremony on that date. Post Commander Walter Turner toasted POW/MIAs with: "Until they all come home." Turner serves as the Department of Alabama POW/MIA chairman.

"I enjoy doing this," he told the *Tuscaloosa News*. "We need to recognize POW/MIAs. The families of MIAs, they don't know where their [family members] are."

In attendance was James H. Henderson, who spent 100 days as a POW in Germany in WWII.

"My daddy said when I was in high school, 'Go join the Army,'" Henderson told the *Tuscaloosa News*. "I ended up in Germany in the beginning of 1945. We got shot down on our 28th mission. The thing that was so bad was they starved us to death."

Eleven sixth-grade history students assisted the Post members in setting up the ceremony, as did the Ladies Auxiliary.

"We had a larger crowd than last year," Turner said. "It raises awareness of the VFW and the part we play in the local community."

Various Posts have honored POW/MIAs on recognition days and at other times during the year. Here are a few examples:

■ **Post 1079** in Elyria, Ohio, honored four former POWs at a ceremony held at the Post. Three of the four were able to attend.

■ **Post 316** in Little Egg Harbor, N.J., was prominent in the town's first POW/MIA ceremony on Sept. 19. "We are a small Post, but we do so much service to our community and for veterans," said



Senior Vice Commander Travis Ponds of Post 6022 in Cottondale, Ala., places a Bible on a table during a POW/MIA recognition ceremony in September 2009. A sixth-grade history class from Collins-Riverside Middle School in Northport, Ala., assisted in the service.

Post Commander John Paul Nowak, who presented the flag during the ceremony.

■ **Post 1352** in Hopelawn, N.J., honored POW/MIAs in October. "These [Americans] must not be forgotten, and we here at VFW are committed to bringing them safely home to their families," said Steve Cserr, Post commander.

■ In September 2008, Bob Thornton, commander of **Post 2169** in Bronston, Ky., went to the Somerset Courthouse to ask if Pulaski County would honor POW/MIAs from the county with a proclamation. The Post invited veterans and their families to a fish fry at the Post afterward.

There are currently some 84,622 Americans listed as missing and unaccounted for, going back to WWII. That

number includes 74,791 Americans from WWII, 8,031 from the Korean War, 1,721 from the Vietnam War, 77 from the Cold War and one each from Iraq and Afghanistan.

POW/MIA Recognition Day is traditionally observed on the third Friday in September each year. The first such day was held in 1979.

The 2009 presidential proclamation stated: "On National POW/MIA Recognition Day, we pay tribute to the American men and women who have not returned from the battlefield, and we express profound gratitude to those who returned only after facing unimaginable hardship on our behalf." ☐

E-mail magazine@vfw.org

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Milan (Moe) Kondich
Owner

Rolling Thunder®, Inc. Mission Statement

Rolling Thunder®, Inc.'s major function is to publicize the POW/MIA issue. To educate the public of the fact that many American prisoners of war were left behind after all past wars. To help correct the past and to protect the future veterans from being left behind should they become Prisoners Of War/ Missing In Action. We are committed to helping American veterans from all wars. Rolling Thunder is a non-profit organization and everyone donates his or her time because they believe in the POW/MIA issue.

The Rolling Thunder Story

In the fall of 1987 in a little diner in Somerville, New Jersey, two Vietnam veterans met to discuss their personal concerns about the prisoners of war (POW) and missing in action (MIA) from the Vietnam War. Having honorably served their country, and having taken an oath to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies..." and to "bear true faith and allegiance to same," they were deeply troubled by the abhorrent neglect of attention given to those who did not make it out with their lives or their freedom. These two veterans discussed the more than 10,000 reported sightings of live Americans living in dismal captivity. Intelligence reports of these sightings were generally ignored by the government and mainstream press. These two veterans were Artie Muller and Ray Manzo.

The First Rolling Thunder Demonstration

Artie and Ray were ordinary men who understood that they had a right to have their voices heard and proceeded to lay down the plans for a gathering in Washington, D.C., during the 1988 Memorial Day weekend. They reached out to their families, fellow veterans and veteran's advocates to unify and form a march and demonstration in our nation's Capital. Their arrival would be announced by the roar of their motorcycles, a sound not unlike the 1965 bombing campaign against North Vietnam dubbed *Operation Rolling Thunder*. Hence, they would call themselves "Rolling Thunder" a title that would endure time and be trademarked in 1990. Word spread quickly and by Memorial Day weekend in 1988, approximately 2,500 motorcycles from all over the country converged on Washington, D.C. to demand from our leaders a full accounting of all POW/MIA's. As they made their stand that day in front of the Capitol, Artie and Ray reflected thankfully for the people who came in support of the POW/MIA issue, and for the unity that was felt. This was Rolling Thunder's first demonstration. Only until ALL POW/MIA's ARE ACCOUNTED FOR, it will not be their last. On that day, the foundation was laid for the annual "Ride for Freedom" to the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall (also referred to as the "Ride to the Wall").

Rolling Thunder Today

Please visit the National website at: www.rollingthunder1.com

The number of participants/spectators in the Memorial Day weekend Ride for Freedom has grown from 2,500 to an estimated 850,000. Incorporated in 1995, Rolling Thunder, Inc. is a class 501(c)(4) non-profit organization with over 88 chartered chapters throughout the United States and members abroad. While many members of Rolling Thunder are veterans, and many ride motorcycles, neither qualification is a prerequisite. Rolling Thunder members are old and young, men and women, veterans and non-veterans. All are united in the cause to bring full accountability for POWs and MIAs of all wars, reminding the government, the media and the public by our watchwords: "We Will Not Forget." No officers or members of Rolling Thunder receive compensation; we all donate our time.

Supporting Local Veterans & Community Involvement

In 2007, Rolling Thunder Charities®, Inc. was established as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non-profit organization which enables individuals and corporations to receive a tax deduction for funds donated to Rolling Thunder Charities, Inc. Funds are used for veterans, active military and their families in need of help. No officers of Rolling Thunder Charities, Inc. receive compensation; we all donate our time.

Rolling Thunder, Inc. spends hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in financial support, food, clothing and other essentials to veterans, homeless veterans and veterans' families in need, womens' crisis centers and toys for children.

In 2005, Rolling Thunder, Inc. united with the National Alliance of POW/MIA Families to petition the U.S. Government to use the designation "Prisoner of War/Missing In Action" (POW/MIA) – a designation recognized by the Geneva Conventions - not "Missing/Captured." This will ensure that prisoners' rights and protections remain consistent under the Geneva Conventions.

Expenditures exceed over half a million dollars a year, nationwide, to educate the public and increase awareness about the POW/MIA issue and other injustices suffered by veterans. The organization regularly donates POW/MIA flags to local area schools, youth groups, non-profit organizations and special interest groups, and organizes flag-raising ceremonies. Veterans speak to youth groups about the honor of serving their country and educating them about the POW/MIA issue.

Rolling Thunder, Inc. sponsors search missions into Southeast Asia for POW/MIAs, and the remains of those killed in action.

Thousands of hours are logged in by Rolling Thunder, Inc. members at local VA hospitals nationwide. Members visit and provide moral support to nursing home veterans and patients suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

Rolling Thunder, Inc. helped facilitate the publishing of a POW/MIA U.S. postage stamp through the U.S. Postal Service that displayed dog tags with the declaration, "**POW & MIA-NEVER FORGOTTEN.**"

Rolling Thunder, Inc. National is on the Board of Directors of the Ride to the Wall Foundation, a veterans' fund established through the sales of the musical CD, "Ride to the Wall" produced for Rolling Thunder XIV by Paul Revere and the Raiders in cooperation with Rolling Thunder.

Rolling Thunder, Inc. participated in the dedication of the World War II Memorial in 2004 and assisted with organizing the World War II parade that took place on that historic date.

Laws Passed Through Rolling Thunder Endeavors

Rolling Thunder, Inc. has advocated and co-authored legislation to improve the POW/MIA issue, veterans' benefits, concerns and interests. Please visit the National website: www.rollingthunder1.com then click on *About Us* for information on the following Legislation.

- Establishing a Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs (House Res. 111)
- Encourage the designation of "Hire a Veteran Week" (H.Con.Res 125)
- Respect for Fallen Heroes Act of 2006 (H.R. 5037)
- Veteran's Housing Opportunity and Benefits Improvement Act of 2006 (S.1235)
- Veterans Benefits, Health Care and Information Technology Act of 2006 (S.3421-Public Law 109-461)
- Veteran-Owned Small Business Promotion Act of 2005 (H.R. 3082)
- Persian Gulf War POW/MIA Accountability Act of 2002 (S.1339)
- The POW/MIA Memorial Flag Act of 2001 (S.1226)
- Displaying the POW/MIA Flag over Federal Buildings & Military Facilities
- Bring Them Home Alive Act of 2000
- Missing Service Personnel Act of 1997

Number of Americans Missing & Unaccounted for from Each State

as of 9-Aug-05

Alabama	34	Maryland	26	South Carolina	29
Alaska	2	Massachusetts	41	South Dakota	7
Arizona	18	Michigan	55	Tennessee	33
Arkansas	20	Minnesota	37	Texas	120
California	183	Mississippi	12	Utah	16
Colorado	29	Missouri	38	Vermont	5
Connecticut	28	Montana	19	Virginia	48
Delaware	4	Nebraska	19	Washington	45
D.C.	9	Nevada	8	West Virginia	17
Florida	60	New Hampshire	6	Wisconsin	30
Georgia	35	New Jersey	51	Wyoming	5
Hawaii	7	New Mexico	12	Canada	2
Idaho	10	New York	118	Panama	1
Illinois	73	North Carolina	44	Philippines	4
Indiana	58	North Dakota	10	Puerto Rico	1
Iowa	28	Ohio	83	Virgin Islands	0
Kansas	30	Oklahoma	40	Civilians*	8
Kentucky	14	Oregon	39		
Louisiana	24	Pennsylvania	98	TOTAL	1,815
Maine	14	Rhode Island	8		

*These 8 civilians do not have a listed home of record.

For more information about Rolling Thunder, or to learn how to become a member or supporter, please contact Rolling Thunder National headquarters at (908) 369-5439.



Rolling Thunder member helps keep POW/MIA issue alive

By Kathy Millen
KMILLEN
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Memorial Day is a solemn occasion for Richard Zayat.

The Vietnam veteran, who served in the U.S. Marine Corps, has made it his mission to remember those fellow servicemen and women who never came back from war. For the last nine years, the 63-year-old Naperville man has been a member of the Illinois Chapter 1 of Rolling Thunder, one of 88 chapters of a national organization that works to keep the spotlight on the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action issue.

The organization also supports other veteran concerns. Members provide motorcycle escorts for returning servicemen or women and donate money to a variety of veterans causes including the Illinois Veteran's Home, Hines VA Hospital, the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans and Honor Flight. The latter transports World War II veterans to Washington, D.C., to see the World War II memorial and Arlington National Cemetery.

Zayat will be among Rolling Thunder members taking part in Memorial Day observances Monday in Lisle. Rolling Thunder's biggest fundraiser is the Never Forget Thunder

the motorcycle ride will be held Oct. 3 beginning at the Batavia VFW. The event will include a raffle for a 2010 Harley-Davidson Street Glide.

Membership in Rolling Thunder is open to anyone. Riding a motorcycle or previous military service is not mandatory. Meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month at the Warrenville VFW, 3S371 Mignin Drive, Warrenville.

For more information, visit www.rollingthunder1.com.

1. Why did you get involved in Rolling Thunder?

I've been very blessed. I was wounded twice. I came back with all my parts, and a lot of guys didn't. A lot of guys are still hurting. Even now, soldiers returning from Afghanistan and Iraq, a lot of them are in bad shape. If I can do anything that will help out in any way, I feel it does me a lot of good too just to be able to help. The sad part is a lot of these returning soldiers have a high suicide rate. ... I think something's got to be done. Evidently the government is not doing what can be done to help these guys. In our day, when our tour was up, we got back and were sent out into the world. We didn't have any debriefings. I don't remember somebody saying, 'OK, you're going to go through counseling,'



Marine Corps Vietnam War veteran Richard Zayat of Naperville poses for a portrait at Veterans Park in Naperville on Thursday. "I feel like I'm doing something good. I feel blessed that I am who I am. I've been through some hard times, and there are some people going through hard times right now. If I could help, it feels good," said Zayat, a longtime member of Rolling Thunder, a national non-profit organization dedicated to helping veterans and remembering prisoners of war and those missing in action. DANIELA GARDNER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

or anything like that. And I don't think these guys are getting it. You can't just come back from a war zone and fit right back into society. It just doesn't work that way.

2. What are some of your other concerns?

The treatment for returning soldiers, the treatment for post-traumatic stress, jobs. I think there is a higher unemployment for returning veterans than unemployment for the rest of the people. The main thing is to get accountability for POWs and MIAs, to put to rest the family anxiety over not knowing and having closure for them. There's still probably a thousand missing in action just from Vietnam.

3. How can Rolling Thunder get people to remember?

The sad thing is, a lot of people see this flag, and it says POW/MIA and a lot of people think it says 'pomia.' They don't really know what POW/MIA means. It's 'Prisoners of War, Missing in Action.' So to educate the public on that, we want to get this POW flag to fly in more public places like schools

and public buildings. That's one of the things our national organization is doing more of, just to get people aware.

4. How has your military service affected your life?

For one, I think I appreciate things more. I don't let small things bother me too much. And just to see another part of the world and to appreciate life and to feel blessed, I think that's the biggest thing, to feel blessed when you see another part of the world and you see what you have here. If it doesn't inspire you to love this country, then nothing will.

5. Why is Rolling Thunder's cause so important?

We don't want it to happen again. This shouldn't ever happen. It should never happen again, it shouldn't have happened before. Our thing is, 'We will not forget.' This is our mission right here: We are united in the cause to bring full accountability for POWs and MIAs of all wars, to remind the government, media and the public by our watchwords which are 'we will not forget.' These guys gave the ultimate, and they shouldn't be forgotten, and their families should have some kind of peace, too.



POW/MIA

Remembrance Table

Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1 performs our Remembrance Table ceremony at many events.

Our Remembrance Table is set for (5). This place setting symbolizes all Prisoners of War and those men and women still listed as Missing in Action from all wars from the (5) branches of service.

The chairs are empty.

They are not with us today.

Remember

*The tablecloth is white,
symbolizing the purity of the
soldiers as they went off
to serve their country.*

Remember

*The bread plates are sprinkled
with salt, symbolizing the tears shed
by the families as they await
the fate of their loved ones.*

Remember

*There is a lemon on each plate,
indicative of the bitterness
these soldiers must feel at
being left behind by
their country.*

Remember

*The glasses are inverted.
They cannot toast with us
this season.*

Remember

*The red rose, symbolizes the love the
families and their fellow comrades
have for these soldiers.*

Remember

*The red ribbon on the vase, symbolizes
the hope we all have. That someday
these brave men and women will
be returned to their families
and their country.*

Remember. . . .



Schedule of Events

8 AM – 10:00 AM	Registration and Breakfast (Available by VFW)
10:30 AM	Vendors set up
11:00 AM	Last Bike Out
1:00 PM	Bikes return/Parking in rear
1:00 PM – Close	Band – Blue Dog
4:00 PM	Last Poker Hand In
4:30 PM	Remembrance Table Ceremony
5:00 PM	Poker Hand Results
5:10 PM	Bike Show Winners Announced
5:20 PM	Mystery Raffle Results
5:30 PM	Bike Raffle Announced

9th Annual



“Big Thunder” Run

October 3rd 2010

Rolling Thunder® Illinois Chapter #1
would like to thank our friends at

Batavia Overseas Post 1197 Veterans of Foreign Wars

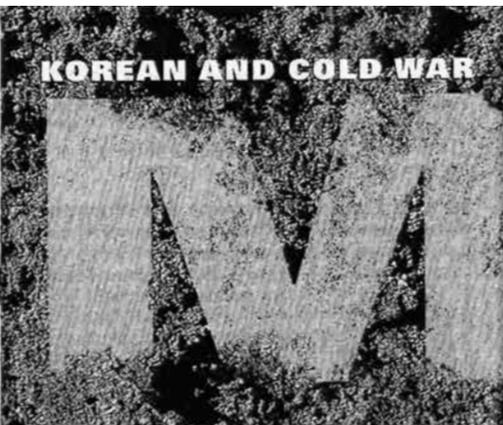
for allowing us the use of their facilities and
their kindness to us.

Please support their efforts.

**Batavia VFW
645 S. River Rd (Rte. 25)
Batavia, IL 60561**



KOREAN AND COLD WAR



Renewing Hope Families of the

Recent developments in Russia and China provide hope that the U.S. can soon move forward in unlocking the mysteries of unaccounted GIs. And VFW has been at the forefront of talks with both countries.

by Robert Widener

VFW is filling a unique void in international relations when it comes to resolving the MIA issue. Its "shuttle diplomacy" between Kansas City and Moscow and Beijing has paid real dividends. But before exploring this relationship, let's look at who benefits most—families of the missing.

In October 2009, nearly 400 family members attended the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office's (DPMO) briefing on Korean and Cold War MIAs. Among them sat Pat Phillips and her daughter Roxann. They were hoping to hear what progress the Pentagon office had made in resolving the fate of Phillips' husband, Capt. Dean P. Phillips.

He and five other crewmembers of an RB-47 went missing

Left: Gunnery Sgt. Alexander Mazza, explosive ordnance disposal technician with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), carefully sweeps the floor of a recovery area in the Gangwon province, Korea, on May 20, 2009. Mazza is part of a JPAC recovery team searching for clues of missing servicemen from the Korean War.



e for the Missing

on July 1, 1960, over the icy Barents Sea. It was one of the last shootdowns of the Cold War. What they do know is that two crewmembers survived and were held in Moscow's Lubyanka Prison until January 1961. But after their release, they offered little insight as to the fate of the remaining crew.

"I was always told that this was a possibility," said Phillips, who had been married for only 1½ years. "During a previous mission to Turkey, he came back with bullet holes in the airplane. So you think you've been prepared for it, but you're really not."

The answers she and thousands of other families seek from the Korean and Cold wars lie locked away in the military archives of Russia and China. The U.S. has worked diligently since 1992 to persuade Russia, and more recently, China, to release vital military documents and allow operations to recover remains. As of Dec. 31, 2009, 8,031 Americans are still missing from the Korean War and Cold War MIAs number 77.

The U.S. has had great success at times. Yet in recent years, delays and roadblocks have frustrated the families whose patience is wearing thin.

"The powers that be seem to think this is something that should be set on



VFW Commander-in-Chief Tommy Tradewell met with Guan Youfei, deputy chief of foreign affairs for China's PLA Ministry of National Defense. Tradewell's visit paved the way for VFW to view documents on MIAs at China's military archives located in Shanghai.

the shelf," said Patricia McMahan, a VFW Auxiliary member of Post 2932 in Aransas Pass, Texas. Her brother, Cpl. Orville K. Spicer, turned up missing on Nov. 30, 1950, during the Korean War near Kunu-ri.

"We are not going away," she said. "We are waiting, but we are waiting impatiently."

To keep the MIA issue moving forward, VFW has held talks with Russian and Chinese officials for several years now. Its non-governmental, humanitarian stance is well received by both

countries and VFW's recent meetings point to real progress.

"It's positive that VFW is able to play a role," said VFW Commander-in-Chief Tommy Tradewell. "Maybe we can help resolve the fate of a number of missing Americans."

Reigniting the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission

On March 20, 1992, the U.S. and Russia formally established a commission to resolve the fates of missing U.S. servicemen from WWII to the Vietnam War.



Barry Woerman holds a photo of his father, Lt. William B. Woerman, who was shot down during the Korean War on April 7, 1953. "We have all of his medals and all of the letters his shipmates wrote," Woerman said. "It was difficult for my mother to talk about it, but later on, she would give us the letters, and we would read them."

Various Categories of U.S. Korean War MIAs

1,788	Declared KIA
2,031	Died as POW
5,400	Remains still in North Korea
229	Remains recovered by JPAC since 1996
75	Remains identified from the 229 recovered since 1996
126	Remains identified since 1982.
866	Sets of remains interred at the Punchbowl Cemetery in Hawaii.

Source: DPMO, Jan. 11, 2010

DPMO's Joint Commission Support Directorate (JCSD) provides operational oversight for the U.S. side.

Since the commission's inception, 471 families have gained some information about the loss of their loved ones that was previously unknown.

"1992-1995 was the commission's heyday," said Norman Kass, executive director of JCSD. "However, it's been an uphill struggle since then. Over the last four years, it has effectively been a unilateral program pushed along by the U.S. side."

The commission suffered its first setback in March 2001 when the Robert Hanssen spy case broke. Hanssen, an FBI agent, funneled secret U.S. documents to the Russians for 22 years. At the time of his arrest, the U.S. expelled Russian diplomats. In response, Moscow forced JCSD members and U.S. Embassy employees out of the country.

This political tit-for-tat feud was short-lived and the commission resumed operations the following year. Then in April 2005, the commission ceased operating completely when Moscow downgraded the presidential status of the Russian side. Consequently, it also signaled an end for U.S. researchers working in the Central Archives in Podolsk.

The commission got a new lease on life in July 2009 when the U.S. and Russia exchanged diplomatic notes re-establishing it. However, the initial wave of optimism has waned due to delays on Russia's part. So far, Moscow has not followed up on the diplomatic notes, nor appointed a chairman or other commission members.

VFW Urges Moscow to Act

In October 2009, VFW's Chief Tradewell and VFW Washington Office Executive Director Bob Wallace traveled to Russia in hopes of persuading officials there to follow through on their commitment. The trip marked the sixth time that VFW officials met with the Russians about MIAs and veterans issues.

"Our mission from the beginning was to get them to work with their veterans organizations in urging their government to reconstitute the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission," said Tradewell. "We need them to appoint a chairman and get the commission moving again."

Tradewell and Wallace met with officials of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as committee members from the Russian Federation Council for Military and Security. They also spoke with committee members from the *State Duma*, Russia's congress.

In addition, VFW held meetings with the Russian veterans organizations Combat Brotherhood and the Warrior Internationalists to see what pressure they could apply through their channels. (See sidebar on page 19.)

"We have finally gotten to the point where all they have to do is appoint a chairman and give us a green light to get into the archives," said Tradewell. "They assured us that the appointment would be coming soon."

VFW's role is unique because no other U.S. veterans group has discussed such matters with Russian officials. And as a non-governmental entity, VFW brings a perspective to the issue beyond politics.

"We're VFW," said Wallace. "We're not the U.S. government, and we don't want them to come to us and think that they're getting anything from the government. We're just veterans talking about a humanitarian mission of resolving the fate of unaccounted for Americans."

Tradewell said that the trip furthers relations with all parties. "Our visit prodded them into seeing that the U.S. wants a leader on their side of the commission," he said.

'Celestial Empire' Opens Its Door

Russia is not the only former adversary to open its archives to U.S. researchers. In February 2008, China signed an agree-

Continued on page 18



VFW Adjutant General Allen F. Kent (left) and VFW Commander-in-Chief Tommy Tradewell (third from left) held talks with China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director Zheng Zeguang in September 2009. Sheri Yi of China's Culture to Culture International served as an interpreter.

Korean and Cold War MIAs

Continued from page 15

ment to cooperate with DPMO and allow access to its records.

It is hoped that archival documents will shed light on Americans who were missing in action or held as prisoners of war in camps managed by the Chinese during the Korean War.

China's willingness to cooperate dates back to U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's visit in 2005. Rumsfeld asked if the Chinese could offer help on the disappearance of his closest friend, James B. Deane, Jr. He and 15 other crewmembers were lost when Chinese fighter jets shot down their P4M on Aug. 22, 1956, over the East China Sea. Four bodies were recovered at the time, but the other 12 were never found. People's Liberation Army (PLA) archivists located a report of the shootdown and turned it over to Rumsfeld in 2006.

Presently, according to Lt. Col. Steve Gransback of DPMO's Northeast Asia Policy Directorate, the U.S. is "working on two fronts: pursuing the relatively small number of MIAs in China, and working with the PLA in the archives.

"The PLA reported that it reviewed over 200,000 pages of documents and will provide them to us once our arrangement with them has been amended," he said.

Two other recent developments offer

VFW Resolutions on MIAs

Resolution No. 402 supports *National POW/MIA Recognition Day* and encourages displaying the POW/MIA flag to remember those still unaccounted for from all wars and operations.

Resolution No. 405 encourages the renewal of bilateral talks between the U.S. and North Korea in order to resume MIA recovery operations.

Resolution No. 407 calls for the Russian government to establish its side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission, and the U.S. Congress to appoint a member to the U.S. side.

even more hope of Chinese cooperation. A Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) investigation team conducted a mission in August 2009 in Sichuan and Guangxi provinces.

And in November 2009, the Chinese investigated the downing of a B-29 that reportedly crashed on Nov. 5, 1950, in Guangdong province. The bomber had been en route to U.S. bases on Taiwan during the Korean War. Investigators learned that villagers found 15 bodies,

four of which were buried at the crash site. Though no remains were found, a piece of metal from the wreckage was turned over to authorities. A U.S. search team is scheduled to return in 2010.

VFW Asks to See Chinese Archives

At about the same time JPAC's investigation team was in China, VFW's Chief Tradewell and VFW Adjutant General Allen "Gunner" Kent were meeting in Beijing with head Chinese officials.

Their trip marked the third time China has invited VFW to discuss the MIA issue. More important, VFW is the only U.S. veterans group to ever speak with the Chinese about MIAs or other veterans issues.

"When China first announced its cooperation, VFW began working on arrangements to see if we could get access to the archives located in Shanghai," said Tradewell. "We wanted to see the documents and talk to their experts."

The China Association for International Friendly Contact arranged the meetings and provided interpreters.

VFW first met with Director General Zheng Zeguang of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His office controls all contacts with Americans, and oversees the POW/MIA issue. Zeguang was open to allowing VFW the opportunity to visit the archives, according to Tradewell, but was unsure of exactly when that would occur.

"He disclosed that their archivists had translated more than 100 files relating to missing soldiers and airmen," said Tradewell. "He felt it was important for Americans to view these records, and VFW in particular."

Kent added: "We are interested in finding out about records they may have concerning Korean War MIAs, such as those of the Chosin Reservoir battle."

Zeguang's office works in concert with the PLA office of the Ministry of National Defense. Its Deputy Chief of Foreign Affairs Guan Youfei has final authority in granting entry into the Shanghai archives. During a meeting with Youfei, Tradewell and Kent heard encouraging news—VFW would be allowed into the archives in 2010.

The Chinese were curious about one thing, though. Why was a veterans organization interested in returning home

the remains of its missing in action?

"The Chinese feel that it is very honorable for a soldier to die on the battlefield and left to be buried there," said Tradewell. "So, they have a hard time understanding why the U.S. would come 10,000 miles and remove someone who was honorably buried."

An exit meeting with U.S. Ambassador to China Jon Huntsman, Jr. and his staff underscored the importance of the trip. According to Kent, "They were interested in the content and outcome of our talks, as well as who we met with."

Tradewell adds, "We have shown the world that the MIA issue is real to us. It's important to do whatever it takes to bring home the remains of the last GI we know of. And by working together with Russia and China, hopefully someday we can provide answers for those families who are waiting on a lost son."

North Korea: Defiant Regime

On April 7, 1953, squadron leader Lt. William B. Woerman lifted off from the USS Valley Forge in his F4U-4 Corsair. Normally in the lead position, that day he chose to let another pilot head the mission while he took the rear slot.

While on a low-level strafing run about 30 miles from Wonsong, machine-gun and small-arms fire hit Woerman's plane, causing it to burst into flames. The aircraft rolled, exploded and began to come apart. No parachute was seen.

Now, nearly 57 years later, his son, Barry Woerman, is among the thousands of family members of MIAs waiting for answers.

"We're pretty certain he couldn't have survived," said Woerman, who was only two years old at the time. "Being angry about it doesn't help. I'm just disappointed that we're dealing with a country that turns its back on a mission of mercy."

Woerman is referring to North Korea's barring of U.S. personnel to conduct MIA operations since 2005. The U.S. suspended its MIA recovery activities that year, the first time since they started in 1996. The U.S. became alarmed about North Korea's nuclear program. Up until then, JPAC had successfully found remains during every mission it conducted north of the DMZ.

According to Dan Baughman, deputy director of DPMO's Northeast Asia

Research Analysis Directorate, 6,000 of the more than 8,000 MIAs from the Korean War were lost in North Korea.

"There are two main battle areas where men were lost," Baughman said. "One is the Unsan/Chongchon River area with 1,549 missing, and the other is the Chosin Reservoir, which accounts for 1,079 missing."

With access currently barred north of the DMZ, DPMO and JPAC have concentrated on MIAs in South Korea. According to Bruce Harder, of the same directorate, 980 sets are located in the South.

"We don't know exactly where they are," said Harder, a VFW member and a former VFW National Security and Foreign Affairs director. "Some POWs were marched north and died along evacuation routes. It takes intensive interviewing with villagers to find out where these burial sites are located."

Dubbed the "Trail of Tears," those routes are currently the focus of JPAC investigation teams who traverse the same roads POWs took nearly 60 years ago. JPAC also is working in the Pusan Perimeter area where 400 MIAs have gone unaccounted. In 2010, 10 recovery and investigation missions are scheduled south of the DMZ.

Aiding JPAC's efforts to some degree is South Korea's own recovery group aimed at resolving the fate of its 130,000 MIAs. So far, it has helped recover two sets of American remains.

Johnie Webb, JPAC's deputy director, noted, though, that the South Korean group was inexperienced in the beginning. Surprisingly, it cremated remains after examining them. JPAC invited the group to its Hawaii facility and provided proper forensics training.

"We were afraid they would recover remains of an American and not know it," said Webb. "We've also worked out an agreement with them to do a joint forensic review of any remains they find."

On the laboratory scene, the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) is pioneering a new technique that compares chest x-rays to remains. Beginning in 1942, medical screenings were conducted to detect tuberculosis in servicemen. CIL acquired 18,000 such radiographs, of which 5,800 pertain to the Korean War, or 72% of the missing.

VFW Meets Russian and Chinese Veterans

During trips to Russia and China, VFW officials discussed veteran-related topics with veterans groups, as well as government officials.

In Russia, VFW spoke with the Combat Brotherhood and the Warrior Internationalists. The Russians seek help from the U.S. in resolving the fate of their 291 MIAs from Afghanistan (1979-89). Each year, the Warrior Internationalists organizes expeditions there to search for their missing. DPMO gave them DNA kits a few years ago to assist their effort.

Also, the Russian vets want to create a ministry of veterans affairs, similar to VA. For starters, they are seeking advice from VA, and information on counseling veterans with PTSD and substance abuse.

"They want to work with VFW and VA on how they could do that," said Bob Wallace, VFW's Washington Office executive director. "Once the Russian POW/MIA commission is running again, the U.S. will bring in VA."

The situation is different in China where veterans organizations are not encouraged, but a network similar to the VA is in place. The Chinese spent time in the U.S. working with VA officials on how to create an agency to care for their veterans.

"There are two classes of soldiers in China," said VFW's Commander-in-Chief Tommy Tradewell. "The senior officers are well taken care of, but there is not much for the enlisted personnel after their service."

China's health care system for veterans is on a much lesser scale than the U.S.'s, according to Tradewell. But it still provides for disability payments and hospital care.

The disability process lacks an appeals court, though, and if the disability worsens, there is no increase in compensation.

The Chinese offer no retirement plan to their enlisted soldiers. All veterans are issued special ID cards, but for use at a hospital only within their region.

Archive Searches Continue

During the Korean War, Russia, China and North Korea kept each other informed by sharing records. No one knows that better than Danz Blasser, a DPMO senior analyst for the Korean War. Blasser, a former U.S. Air Force cryptologic linguist, researched the Russian archives for four years and says the documents at Podolsk are the key.

"Everything that happened in the Korean War filtered up to the Soviets," said Blasser, a VFW life member-at-large from Virginia. "They wanted all of the information on U.S. activities."

That's not hard to understand considering Soviets flew 75% of all air sorties, and had four anti-aircraft artillery divisions stationed in North Korea and China. The Russians also sent out search parties for downed planes, and even set a bounty of 1,500 rubles for each find.

The Russian archives proved their value in resolving Capt. Troy Cope's case in 2004. Cope went missing when he and his wingman tangled with six Russian MiGs along the Yalu River on Sept. 16, 1952. All trace of him disappeared.

Then in 1999 while searching through the Podolsk archives, Blasser discovered a report from a Russian pilot documenting the shootdown of an F-86 the same day that Cope went missing. To Blasser's amazement, the report listed an exact street address in Dandong, China, where the crash occurred.

"He had crashed in China," he said. "Until the documents were found, he was believed to have gone down elsewhere."

Cope's remains were recovered four years later. He was buried in 2005 at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery.

While the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission has been at a standstill, DPMO researchers have forged ahead. Over the last four years, they have pursued leads in Ukraine, Albania, South Korea and the Czech Republic.

Albania is important because the Russians shared information with it up until Stalin's death in 1953. Then they became allies with China and exchanged information with it. In all, Albania has four archives of such material.

As for South Korea, its Institute for Military History Compilation received

U.S. MIAs Worldwide

Below are current figures on where Americans are still unaccounted for from three wars.

WWII:

Various locations	26,889
Philippines	9,991
Other Pacific Islands	9,238
Japan	3,731
North Africa/Mediterranean	3,518
Solomon Islands	2,772
North Sea	2,749
Pacific Ocean	2,476
Other European Nations	2,179
China, Burma, India	2,014
Germany	1,977
Papua New Guinea	1,866
France	1,656
N. Marianas/Guam	1,325
Italy	1,267
North & South America	1,143
Total	74,791

Korea 8,031

Vietnam 1,721

Total MIAs 84,543

Source: DPMO, Dec. 31, 2009

Russian archival material starting in 2006 as part of an exchange between the two countries. In going through its records, Blasser discovered the existence of a sub-archive of the Russian general staff stored at Podolsk.

"When working with the Russians, they say to give them specifics; 'don't go on a fishing expedition,'" he said. "Now we can say that this is where we want to go, we know you have the information and that these documents exist."

Ukraine's archive holds 12 volumes of records from the former KGB concerning the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, the parent unit of all Russian air/anti-aircraft units in the Korean War.

In all, DPMO has identified 920 archive facilities, and reviewed or collected 487,623 pages of information.

Resolving Cold War Shootdowns

Between 1950-65, the U.S. Air Force and Navy conducted Cold War reconnaissance missions resulting in losses. Of the 39 shootdowns classified as Cold War losses, 10 of them resulted in 126 missing airmen.

One case, however, has been closed. It

occurred on Sept. 2, 1958, when four Soviet MiGs shot down an unarmed C-130 Hercules aircraft carrying 17 crewmembers over the Turkish-Armenian border. Six bodies were returned at the time, but the remaining 11 sets of remains were not returned home until 1998. They were laid to rest in a group burial in 1998 in Arlington National Cemetery, 40 years later to the day.

Jim Connell, DPMO's Cold War senior analyst, said 77 airmen are still missing. He visited Latvia in 2009 to gather information from fishermen about the case of a Navy PB4-Y2 shot down by Soviet pilots over the Baltic Sea on April 8, 1950. The crew of 10 was never recovered.

"We were told early on when we started these investigations, no matter how fantastic or far-fetched or ridiculous it is, go out and check it out," said Connell, a retired U.S. Navy captain.

Connell's proudest moment came when the remains of Capt. John Dunham were recovered from the Kurile Islands in 1994. Dunham and seven other crewmembers were shot down by Soviet fighters on Oct. 7, 1952. A Russian Border Guard sailor turned over Dunham's 1950 Annapolis class ring to the commission after he heard an appeal for information on the case.

The Russian had been assigned to recover the wreckage and came across Dunham's body tangled in his parachute. The ring later was taken aboard the ship. The sailor's account led to other Border Guards who showed investigators where Dunham's body was buried.

Connell's Cold War Working Group also has examined the possibility of Americans transferred as POWs to the former Soviet Union. The group examined documents relating to Russian prisons, or Gulags, but there has been no conclusive evidence after 10 years of study.

Hope Lingers for the Families

Despite the stagnation of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission, families remain vigilant. Greg Shavinski and Charlotte Busch Mitkin both had family members aboard the same RB-29 that was shot down by Soviet MiGs on June 13, 1952, off the coast of Vladivostok, Siberia. No traces of the 12 crewmembers were ever

Continued on page 22

found.

"The information we got from the government at the time was that it was an air accident," said Mitkin. Her brother, Maj. Samuel N. Busch, was the commander of the plane. She has attended briefings on MIAs since 1991.

Shavinski's uncle, Master Sgt. William R. Homer, was the plane's flight engineer. Shavinski became obsessed with his uncle's fate after his mother handed him old newspaper clippings one day.

"She said she was getting up in age and gave me these accounts about Uncle Bill," said Shavinski, a Marine Vietnam vet, 1968-69. "I really grabbed onto it."

"When I got back from Vietnam," he added, "no one welcomed me home, and here's an instance where these guys were doing their duty, too, and there was no recognition."

Shavinski mounted an effort that eventually resulted in Distinguished Flying Crosses for the entire crew.

Mitkin, who was 18 years old at the time of the incident, realizes that clo-



WVA/REYNOLDS LIBRARY AND ARCHIVE

Charlotte Busch Mitkin and Greg Shavinski both had family members aboard the same RB-29 that was shot down during a Cold War mission on June 13, 1952.

sure is still a long way off.

"It's been a long journey that won't be over until my brother's remains are found and returned home where they belong," she said.

Mitkin's wish is postponed for now

until the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission is operating again. VFW remains adamant about this issue, and is committed to future talks with Russia and China.

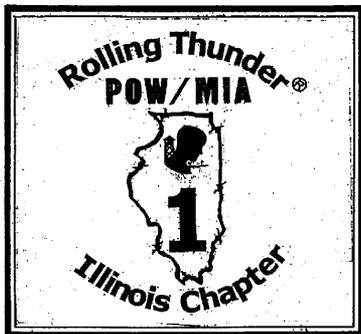
"It is believed that the Russians hold the keys to a lot of answers to WWII, Korea, Cold War and Vietnam MIA cases," said VFW's Tradewell. "And help from the Chinese will go a long way in resolving the fate of those servicemen missing from WWII to the Korean War. There are so many families out there waiting and wondering what happened."

Barry Woerman probably sums it up best when he speaks about the Pentagon's effort in resolving his father's fate:

"I'm proud to be an American. Our government's MIA efforts show how much we value our troops, their ultimate sacrifice and respect them in death. This gives his life value and shows that he died for something; that his country values him, his memory and that his death was not in vain." ❁

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CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY

JPAC FS-3

"Until they are home"

Fact Sheet

The Central Identification Laboratory of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command is the largest skeletal identification laboratory in the world and is staffed by more than 30 anthropologists and four forensic odontologists (dentists). JPAC's mission is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of all Americans missing as a result of the nation's past conflicts. CIL scientists also provide support on humanitarian missions as well as to local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

IN THE FIELD



Standard recovery missions occur around the world and last 35 to 60 days depending on the location, terrain, and recovery methods. Anthropologists travel to sites that are located throughout the world.

At a recovery site, the anthropologist directs the excavation much like a detective oversees a crime scene. Each mission is unique, but there are certain things that each recovery has in common. The first step is for the anthropologist to define the site or determine the site perimeter. Recovery sites can be as small as a few meters for individual burials to areas exceeding the size of



a football field for aircraft crashes. Once that has been defined, a grid system is established. Careful excavation occurs using that grid system. Every inch of soil that comes out of the site is screened for any potential remains, any life support equipment or any material evidence. Initial analysis occurs at the site, and the material is then brought back to the lab for additional examination.



IN THE LAB

The forensic anthropologist assigned the case in the laboratory is not the individual who completed the recovery in the field. This entire procedure is carried out "blind," meaning that the anthropologist does not know the suspected identity of the individual under analysis and only those details that are required to select the appropriate scientific techniques (e.g. the approximate era of the loss incident). The blind analysis is completed in order to prevent any subconscious bias from influencing the scientist's analysis. CIL anthropologists examine all recovered skeletal remains in order to produce a "biological profile."

This profile includes the sex, race, age at death, and height of the individual. Anthropologists also analyze any trauma caused at or near the time of death and pathological conditions of bone such as arthritis or previously healed fractures. Anthropologists are also



responsible for the analysis of material evidence such as military uniforms, personal affects, and identification tags.

MISSING AMERICANS FROM PAST WARS

World War II	~ 78,000
Korean War	~ 8,060
Vietnam War	~ 1,740
Cold War	~ 125

JPAC FS-3

www.jpac.pacom.mil

2009

FORENSIC ODONTOLOGY



Dental remains are extremely important to the identification process, both because they offer the best means of positive identi-

fication of an individual and because they are durable and may contain surviving mtDNA. An individual's dental records are often the best means of identification due to the unique characteristics that are available from teeth, including commonly observed dental treatments such as extraction, fillings, crowns, and partial dentures. The dental records from an individual's personnel file are compared with remains received at the laboratory by the forensic odontologists. Ideally, the forensic odontologist will have antemortem (before death) X-rays to use for comparison, but even hand-written charts and treatment notes can be critical to the identification process.

DNA



The CIL uses mtDNA in more than half of its cases. Successful use of mtDNA for identifications requires a family reference sample and the process of obtaining these can add over a

year to the identification process. All mtDNA samples taken at the CIL are analyzed at the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL), located in Rockville, Md. AFDIL extracts and amplifies surviving mtDNA, and determines the genetic pattern present. This pattern is compared with patterns from family reference samples given from each (suspected) unidentified service member's family.

CIL FACILITIES



The Central Identification Laboratory is the only skeletal laboratory accredited by the American Society Directors. Additional CIL special capabilities include: alternate light source analysis, scanning electron microscopy, digital radiography,

bone histological analysis, ground penetrating radar, and a full array of underwater survey equipment. The CIL is currently identifying about two Americans a week, about 74 per year.



The Central Identification Laboratory is always looking for talented and motivated scientists. Anthropologists with experience in skeletal analysis and archeological excavation are encouraged to contact JPAC if interested in this exciting and rewarding mission.



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JOINT POW/MIA ACCOUNTING COMMAND

JPAC FS-1

"Until they are home"

Fact Sheet

The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command's mission is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of all Americans missing as a result of the nation's past conflicts. JPAC personnel, along with other U.S. and foreign specialists, search for, recover and identify remains of Americans unaccounted-for from all conflicts from World War II through the Persian Gulf War. JPAC is organized into the following areas to get the job done:

ANALYSTS & INVESTIGATIVE TEAMS

- The search process begins with JPAC historians and analysts. These experts gather information from records, archives, interviews and other sources.



- Researchers create a 'loss incident case file' for each unaccounted-for individual. This file includes historical background, military medical and personnel records, official correspondence, maps, photos, and other evidence.

This groundwork lays the foundation that helps JPAC locate possible sites where American MIAs may be located.

- After this evidence and information is gathered, JPAC sends out an investigative team to these potential sites.

- Each team consists of four to nine people including a team leader, analyst, linguist, and medic. In some instances, an anthropologist, explosive ordnance disposal technician, and a life support technician augment the team.

- These teams survey potential recovery sites so that recovery teams have the most up-to-date information about a case prior to deployment. They also search for new leads that may result in future recoveries. Most importantly, investigative teams help determine if and when JPAC should send a recovery team to excavate a site.

RECOVERY TEAMS

- Once the decision has been made to excavate a site, the next step is to send a JPAC recovery team.

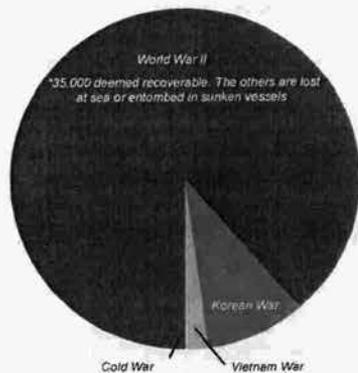
- JPAC has 18 recovery teams consisting of 10 to 14 people including a team leader, forensic anthropologist, team sergeant, linguist, medic, life support technician, forensic photographer, explosive ordnance disposal technician, and mortuary affairs specialists.



- Each year, JPAC conducts at least five recovery missions associated with the Korean War, ten missions in Southeast Asia for Vietnam War cases, and ten missions in other areas of the world to search for MIAs associated with World War II and the Cold War.

- Standard recovery missions last 35 to 60 days depending on the location, terrain, and recovery methods. Recovery

HOW MANY ARE STILL MISSING?



JPAC FS-1

www.jpac.pacom.mil

2009

teams use standard field archeology methods in the excavation as directed by the on-site anthropologist at each site.

- Recovery teams have to be in top physical condition to reach excavation sites, which often are in very remote places. Teams routinely have to walk through dense jungles, hike mountains and glaciers, and rappel down cliffs. Each team travels with up to 10,000 pounds in survival and excavation equipment.

- Most missions employ 10 to more than 100 local workers.

- Recovery sites can be as small as a few meters for individual burials to areas exceeding the size of a football field for aircraft crashes. Sites are sectioned into 4x4 grids for excavation.

- As a sign of respect, any remains that the teams find are placed in aluminum transfer cases and draped with a U.S. flag. An arrival ceremony is held in Hawaii with a joint service honor guard and senior military officers from each service.

- The remains and artifacts are then transported to the Central Identification Lab.

CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY

- The CIL is staffed by more than 30 anthropologists and four forensic odontologists (dentists). JPAC has the largest staff of forensic anthropologists in the world.



- In the laboratory, anthropologists are responsible for the skeletal analysis of human remains and/or the analysis of material



evidence such as military uniforms, personal effects, and identification tags.

- While the CIL identifies about two Americans a week on average, the recovery and identification process may take years to complete. Approximately 74 POW/MIAs are identified, on average, per year.

- Once a case is completed, the identified American is transferred to the appropriate service mortuary affairs office. Military members from these offices then notify families personally of the identification.

HISTORY

- In 1973, after the Vietnam War, the Central Identification Laboratory, Thailand (CIL-THAI) was established, focusing on the Americans still missing in Southeast Asia.

- In 1976, the Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) was established to search for, recover, and identify missing Americans from all previous conflicts.

- In 1992, Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) was established to focus on achieving the fullest possible accounting of Americans missing as a result of the Vietnam War.

- In 2002, The Department of Defense (DoD) determined that POW/MIA accounting efforts would be best served by combining the two units and operating as one.

- On Oct. 1 2003, JPAC was formed with the merger of the 30-year-old U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) and the 11-year-old Joint Task Force – Full Accounting (JTF-FA).



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slighted!!!**

*P-body (recovered)
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Remembering Ted Sampley

No Truer Friend or Tougher Foe

By Ted Shpak, Rolling Thunder Legislative Director

Ted Sampley, a founder of Rolling Thunder, a decorated Vietnam War veteran and former Green Beret who was best known as an unyielding activist for American prisoners of war and missing servicemen, died in May 2009 of complications from heart surgery just weeks before Rolling Thunder XXII. Ted was 62.

He became a fervent POW/MIA activist in the early 1980s after the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. His passion for this issue knew no bounds and over the years captured much public attention.

It was only natural that he would combine forces with three other Vietnam veterans to found Rolling Thunder, First Amendment Demonstration Run in Washington, D.C.

But Ted's biggest claim to fame came in 1994, when he presented evidence that the Vietnam-era remains in the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery were not anonymous after all.

Through painstaking analysis of service records and maps, he concluded that the remains were those of missing Air Force pilot Lt. Michael Blassie, who was shot down in 1972. But Ted faced many obstacles, including Lt. Blassie's incredulous family. In the end, however, the Blassie family assisted Ted in his research and, in 1998, U.S. military officials confirmed Lt. Blassie's identity through DNA analysis. Indeed, it was Air Force Colonel Pat Blassie, Lt. Blassie's sister, who delivered the most heartfelt eulogy at Ted's funeral.

Ted Sampley gained notoriety for his rabble-rousing activism, including chaining himself to the White House gates, several trips to jail for acts of protest, and displaying bamboo cages holding mock POWs. But a kinder, gentler side of Ted was revealed at his memorial service by those who loved and knew him best—his family and friends from his hometown of Kinston, N.C. Few beyond Kinston knew that Ted was a master potter and skillful painter until they saw his pottery and paintings that were on display in the funeral home.

Ted was a leading civic activist as well and the people of Kinston credit him for helping to revitalize the downtown area, especially Heritage Street, which had become outdated and forgotten. He helped build a replica of the Confederate warship CSS Neuse II and to establish a museum of Confederate history. He also co-founded the Salute to Veterans festival and had begun work on the National Walk of Honor at Neuseway Park in tribute to veterans. "Ted had one of the biggest hearts of anyone I have ever met," said festival co-founder Mary Beth Dawson. "He would put up a very gruff exterior, but if anyone ever broke through it, he had a heart of gold."

Among the more than 1,000 at Ted's standing-room-only funeral were dignitaries from the Vietnam Embassy in Washington, D.C. and the city of Kinston; former U.S. congressman and author Bill Hendon, members of Rolling Thunder and countless family and friends. A large screen TV flashed images of Ted, the father, the activist, the potter and the civic leader.

Many of the speakers conceded that Ted Sampley was controversial and could often be a friend and a foe. But all also agreed that they were there to honor a great American patriot.

We all will miss you Ted.

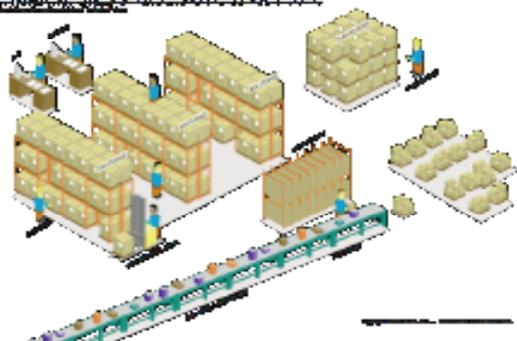


Theodore Lane Sampley: 1946–2009



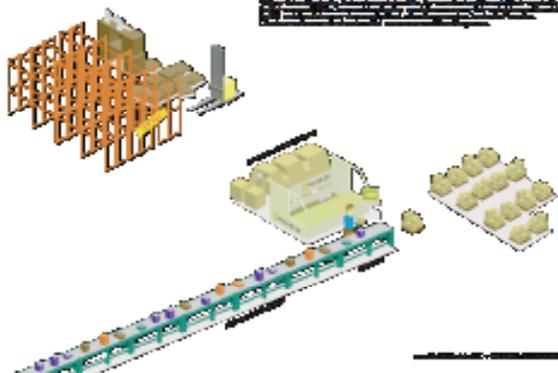
Ted Sampley's son Lane and granddaughter Chaney.

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