

# Big Thunder Run



**12<sup>th</sup> Annual**

**OCT. 6<sup>th</sup> 2013**

Rich Zayat

visit our website <http://www.rollingthunder11.com>  
email [rollingthunder11@gmail.com](mailto:rollingthunder11@gmail.com)



## An Open Letter To Our Membership and Our Friends

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1, and the Management and Staff at Inland Bank, we are proud to announce our alliance and partnership. As we continue to face a resource-stressed economy with growing Veteran needs, we continue to remain deeply committed to working with partners who share our vision. With their Hometown Hero Account and Corporate Donation Program to Rolling Thunder Charities, Inc., Inland Bank has demonstrated their high level of commitment to Rolling Thunder.

Frankly, our alliance has resulted in a mutual "fan club" for both Rolling Thunder and Inland Bank. They are a local Bank, striving to focus on the needs of the community rather than being focused solely on profit. Inland Bank strongly supports Rolling Thunder's efforts in accomplishing the mission of educating the public. Since our earliest involvement with Inland Bank, Rolling Thunder found their bank and team to be a great fit, in many ways! They have donated generously as a result of their Home Town Hero Account program. They are friendly, community oriented and above all, offer hope and support for the families of our POW/ MIA and all those who have bravely and selflessly served our great nation. Additionally Inland Bank shares Rolling Thunder's compassion to support the needs of our returning Veterans as we look for new projects that can be mutually supported. Rolling Thunder encourages you to review the enclosed information about the Home Town Hero Account and Donation Program or visit Inland Bank's website at [www.inlandbank.com](http://www.inlandbank.com) for more details on how you can personally support our partnership.

Our present structure allows 97½ cents from every fundraising dollar to be spent on the POW/MIA issue and assisting local veterans. Please consider supporting the alliance between Rolling Thunder Illinois Chapter 1 and Inland Bank. If you have any questions, or want to learn more about Inland Bank and what they are doing in our community, please feel free to reach out to Dina Derman at 630-908-6413.

Regards,  
Bill "Hawk" Sharpness  
President – IL Chapter 1

Handwritten signature of Bill "Hawk" Sharpness in black ink.

Dina Derman  
Senior Vice President – Inland Bank

Handwritten signature of Dina Derman in black ink.

# National POW/MIA Recognition Day

September 20, 2013



*Keeping the Promise*

[www.rollingthunder.org](http://www.rollingthunder.org)



## Illinois Soldiers Still Wait

Illinois POW/MIAs:

WWII	1310
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  
Air Museum, Chicago, IL.



Rolling Thunder®  
**POW/MIA**



Illinois Chapter

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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.



*Gold Star Pin*

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.

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## 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

## "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.*

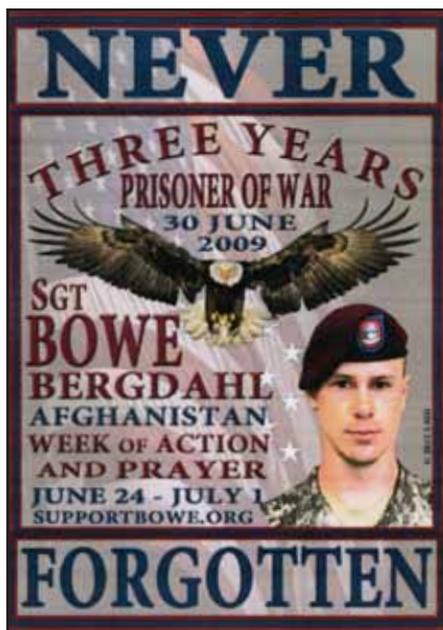
*It is the soldier,  
not the campus organizer  
Who has given us the  
freedom to demonstrate.*

*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



# BIG THUNDER RUN

The early cold weather that we had in October could not stop the approximately 425 riders that rode out from the Batavia Illinois VFW for the 11th Annual Big Thunder Run. The ride is organized to bring POW/MIA awareness as well as to provide much needed help to local veterans. The ride stopped at four locations along the way before returning to the Batavia VFW for a party and bike show. Some additional highlights of the day included Rolling Thunder performing a Remembrance Table Ceremony. This is a solemn ceremony during which the group remembers our Prisoners of War and Missing in Action who have not returned from war. A special mention during the ceremony was for the American POW, Bowe Bergdahl, who is still being held captive by the Taliban in Afghanistan. Bowe has been a POW for over 3 years now. An additional highlight was when the ride participants welcomed a busload of Veterans from the Hines VA Hospital as the party guests of honor. Much fun was had with door prizes and the giveaway of a 2012 Harley Davidson Soft Tail Deluxe. The lucky winner of the HD was Jeff Houghtaling of Aurora, IL. The celebration continued at the VFW with the band



ROADS WISCONSIN / NORTH ILLINOIS / NOVEMBER 2012

*Continues on page 7*





Back Country Roads performing for the crowd while door prizes were handed out.

Everyone involved would like to thank all the riders and participants, Back Country Roads, Hinks in Sycamore, The Brown Pub in Hinkley, Knuckleheads in Elburn, The Bristol Tap in Bristol and the Batavia VFW.

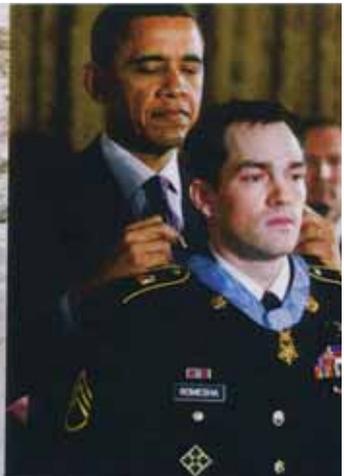
For more information about POW/MIA and the Big Thunder Run go to [www.rollingthunder11.com](http://www.rollingthunder11.com)





## 'Regular grunt' Romesha Awarded Medal of Honor

by Meghann Myers - Staff writer



**O**NE MAN EARNED the Medal of Honor for leading a counterattack against an estimated 400 insurgents at a remote combat outpost in the mountains of Afghanistan, but everyone from the soldier himself to President Obama has made sure to acknowledge the group effort it took to defend COP Keating on that day.

Former Staff Sgt. Clinton L. Romesha, 31, became the fourth living Medal of Honor recipient Feb. 11 at the White House, and the next day he was inducted into the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes. The two emotional ceremonies were attended by defense officials and Romesha's family, as well as his battle buddies and family members of the eight men who lost their lives Oct. 3, 2009.

During Feb. 11's White House ceremony, Romesha remained seated on stage in a room packed wall to wall with friends, family and fellow soldiers, there to watch the Commander-in-Chief present him with the nation's highest award for valor.

Romesha teared up during descriptions of his effort to keep U.S. casualties out of Taliban hands, and the "buddy transfusions"—blood transfusions in the field—that saved some soldiers' lives that day.

"A later investigation found that COP Keating was tactically indefensible," Obama said. "That's what these soldiers were asked to do: Defend the indefensible."

Romesha was a section leader in B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division during an enemy attack on the COP in Afghanistan's northeastern Nuristan province, nestled

at the bottom of a valley surrounded by the Hindu Kush mountains. The attack left eight American soldiers dead and two dozen others wounded.

Four officers were reprimanded for command failures that a U.S. Central Command investigation found led to Keating's vulnerability and subsequent attack. Long scheduled for closure because of its dangerous location, the outpost was cleared and destroyed following the battle.

The attack began before 6 a.m. Oct. 3, when the enemy fired recoilless rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, mortars, machine guns and rifles from all four sides of the COP. During the first three hours of the battle, mortars hit the COP and OP every 15 seconds, and in less than an hour, the enemy swarmed Keating.

"It doesn't look good," Romesha said at the time, according to multiple accounts.

He sought out reinforcements from nearby barracks under heavy fire, managing to engage two enemy machine-gun teams. Despite shrapnel wounds from a rocket-propelled grenade attack, he assembled a five-man team to fight back, called in air support and moved 100 meters under enemy fire to recover casualties.

But he didn't do it alone, Romesha stressed Feb. 12,

*Continues on page 9*





when he took the stage at the Pentagon to tell the story in his own words.

"Four hundred Taliban versus 52 American soldiers. Just doesn't seem fair," Romesha began. "To the Taliban."

The room erupted in laughter. The somber mood lightened.

"It was our home, and they simply couldn't have it," he continued.

"As you know, the Medal of Honor is not often given when things went well on a battlefield," he said. "Some say I'm a hero, but it doesn't make sense, because I got to come home, with few scars."

Romesha, who grew up Lake City, Calif., and enlisted as an armor crewman in 1999, returned to civilian life in

2011 after a deployment to Kosovo, two to Iraq and that one fateful tour in Afghanistan. Today, he works as a field safety specialist for an oil field construction firm in Minot, N.D., where he lives with his wife and three children.

Before he said anything about his actions on Oct. 3, 2009, Romesha read off the names of his fallen battle buddies: Staff Sgt. Justin Gallegos, Sgt. Michael Scusa, Staff Sgt. Vernon Martin, Spc. Stephan Mace, Pfc. Kevin Thomson, Spc. Christopher Griffin, Sgt. Joshua Kirk and Sgt. Joshua Hardt.

"It is on their behalf that I stand before you today, as just a regular grunt, so wonderfully recognized," he said, before asking his fellow B Troop brothers in arms to stand for another round of applause. \*

## MEDAL OF HONOR Official Citation

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

### STAFF SGT. CLINTON L. ROMESHA UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY AND INTREPIDITY in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Section Leader with Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, during combat operations against an armed enemy at Combat Outpost Keating, Kamdesh District, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan on 3 October 2009.

On that morning, Staff Sergeant Romesha and his comrades awakened to an attack by an estimated 300 enemy fighters occupying the high ground on all four sides of the complex, employing concentrated fire from recoilless rifles, rocket propelled grenades, anti-aircraft machine guns, mortars and small arms fire. Staff Sergeant Romesha moved uncovered under intense enemy fire to conduct a reconnaissance of the battlefield and seek reinforcements from the barracks before returning to action with the support of an assistant gunner. Staff Sergeant Romesha took out an enemy machine gun team and, while engaging a second, the generator he was using for cover was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade, inflicting him with shrapnel wounds.

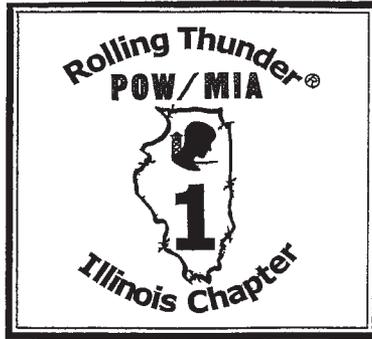
Undeterred by his injuries, Staff Sergeant Romesha continued to fight and upon the arrival of another soldier to aid him and the assistant gunner, he again rushed through the exposed avenue to assemble additional soldiers. Staff Sergeant Romesha then mobilized a five-man team and returned to the fight equipped with a sniper rifle. With complete disregard for his own safety, Staff Sergeant Romesha continually exposed himself to heavy enemy fire, as

he moved confidently about the battlefield engaging and destroying multiple enemy targets, including three Taliban fighters who had breached the combat outpost's perimeter.

While orchestrating a successful plan to secure and reinforce key points of the battlefield, Staff Sergeant Romesha maintained radio communication with the tactical operations center. As the enemy forces attacked with even greater ferocity, unleashing a barrage of rocket-propelled grenades and recoilless rifle rounds, Staff Sergeant Romesha identified the point of attack and directed air support to destroy over 30 enemy fighters. After receiving reports that seriously injured soldiers were at a distant battle position, Staff Sergeant Romesha and his team provided covering fire to allow the injured soldiers to safely reach the aid station. Upon receipt of orders to proceed to the next objective, his team pushed forward 100 meters under overwhelming enemy fire to recover and prevent the enemy fighters from taking the bodies of the fallen comrades.

Staff Sergeant Romesha's heroic actions throughout the day-long battle were critical in suppressing an enemy that had far greater numbers. His extraordinary efforts gave Bravo Troop the opportunity to regroup, reorganize and prepare for the counterattack that allowed the Troop to account for its personnel and secure Combat Post Keating. Staff Sergeant Romesha's discipline and extraordinary heroism above and beyond the call of duty reflect great credit upon himself, Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and the United States Army.





## **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. . .**

# 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](http://www.pow-miafamilies.org)



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# COL. BUD DAY: AMERICA LOSES A LEGENDARY HERO

By Attorney Rees Lloyd  
July 31, 2013  
NewsWithViews.com

America has lost one of its greatest, most inspiring military heroes and patriots: Col. George E. "Bud" Day (USAF, ret.), recipient of the Medal of Honor and more than seventy other decorations for valor, passed away on July 27, 2013, ending a remarkable life of service to American freedom.

Bud Day served in the USMC in WWII; in the Army between wars; and in the Air Force as a combat pilot in the wars in Korea and Vietnam.

Honored for his heroics in combat in three wars, he literally became a "legend in his own time" for his inspiring heroism in resisting his North Vietnamese communist captors as a prisoner of war in Vietnam, for which he received the Medal of Honor.

While the Medal of Honor and other decorations for valor on Bud Day's uniform attest to his inspirational courage, integrity, patriotism, and heroism, perhaps even more poignant evidence is the respect, admiration, and even love his fellow warriors and POW's hold and express for him.

Among them, former POW and now Senator John McCain, who has for years credited Bud Day with preserving his life when near death when both were POW's in the Hanoi Hilton, and has referred to him as the "bravest of the brave" and as his "leader and inspiration," issued a statement from his office in the Capitol on learning of Col. Day's passing:

"Today brings the sad news that my dear friend and comrade, Colonel George E. 'Bud' Day, USAF (Ret.) has passed away. I owe my life to Bud, and much of what I know about character and patriotism. He was the bravest man I ever knew, and his fierce resistance and resolute leadership set the example for us in prison of how to return home with honor. I will have much more to say about Bud's courage, kindness and sense of honor and duty this week. For now, I want to draw Americans' attention to the passing of this good man and great patriot, and to extend my deepest, most heartfelt condolences to Bud's wife, Dorie and his children. I will miss him terribly."

On Bud Day's life, Medal of Honor recipient, and Past President of the Medal of Honor Society, Col. Leo Thorsness (USAF, ret.), who was a POW in solitary confinement for a year in "Camp Punishment" in Hanoi in a six-foot wide cell next to Bud Day, wrote in his book, "Surviving Hell:

"Bud Day [was] one of the toughest POWs in North Vietnam...His story had become something of a legend: shot down and captured, a daring escape soon after, and a desperate journey south to safety. He was shot and captured within sight of the American line and brought to Hanoi where his legend had grown by the maximum resistance he offered as a prisoner. Bud was the hardest of the hard men in the Hanoi Hilton. (He would be awarded the Medal of Honor for the bravery he displayed in captivity.) I felt lucky he was next door to me."

Another Past President of the Medal of Honor Society, Maj. Gen. Patrick H. Brady (USA, ret.) who received the Medal of Honor as a "Dust Off" medical evacuation helicopter pilot credited with carrying out over 5,000 rescues of the wounded in Vietnam (see his book on "Dust Off: America's Battlefield Angels"), noted Bud Day's heroism in war was matched by his dedication to defending veterans rights in peace as a pro bono attorney suing the Department of Defense on behalf of veterans.

"Bud Day was a great man," said Gen. Brady, who is himself recognized as one of the most decorated combat veterans in U.S. history. "What is not as well known is what Bud Day did for veterans issues. He took on the Department of Defense when they reneged on the promise they made to all retirees on a life time of health care."

On Bud Day's passing on July 27, 2013, another legendary POW and American hero, Orson Swindle (USMC, ret.), who later served in the administration of President Ronald Reagan, was National Chairman of Veterans For McCain in 2008, and is presently a Senior Advisor to the Board of Directors of Combat Veterans For Congress PAC, wrote movingly in an e-mail entitled "Bud Day has flown West and God has the greatest of wingmen":

"To you all who knew Bud from our campaigns together and other walks of life. I sent this to our POW net earlier this evening. We have lost a great man, a great American, and a great friend ..."



# 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**

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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**

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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**

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Please visit the National website at: [www.rollingthunder1.com](http://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.

*Continues on page 15*

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](http://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



**Rolling Thunder<sup>®</sup>, Inc.**

A non-profit organization for  
**POW/MIA's and all American veterans**

Rolling Thunder<sup>®</sup>, 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 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.

## 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	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,815</b>
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.

### *God and the Soldier*

*God and the soldier  
All men adore  
In time of trouble,  
And no more;  
For when war is over  
And all things righted,  
God is neglected -  
And the old soldier  
slighted!!!*

*P-body (recovered)  
Author Unknown*





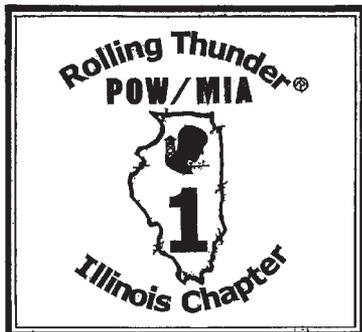
Observances of National POW/MIA Recognition Day are held across the country on military installations, ships at sea, state capitols, schools and veterans' facilities. It is traditionally observed on the **third Friday in September** each year. This observance is one of six days throughout the year that Congress has mandated the flying of the National League of Families' POW/MIA flag. The others are Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day and Veterans Day.

The flag is to be flown at major military installations, national cemeteries, all post offices, VA medical facilities, the World War II Memorial, Korean War Veterans Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the official offices of the secretaries of state, defense and veterans affairs, the director of the selective service system and the White House.

A Pentagon ceremony for National POW/MIA Recognition Day was held on Friday, Sept.21, 2012. This ceremony featured troops from each of the military services.

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**If You Think the Way We Do?**



**AND - You want to learn more,**



**come and Ride with a Purpose!**

**We meet on the First Wednesday  
of every month at 7:30 pm.**

**AT  
The V.F.W. in Warrenville, IL**



# 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	Jet Black Comedy
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

**12th Annual**



## **“Big Thunder” Run**

**October 6th 2013**

**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**

**JOHN BORLING, WHO SPENT NEARLY SEVEN YEARS AS A PRISONER OF WAR, FOUND AN EXTRAORDINARY WAY TO STAY SANE—EVEN AS HE WAS PLOTTING AN ESCAPE**



*Continues on page 21*



# POW

## Poet

BY DAWN RAFFEL

THE CELLS WERE HORRIFIC: cramped, dark, and blisteringly hot. The prisoners—hundreds of American servicemen captured by the Vietcong—endured torture, hunger, and crushing isolation. During the endless days and nights, in the bleak procession of weeks, months, and years of not knowing whether they'd ever go home or see their loved ones again, one thing pierced the utter desolation: the small sound of taps on the wall. From man to man, from cell to cell, a code was passed, a way to say "hello," to say "I am still alive."



Borling calls the cup at left his "only constant companion" in prison; above, First Lieutenant Borling in 1966.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNA KNOTT

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The tap alphabet was first brought into the North Vietnamese prison by a pilot who'd been shot down in 1965. These bare-knuckled ABCs were surreptitiously taught to new arrivals. With little explanation, one man would tap out the rhythms until the next man understood. Desperate, they learned fast. They also learned that to tap was to risk being beaten. The guards in the infamous Hoa Lo prison, sarcastically called the Hanoi Hilton by the POWs and the same prison in which Senator John McCain was held, dispensed brutal punishment if they heard any sounds from the prisoners. And yet the taps persisted—a lifeline out of hell.

**A**IR FORCE PILOT John Borling, imprisoned for nearly seven years after his plane was shot down northeast of Hanoi in 1966, briefly occupied a cell next to Jeremiah Denton, Jr., who later became a senator. "We were dying from the heat," Borling says as he describes a typical tap exchange. When the guards opened the cell doors, the prisoners, who spent their days in total darkness, were blinded by the sunlight. "I tapped 'hot' on the wall to Jerry," says Borling, "and one of us tapped 'dying,' and one of us tapped, 'Pray for rain.'" Incredibly, within an hour, there were thunderclouds and a drenching, cooling rain. "The temperature must have dropped 15 degrees," Borling says. "Kept us alive. And it stayed cool for weeks."

But Borling took tapping far beyond simple declarations. He imagined beauty under monstrous circum-

stances to show that his spirit couldn't be destroyed. A self-described and wryly self-deprecating "old fighter pilot," he had always loved literature. Imprisoned with no pen or pencil, nothing to write with but his mind and heart, he composed verse in his head and tapped it out on the walls. "In order to stay human, in order to stay sane, in order to stay competitive, I needed to create," he says. The poems were gifts for the other men, and they were also for his wife, Myrna—a legacy in case he didn't make it out alive but someone else did. (Myrna later told him that she knew all along that he was alive; "she could feel me," he says. Still married after all these years, they have two grown daughters.)

**S**OME OF BORLING'S prison poems are about flying planes and the freedom that represents. Others are what he calls "the dark and bitter stuff." He also wrote holiday poems. "We couldn't celebrate them, but the poignancy of Christmas and New Year's and Hanukkah and Easter was there with us," he says. "I would create those poems and pass them through the walls as a present, and the guys would tap back. 'Thanks very much. When are we going to have the suicide pact?' Because you want to laugh, you want to cry."

Borling says writing was "a way to make time an ally" and to open an armored heart. But he also risked life and limb in an effort to escape. At one point, his captors had tied him to a board; Borling painstakingly worked

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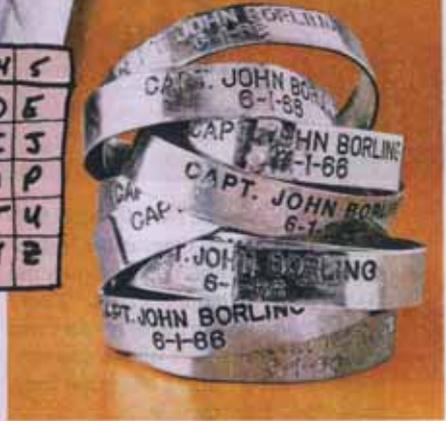


Borling (circled) with his squadron in 1966, the year he was shot down; the tap code was based on an alphabet grid (below left); after Borling's release, people sent him POW bracelets bearing his name.

a nail out of the wood and hid it in his mouth. Later, he used the nail to free himself from the hell cuffs—so named because they caused extraordinary pain and sometimes broke bones—and from the manacles on his ankles, giving his body and spirit a rest before slipping them back on as the guards returned.

	1	2	3	4	5
1	A	B	C	D	E
2	F	G	H	I	J
3	L	M	N	O	P
4	Q	R	S	T	U
5	V	W	X	Y	Z

Knowing the prisoner in the next cell, a man named Darrell Pyle, was also suffering terribly, he used the nail to bore a tiny hole in the wall between them. "It was Sunday," Borling recalls, "and we said the Lord's Prayer through this little speck of a hole, and then I passed the pick through to him and told him how to work his cuffs." The two men hatched a plan. On a rainy Saturday night, they propped their bed boards so they could climb into the ceiling, and then made it to the roof. They had planned to get to Hanoi's Metropole Hotel, where foreigners stayed, and claim asylum or at least tell the story of how they were being tortured. But



Pyle couldn't get out of his leg irons—the guards had changed the locks—and the men were caught. They were badly beaten and thrown back into their cells.

**A**FTER 1970, with Ho Chi Minh dead, the prisoners received slightly better treatment, Borling says. Around the same time, Americans at home began wearing metal POW bracelets, copper bands engraved with the names of missing soldiers. Finally, on February 12, 1973, the first 142 of 591 POWs—including Borling—were released, to the joy of their families and the nation. One man



Continues on page 24



Borling, with wife Myrna and daughter Lauren in 1973 (top right) and today (bottom right), was highly decorated during his 37 years in the Air Force.



had been held since 1964. By March 29 of the same year, Operation Homecoming was complete. The returning POWs were hailed as heroes. "There was a great outpouring of respect and affection on the part of the country, which needed a boost after that long, hard war," Borling says.

**Y**OU MIGHT THINK the first thing a freed prisoner would do—after calling his wife!—would be to request a good meal, but Borling asked for a tape recorder. Initially, he didn't recognize the machine. Seven years earlier, when he was shot down, a tape recorder was still a bulky device with reels. After someone at the military base showed him how to use a cassette, he recorded the poems he'd recited for years in his mind.

Then it was time to go home and celebrate. "President Nixon had a big party for us," Borling recalls. "He opened up the entire White House,

and we went wandering into the Lincoln Bedroom, looking in the drawers. One of our guys did a handstand on the Steinway eagle-leg grand piano in the East Room." The party ended at about 11 p.m., when Nixon declared he had to go to bed. "By the way," adds Borling, "about 50 children were born nine months later."

You might think another thing a freed prisoner would do would be to find a desk job. Not Borling. He went back to active duty for another 23 years before retiring with the rank of major general. Now 73, he's still writing poetry and still keeps in shape; he ran the Chicago Marathon at 70 and plans to do it again when he's 80.

Through the decades, the former POWs stayed in touch. "I remember long, intense talks about how can we better serve the nation, how can we

BORLING: COURTESY L. MATIASKO

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use this experience to be, in a humble sense, motivators to the higher calling that is America," says Borling.

**R**EMARKABLY, these men who had given so much believed they owed something to their country, rather than the reverse: "We all felt that we had a lifetime of paying back that we had to give."

Borling's belief in the importance of service inspired him to start SOS America (Service Over Self), a foundation that advocates a year of mandatory military service for young men to make them, he says, "better citizens, husbands, and fathers."

It was perhaps inevitable that Borling would return to Vietnam. In 2002, he traveled there with a group

of White House Fellows. Ironically, the group stayed at the Metropole Hotel in Hanoi, the same hotel that had long ago beckoned in his imagination as a place of refuge. In the morning, before everyone else got up, Borling went for a run, back to what had once been the Hanoi Hilton. A hotel now stood at the back of the grounds. Borling went in. Up on the fourth floor, he found tennis and volleyball courts and a swimming pool. "As best as I could determine, I was standing in what was once a terrible place, where they took you in initially and hurt you. Looking down into the prison courtyard that's now a children's playground, I thought, God must have a great sense of circularity or a hell of a sense of humor—and isn't that fine?" ■

## WORDS STRONGER THAN WALLS

### SONNET 4 45 43 (SONNET FOR US)

The world without, within our weathered walls,  
Remote, like useless windows, small and barred.  
Here, months and years run quickly down dim halls,  
But says, the daze, the empty days come hard.  
I used to count a lot, count everything,  
Like exercise and laps and words of prayer.  
What hurt that hunger, thoughts that thirst can bring,  
Companions, waking, sleeping, always there.  
But policy insanities unwind,  
Till bad is good and betterment is worse.  
So refuge blanket, net, and molding mind  
Create a mingling dream-real universe.  
I'm told that steel is forged by heavy blows.  
If only men were steel, but then, who knows?

John Borling



To mark the 40th anniversary of the return of American POWs, the Pritzker Military Library has published Borling's book, *Taps on the Walls: Poems from the Hanoi Hilton*.





Members of Rolling Thunder Chapter 1 veterans group — including, from left, Jim Slenk of Batavia, Bill Sharpness of Kingston, Ronda Mahar of Wheaton and Bill Atkinson of Carol Stream — rented billboards, including one in Hanover Park, to call attention to the plight of the lone American POW, Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl of Idaho.

# Billboards served as yellow ribbons

By **CHRISTOPHER PLACEK**  
 cplacek@dailyherald.com

From the Vietnam War grew a movement among veterans groups and families to make sure no prisoners of war were forgotten.

That was a different time and a different type of conflict; POWs were not uncommon amid the jungle warfare and airstrikes.

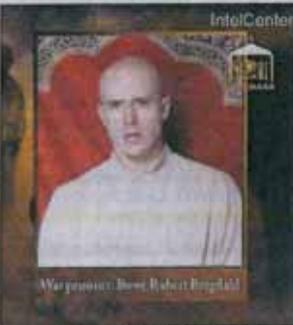
Today, only one soldier is classified by the Department of Defense as "missing/captured" in current international

**MORE ONLINE**

- Watch a FOX News interview with Oliver North about Bowe Bergdahl's recapture by the Taliban.
- Visit the POW network site.

**AT DAILYHERALD.COM**

conflicts: Bowe Bergdahl, a 25-year-old Army sergeant from a small town in Idaho who has been in captivity in



A Taliban video released Dec. 25, 2009, showed U.S. soldier Bowe Bergdahl, who was captured more than five months earlier in eastern Afghanistan.

ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE PHOTO

Continues on page 27





# Female Engagement TEAMS

BY KELLY VON LUNEN

## Building Trust in Afghanistan and Iraq

**I**n Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. forces are making use of all-female teams to obtain information that their male counterparts have been traditionally denied. While not technically on combat missions, these women Marines are doing their parts in the fight against terrorism abroad.

The Army led the way with all-female squads less than a year after the start of the Iraq War with *Team Lioness*, a group of some 20 women with HQ & HQ Co., 1st Eng. Bn., 1st BCT, 1st Inf. Div. During missions, commanders saw that male U.S. soldiers made Iraqi women uncomfortable. Some women refused to be searched by these men, making deadly weapons harder to detect.

When the Army added female soldiers—*Lionesses*—to these missions, the Iraqi women relaxed to a degree that the *Lionesses* were able to obtain crucial information from them.

### 'We Know Women Are Here to Help'

Today, Female Engagement Teams (FETs) consisting of 46 personnel work to reach Afghan women. These select Marines show respect for Muslim traditions by

often covering their heads and shoulders with scarves. The first such units were fielded in Afghanistan in February 2008.

"It's part of the effort to show we're sensitive to local culture," Capt. Jennifer Gregoire told the Associated Press. "If you show your hair, it's kind of like seeing a nude picture here, because women are very covered up."

As Gregoire led an FET in the Now Zad Valley of Helmand province, she acknowledged that women are still technically barred from combat units in the Marine Corps.

"But... I think [other Marines] understand that what we're doing is vital to operations and vital to the counterinsurgency program they want to run," Gregoire continued.

Finding Afghan women is the initial challenge because many villagers are wary of meeting any Marines.

"Deep in Taliban territory, Afghans don't want their women meeting American women," National Public Radio's Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson reported. "Not even culturally sensitive ones like these Marines, who cover their hair and necks with scarves."

Nelson points out that these American women wear military uniforms, carry

**Above left:** Marine Corps Cpl. Sarah B. Furrel, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, teaches Afghan girls to count at a school in Now Zad, Afghanistan, on Jan. 2, 2010.

**Above right:** Marine Cpl. Marissa L. Stuart works with an Iraqi woman and child in Kabani, Iraq, on June 28, 2008.

weapons and work with men they aren't related to. All of these concepts are foreign to Afghan women.

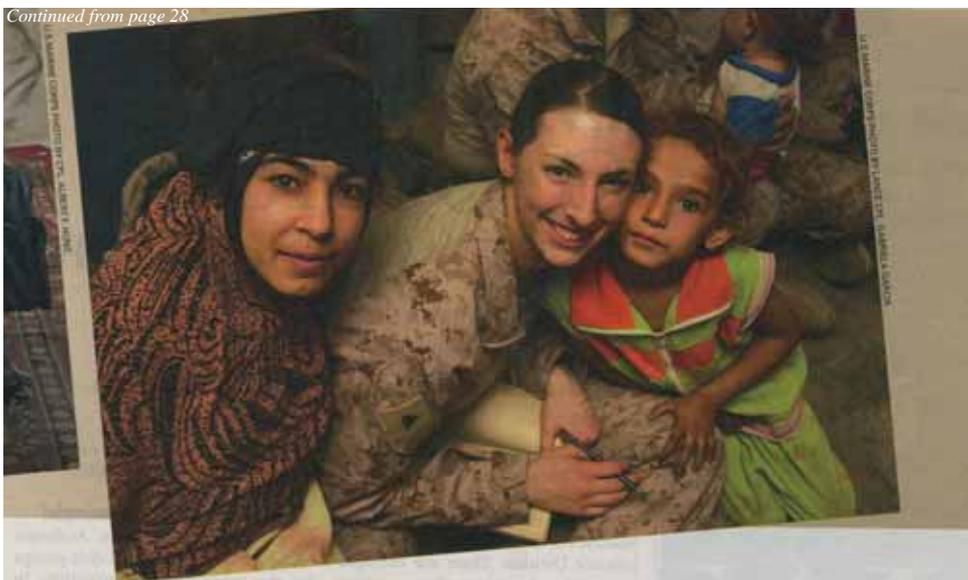
"Besides the chronic shortage of female interpreters, [FETs] must overcome centuries of mistrust that Afghans have in foreigners," Nelson reported. "Then there's the added hurdle of needing Afghan men's permission before they can speak to their women."

Former *Washington Post* military correspondent Thomas E. Rick says that Afghans don't seem to mind the FETs.

"Female Marines are extended the respect shown to men, but granted the access reserved for women," he reported. "In other words, the culture is more flexible than we've conditioned ourselves to think... Local women wield more influence than many of us imagined—influence on their husbands, brothers, and especially their adolescent sons."

As an FET went along on one patrol,

*Continues on page 29*



**"Your men come to fight, but we know the women are here to help."**

*—an Afghan elder*

its members were invited inside several compounds, while the males stayed outside. "And in each case, the FET succeeded in breaking the ice and getting women to open up and discuss their daily lives and concerns," Rick wrote.

FETs deliver humanitarian aid into the compounds, where the local women have access to it. At marketplaces, "the strongest, fastest or most-feared men get it," according to Rick.

In addition, some of the Afghan women said they anticipate the opportunity to meet American women Marines, which suggests that the Afghan men hadn't punished them for speaking to Americans.

"One gentleman with a gray beard who opened his home to the FET put it this way: 'Your men come to fight, but we know the women are here to help,'" Rick reported.

### **'An Eye-Opener' in Iraq**

Smaller teams comprising three female Marines, a female Iraqi interpreter and a female corpsman are currently being used in Iraq.

Children meet the teams on the street

and tell their mothers, according to the 1st Marine Logistics Group. Then up to 30 Iraqi women meet with Iraqi Women's Engagement Teams (IWETs).

The IWETs also go door-to-door speaking to women to find out what issues are important to them. One such team conducted a census patrol in an Iraqi town. It was able to meet and talk with the local Iraqi females one-on-one, segregated from men.

"It was an eye-opener," said Sgt. Veronica Deleon. "We realized Iraqi people are ordinary individuals that want an opportunity at life and a future for their children, just like we do."

The IWET met with more than half of the female adult population of the town. The team questioned the Iraqi women about what types of assistance they need. Iraqis requested better electricity, financial assistance, medical facilities and chlorine tablets for their drinking water.

Many of the women have husbands who have either been killed or are detained. Because of this, the women need money.

"The women were especially interested in medical assistance," Maj. Margaret

Weitzel reported.

The Iraqi government provides a "traveling doctor" who visits every now and then, but the women expressed their desire for a permanent facility that includes a doctor specializing in female health care.

"The closest medical facility is ... too far to walk for those of us who don't have cars," one woman said.

They also seek jobs. The women want to work to raise money for food for their children.

One woman, whose two sons had recently received cleaning jobs, said things are looking much better in Iraq. "With the Americans' help, Baghdad is even getting better. ... The Americans always help me. The Americans care for us more than our own people. They give us mercy."

Female Marines report benefitting from these meetings as well.

"[The visit] made us aware of why we are here and how important it is to conduct these missions so we can continue to earn and keep their trust," Deleon said. ☐

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March 2010 • [WWW.VFVC.ORG](http://WWW.VFVC.ORG)

## TYPE II DIABETES

# Vietnam Veterans Battle a New Enemy

*U.S. Army armored personnel carriers stir up clouds of dust over a defoliated area of central Vietnam.*



By Jim Hall

**S**eptember 1968, the Republic of Vietnam, somewhere near Pleiku: The young private first class stopped filling sandbags used to reinforce his fighting position and scanned the sky trying to spot the airplane he heard droning in the distance. Then he saw it, silver and grey in the early morning light. The soldier wiped sweat from his forehead and the corners of his eyes with the back of his hand as the plane banked and came in low over the jungle canopy and scrub bordering the road in and out of the region.

As the pilot leveled off, thin clouds of spray came from under the wings of the Fairchild C-123 Provider. The spray widened and all but disappeared as the powerful defoliant, Agent Orange, fell on the vegetation below.

Two days later the soldier was

among two platoons patrolling through the sprayed area. He noted the dead and shriveled, grey-brown growth as he made his way through what had been an overgrown area bustling with the sound of insects and birds, an area where a resourceful enemy could have set up an ambush. Now the area was shriveled, brown and quietly alien. The soldiers' movements and their own breathing were the predominate sounds.

As they moved along, the soldiers stirred up small clouds of dust as they brushed against a bush or small tree.

February 2007, the waiting area of a VA hospital in Pennsylvania: The former private, now going on 60 years of age, sat looking at the papers he had been given. His 5'11" frame was slumped forward, and he had added 50 pounds in the wrong places to the 165 he weighed in Vietnam. His hair had

thinned and turned grey.

He had just been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. His mother had diabetes before she died. It was something older people got, he thought.

The veteran in the story above is fictitious, but events and circumstances used to form this composite are real. The reality is that 90 to 95 percent of those with diabetes have Type 2, and the incidence among Vietnam veterans is substantially higher than the general population. In fact, the disease is now a presumptive service-connected disability for Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange.

Diabetes is a disease to be taken very seriously. It is recognized as a leading cause of death and disability in the United States. It is the leading cause of adult blindness, end stage renal disease and non-traumatic lower-extremity amputations. Diabetics are four times

DAV MAGAZINE

*Continues on page 31*

more likely to suffer coronary heart disease and strokes, and more.

There are three types of diabetes: Type 1 (insulin dependent diabetes mellitus) most often develops in children and young adults; Type 2 usually develops in adults; and gestational diabetes, discovered during pregnancy, usually disappears after pregnancy, but women who suffer it have a higher risk of Type 2 diabetes later in life.

The American Diabetes Association estimates more than 20 million children and adults in the United States have diabetes. More than 14 million are diagnosed while some 6 million are unaware they have the disease. Many of those who are unaware are Vietnam veterans.

During a Taking Control of Your Diabetes conference last year in Columbus, Ohio, Urban Miyares, the DAV's Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year for 1994, was the keynote speaker. In 1968, Miyares collapsed in a diabetic coma during an enemy attack on his unit in Vietnam. Since then he has suffered blindness, hearing loss, kidney disease and neuropathy as a result of diabetes. He has also become a diabetes education advocate, successful businessperson, motivational speaker and athlete.

According to Miyares, service connection for diabetes is increasing dramatically in the veteran population, especially among Vietnam veterans exposed to Agent Orange.



"Diabetes is quickly becoming one the biggest costs to the VA health care system," Miyares said. "Veterans definitely need to get educated on this devastating disease."

For veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, getting educated includes getting examined and diagnosed. Then you need to see a DAV National

Service Officer (NSO).

"I would say 20 percent or more of the Vietnam veterans we see are diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes," said Ronald F. Hope, Supervisory NSO at the National Service Office in Winston-Salem, N.C.

A combat service-connected Vietnam veteran himself, Hope has been advocating on behalf of and assisting veterans filing claims for service-connected disability for nearly three decades. He encourages Vietnam veterans to take immediate action regarding Type 2 diabetes.

"If you are diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes, you need to see your nearest DAV NSO to assist you in filing for service-connection for this disease," Hope said. "Bring us the diagnosis and DD 214 to prove Vietnam service and we'll do the rest."

To learn more about diabetes visit the American Diabetes Association Web site at [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org). There is also a diabetes fact sheet available at the VA Web site, [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov). 



**Wounded Warriors...**  
Chapter 95, Oceanside, Calif., donated DVD players, electric razors and restaurant gift cards to injured Marines and sailors at the Wounded Warrior Center, Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. The center, located near the base naval hospital, houses those who were injured in Iraq and Afghanistan.

# KOREAN WAR VETERANS' TRIBUTE

by Luis Vargas

**J**ULY 27, 2013 WILL MARK the 60th anniversary of the end of the Korean War. It is our duty and responsibility to honor, respect and remember the service and sacrifice of the courageous men and women who served in "The Forgotten War."

I was a ninth grader when the Korean War started and it wasn't long before the upperclassman volunteered for the service. Our votech instructor, a World War II Navy veteran, was recalled to active duty. My

friend and neighbor who volunteered for the Army was declared missing in action. His parents died never knowing the fate of their son. I was enrolled in Army JROTC and served on a marksmanship team that participated in military funerals for returning servicemen who had been killed in action. These experiences helped me to understand the real meaning of service and sacrifice by members of our military.

The Korean War veteran needs no eulogy from me or any other man. He



has written his own history in red upon the enemy's breast. We must honor his patience under adversity, his courage under fire and his modesty in victory. Keep them in our prayers and cherish the sweet memories they left behind.

Truly, these Korean War veterans exemplify those three hallowed words echoed by their commander, General Douglas MacArthur: "Duty-Honor-Country." \*

## Korean War Recalled on 60th Anniversary of Armistice

THE MILITARY ORDER of the Purple Heart (MOPH) proudly salutes the Veterans of the Korean War on the 60th anniversary of the signing of the armistice that brought the war to an end. Sometimes referred to as the "Forgotten War," the service and supreme sacrifice of more than 137,000 American service members should never be forgotten. Nor can it be forgotten by the 4,256 patriot members of the MOPH who still bear the scars of the Korean War for which they received the Purple Heart medal.

One of the most brutal and unpopular wars in our young country's history, the Korean War was characterized by savagely violent fighting and the severe hardships that were endured by the American, Unit-

ed Nations and South Korean soldiers who were drastically unprepared for the initial attack, all the way through the frozen Chosin Reservoir.

Because the Korean War came so closely on the heels of World War II, it was very unpopular on the home front. Then and now, the American people had no understanding of the significance of the war, nor did they understand either the savage fighting that was taking place or the hardships that our servicemen and women had to endure while serving in Korea. Even President Truman called America's involvement in the Korean hostilities a "police action," to avoid reminding the country that we were again at war.



## Vets in Focus

### Triple Amputee Quick to Overcome Obstacles

Airborne soldier Monte Bernardo is determined to recover quicker than average so that he can pursue his dreams of becoming an aerospace engineer.

The war in Afghanistan has produced yet another story of true grit and raw determination in battling what others would see as adversity. It is the story of Army Sgt. Monte Bernardo, a triple amputee.

Only 47 days after losing both legs, he was walking at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. And only a couple of months after that, he was driving, despite having also lost his left hand to a bomb.

"I've always been one to push above and beyond," Bernardo said the day he first drove Walter Reed's adaptive van. "I set my standards high and then I try to exceed them."

On July 4, 2012, the 30-year-old was severely wounded while on patrol just south of Kandahar in Afghanistan. It was his second tour in that country with the 4th Sqn., 73rd Cav Regt., 4th BCT, 82nd Abn. Div.

As a cavalry scout and team leader, Bernardo was leading a foot patrol in an area where some of his unit members had been killed in previous explosions. The patrol was ambushed, and Bernardo's men ran to a berm for cover.

But there was a bomb buried in that berm. Bernardo went to sit down and used his hand to catch his weight, detonating the bomb.

"I sat right on top of that bomb," he told the *Washington Post*. "My buddy came running through the smoke. I asked him if my legs were gone and he said, 'Yah, your legs are gone.' I was like, 'All right, that sucks.'"



**MONTE BERNARDO**

**WAR ZONE:** Afghanistan

**DATE WIA:** July 4, 2012

**UNIT:** 4th Sqn., 73rd Cav Regt., 4th BCT, 82nd Abn. Div.

**MOS:** Cavalry scout

At Walter Reed, Monte Bernardo is recuperating at record speeds after losing both legs and part of his left arm in Afghanistan last year.

And that has been Bernardo's guiding attitude ever since. His sense of humor has not wavered. He says he would do it all again. His determination is inspiring.

"Apparently, I'm pretty quick at recovering from what I heard from everybody," he told a Washington, D.C., news station. "I'm relearning how to use a hand that's not mine, legs that aren't mine."

Bernardo's brother, Frank, calls him an inspiration. "As soon as he can do something, he does it," he said.

When he heard that the stay at Walter Reed for a triple amputee ranges from 18 months to three years, he said "no way," and vowed to get back on the road within a year so that he could begin college.

The day Bernardo began driving at Walter Reed, he did it with ease, saying it felt "natural." He expressed his frustration with the traffic, joking that D.C. drivers are "stupid." When a reporter riding with him asked whether or not he was nervous, Bernardo laughed.

"I jumped out of airplanes for the last six years, and I stepped on a bomb," he said. "What's there to be nervous about?"

The Petaluma, Calif., native joined the Army in 2006. His family says it is love of country that inspired him to enlist.

"He would give the shirt off his back to help others and is an amazing person and keeps asking about his guys back in Afghanistan," Frank said at the time his little brother was wounded.

Bernardo grew up on a dairy farm and then became a plumber. His 11-year-old daughter, Felicity, is by his account, the light of his life.

When he leaves Walter Reed, he is moving to Texas and enrolling at Texas A&M to study aerospace engineering. His brother played rugby and graduated from that school.

Last Nov. 17, Bernardo was a guest at a Texas A&M football game in College Station where he was honored in an unexpected way. Representatives from *Operation Finally Home* recognized Bernardo's service. They announced they were building him a mortgage-free adaptive home in the King Oaks community of Bryan-College Station.

"It's all worth it to have people like this [supporting you]," Bernardo said after hearing the announcement in front of thousands of people. "I'd do it again in a second. I wouldn't go back on it." ☛

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# A Conversation with Karl Marlantes

The best-selling author on his experiences in Vietnam, the struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and the importance of ritual and ceremony

Last year, Karl Marlantes delivered a bombshell to the publishing world in the form of *Matterhorn: A Novel of the Vietnam War*, a 600-page novel about an infantry officer serving in Vietnam.

Inspired by his own service in the war, the DAV life member of Chapter 43, Bellevue, Wash., struggled for more than 37 years to complete *Matterhorn*. Upon its release, the novel quickly became a *New York Times* best-seller and garnered critical accolades and awards for the author.

But hidden in the struggle of getting *Matterhorn* to print is the story of another book, *What It Is Like to Go to War*. Marlantes wrote his second book both as a means to get *Matterhorn* published and as a way to come to grips with the demons of the war which haunted him.

A work of nonfiction, *What It Is Like to Go to War* was written as Marlantes settled into life as a business leader and family man. Yet beneath this tranquil, seemingly normal life was the wreckage of a former Marine officer who was battered by his war experience.

*What It Is Like to Go to War* draws on the wisdom of ancient texts on combat, as well as enlightening conversations with friends, fellow veterans and, in particular, mythology scholar and author Joseph Campbell, who brings Marlantes to tears with a piece of long-forgotten wisdom.

Marlantes recently sat down with the DAV to discuss his most recent published work.

**DAV:** Can you tell me about the timing of writing *Matterhorn* and *What It Is Like to Go to War*? Did you start writing one before the other or did you always intend to write both?

**Marlantes:** I started working on *Matterhorn* extremely early. I started writing it in the '70s and I couldn't get anyone to touch it or to read the manuscript. So about the end of the '80s some of my friends, who are probably experts in the publishing industry, told me, "No wonder you can't get a big fat fiction book published because no one knows your name or wants to take a gamble on an unknown name who writes a big fat fiction book. You need to write a nonfiction type of book." That kind of put it in the back of my head. You get a nonfiction book

published and then you get *Matterhorn* published. Quite frankly by 1990, I was cracking up with PTSD. I had no idea of what it was. But I started to get some hints [that] what was going on may have had something to do with the war. But I had never heard of PTSD.

I was overseas in Singapore. So I thought I should try to come to grips with some of the things that were bothering me. I was starting to have nightmares about certain things that had happened. That along with this thought that I should write a non-fiction book first led me to start working on *What It Is Like to Go to War*. And I basically started to work out some of my demons. And in the course of it I started to think that if I'm dealing with this then other guys must be dealing with it too. I also



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wished I would have known some of this stuff before I joined the Marine Corps, so I started thinking about young people going off to war to start a career. And finally came this idea that our culture is so bad about talking about combat. Veterans face isolation just by the fact that they have faced this situation. It's like a mystic; they can't even tell you what it was like because it was so different. But this silence we have for a combat veteran comes from fear. We don't want to embarrass him. From the veteran's side, it's, "I don't want to say something because they may think I am a crazy killer." We keep quiet. I didn't know my father was in the Battle of the Bulge until I was 50 years old.

**DAV:** That is amazing.

**Mariantes:** Yeah, you know I didn't even know it. He had some funny stories about getting drunk on Calvados in Normandy because that is acceptable. You can't talk about the other stuff.

**DAV:** Is there a value to that silence?

**Mariantes:** No, I don't think it's a value. It's a disservice. There is a code in the military that says you can't whine and you can't brag. Well, as I tell people, war is 95 percent things to complain about and 4 percent of things to brag about, so that doesn't leave much left to talk about.

So what is going on here, it is a disservice to both loved ones back home and to the veterans themselves, because this isolation does lead to more self-medication and to suicide. And breaking down this barrier about having a veteran being able to talk freely about his experience and having people who love him find out what happened, you know, I think it would be a great, great help. The military can't solve that one. It is up to us.

**DAV:** It seems that our military today has embraced the importance of saying goodbye to fallen comrades in small ceremonies. I am sure from what I have seen at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial that is a place where saying goodbye has happened quite a lot.

**Mariantes:** You are on to something very important. The memorial is the place for Vietnam veterans to touch, physically touch that time period and mourn those dead people because that also is a symbolic, ceremonial part of our culture that we left behind in the so-called "Enlightenment." We threw a lot of the baby out with the bathwater. We have lost a lot of these rituals, a lot of these symbols of the more spiritual life. I think this loss is to our detriment. The wall is a place where people go to mourn, and it's because it is a place and a piece of art—all of that is important and it works. It works.

**DAV:** You talk about combat veterans being part of a club, which can be a means of them exchanging stories and bonding over shared experience. How useful do you think today's veterans service organizations (VSOs) are in this regard and how can they be better?

**Mariantes:** I think VSOs are extremely important because so many of them facilitate a successful transition to civilian life by helping veterans with employment and education. The DAV—all the work you do in your way helps integrate these people back into the culture because they need help, whether they are disabled because of physical or psychological wounds. The DAV helped me get my PTSD rating. You guys cleared the way because the paperwork was such a challenge.

But there is a point where VSOs fall short. And not that these organizations can do something about it. The point where it falls short is that these are still veterans talking to veterans. What we need are veterans talking to non-veterans. And, how do we do that? That is why I write about this isolation veterans experience. It can also happen in groups. It certainly helped me tremendously to talk with a veterans group about what I did in the war. I was able to do that with other veterans at the Department of Veterans Affairs. But we haven't gotten to the point where we feel comfortable or safe talking with non-veterans. I think it is important for VSOs to find a way to get non-veterans and veterans speaking openly to one another. Veterans need someone to listen and ask questions in a way that is not judging. What I am worried about is veterans-only clubs and such increasing the isolation.

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**DAV:** When I read your writing, your descriptive gifts really stand out. And the idea of Vietnam being a “beautiful untouched jungle” makes me want to see it. At so many points in your writing, Vietnam is a jungle paradise yet it intertwines with these cruel, savage images of combat. I’m curious to know how that feels when you are looking at this beautiful countryside and all of a sudden you lose a friend there. Can you ever go back and look at this countryside in the same way?

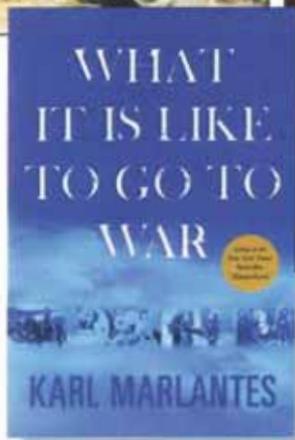
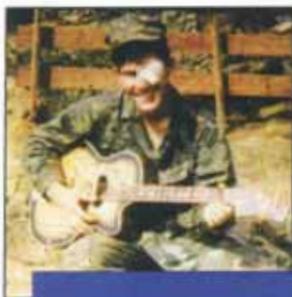
**Marlantes:** No, you will never look at it the same, but it doesn’t necessarily mean you will never have a positive experience with it. In fact, being aware of death, which the combat veteran has drilled into his head, makes looking at the beauty even more intense. You know life and death are around you. You know how sweet life is. And you may only get to see this a few times in your life, so you vow to really enjoy it today. It goes back to that near spiritual experience—the here and now. It tends to

focus you and even deepens the experience. Nowadays, I’ll look at this scene of beauty and it will occur to me my radio operator who died in Vietnam will never see this. And it makes me sad, and I’m getting sad just talking to you about it. But you know what? It deepens the experience. It doesn’t ruin it.

**DAV:** There must be a process one goes through to get to where it’s not ruined or to where it is deepened.

**Marlantes:** Yes, it took decades before I could look at landscape and not think about where I would set out machine guns. I would just be driving down a country road and automatically say to myself, “That tree line is going to have to get defended.” It was just automatic. Thankfully it doesn’t happen as much anymore because I live in Washington and we have a lot of tree lines.

*For the full interview with Karl Marlantes, visit [www.davv.org](http://www.davv.org).*



Above left, as a young U.S. Marine Corps first lieutenant, Karl Marlantes plays guitar. Above, for heroism in combat he is awarded the Navy Cross. Left, Marlantes funneled his war experiences into the new release, *What It Is Like To Go To War*.



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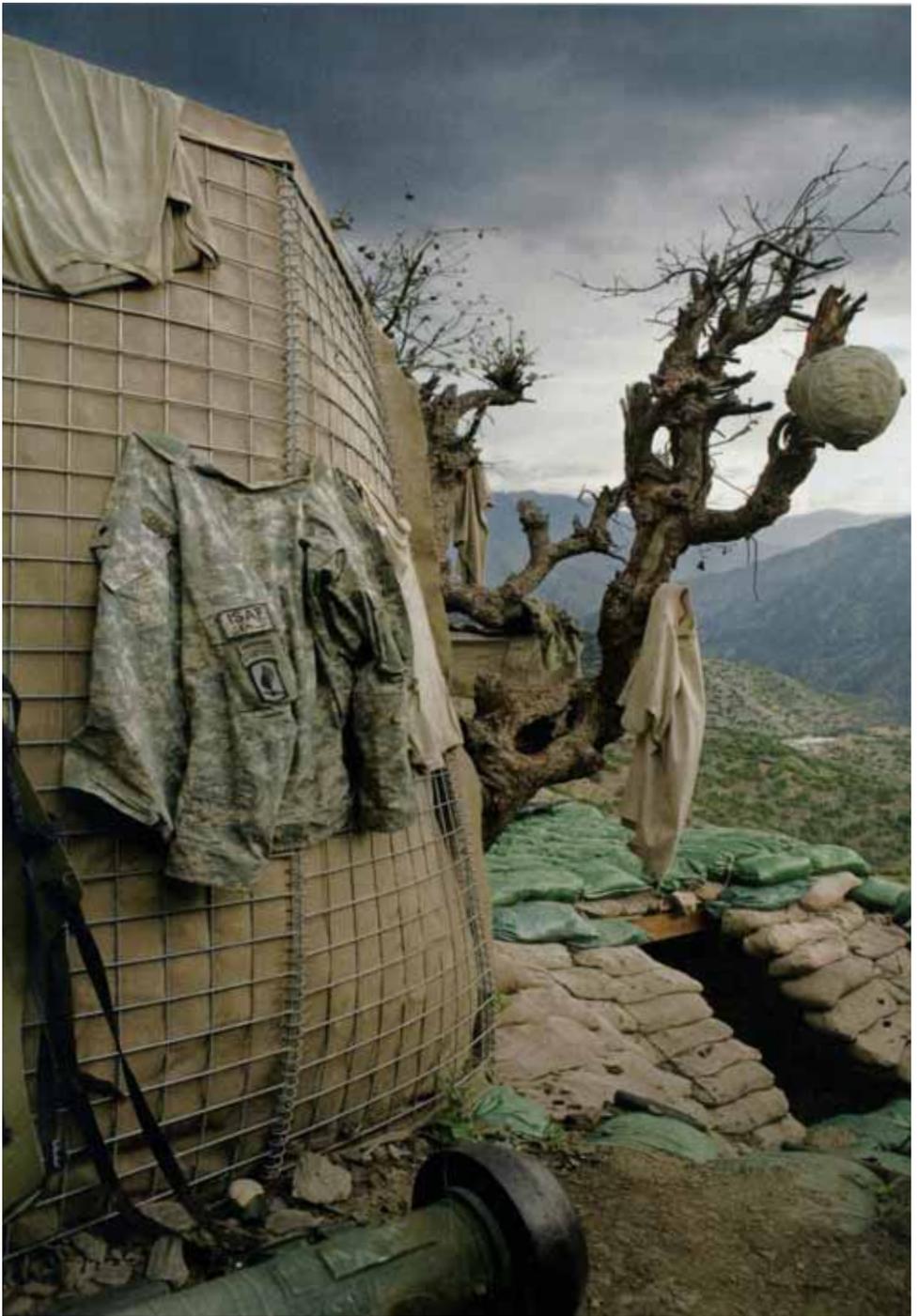
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# Dispatches from Afghanistan's Valley of Death

By Rob Lewis

Photographer Tim Hetherington shares his experiences from Outpost Restrepo

In 2007, the war in Afghanistan ran a distant second to Iraq in competition for the attention of the American public, even though a fierce battle was raging against a resurgent Taliban and an increasingly powerful al Qaeda.

That same year, author Sebastian Junger (*The Perfect Storm*) and acclaimed photographer Tim Hetherington dug in with the soldiers of Battle Company of the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne in the Korengal Valley, a stark, craggy basin of Kunar Province often referred to as the deadliest place on Earth.

Perhaps "dug in" isn't the right term. The company leaders made a bold decision to go farther into the "Valley of Death" than soldiers on previous rotations. This meant Battle Company soldiers engaged in an average of four to five firefights a day for nearly 14 months.

One of Battle Company's first losses was its spirited medic, Pfc. Juan Restrepo. To honor their fallen comrade, the soldiers named their new home Outpost Restrepo. The glorified bunker served as a home and a thin line of defense for the soldiers, who formed a close bond under hellish conditions.

The assignment at Restrepo turned out to be a wealth of inspiration for the two civilians. The assignment was originally for a *Vanity Fair* article on soldiers fighting in the Korengal. Junger interviewed the soldiers and handled the written word while Hetherington captured dozens of rich and expressive photographs.



Tim Hetherington

Hetherington also used his keen eye to capture hours of video footage which was combined with post-deployment interviews of Battle Company soldiers to create the documentary film "Restrepo." The award-winning documentary premiered at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival and went on to earn high praise from critics for its unblinking soldier's eye view of relentless combat.

"Restrepo" received a nationwide theatrical release last year and is available on DVD. For more information, visit <http://restrepothemovie.com/>.

Next came Junger's book, *War*, a visceral and thoughtful meditation on life and death at Restrepo as well as the very nature of man and battle. The book was met with critical acclaim and still holds a spot on various bestseller lists.

And now comes the release of *Infidel*, an exquisite bound collection of Hetherington's camera work in the Korengal Valley. *Infidel* captures life for the often weary Battle Company soldiers with an almost surreal intimacy. The book is now available for sale at stores and through online booksellers.

Hetherington recently sat down with *DAV Magazine* to talk about *Infidel* and the life-changing experience at Outpost Restrepo.

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**DAV:** Your time in the Korengal Valley was longer and more intense than many embeds. Were you prepared for this experience by past assignments, or was this something completely different?

**Tim Hetherington:** I've covered conflicts for over ten plus years and have been in some pretty demanding situations, but every war has a different dynamic, so it's hard to make comparisons about this one being more or less.

What was certainly different was the amount of time I spent with the guys, about five months in total, all of it in the Korengal Valley during their deployment. Getting to know them, being accepted into the group and sharing experiences with them was a profound experience and one which I will carry for the rest of my life. That was certainly different. I mean, I was once embedded with a rebel army in Liberia but did not manage to share as much as I did with the men of second platoon.

I definitely didn't expect the experience to be as kinetic as it was. Remember that my colleague Sebastian Junger and I went there in 2007 when the world was firmly focused on Iraq. I thought I was going on a quiet assignment for *Vanity Fair*, and I expected there would be a lot of walking in the mountains, meeting elders and drinking cups of tea and occasionally getting shot at.

Nothing prepared me for the reality that the war in Afghanistan was slipping out of control, and by the end of October 2007, about a fifth of all fighting across the entire country was taking place in that six-mile-long valley.

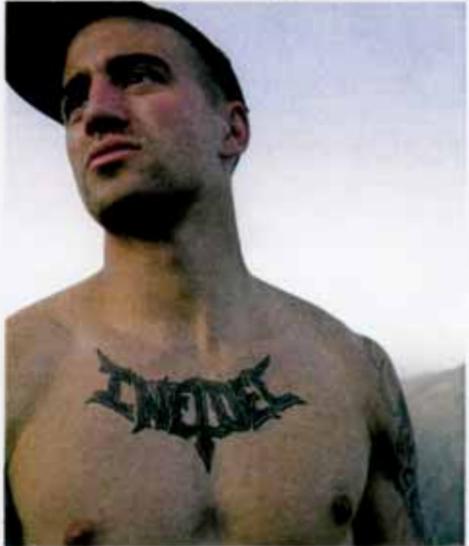
**DAV:** What was it like to be an artist in the midst of warriors? Did you find yourself or your perception of the American military changing?

**Hetherington:** You get all types of people in life, and the military is no different. There were a number of guys in the platoon that also had an artistic sensibility: Misha Pemble-Belkin was always drawing, and Vinny Cantu was a great tattoo artist. In fact, that's where the title of my book *Infidel* comes from. Vinny brought a tattoo gun up to the Korengal, and a number of guys had the word "Infidel" inscribed in large letters across their chests. I asked one of them why, and he replied, "Well, it's what the enemy calls us on the radio, so why not?" They wore it like a badge of honor.

This was my first time with American soldiers, and I was really impressed by them. They were a disciplined and tough bunch, but being up at Outpost Restrepo with them was also fun because they all had a great sense of humor. When I did need to leave the Korengal, I'd always end up missing being there and was constantly wondering what was going on. Also, as a European, I'd had East and West Coast experience of the U.S., but within the platoon there were people from all places and backgrounds, so I was keen to learn a lot more about the U.S.

I guess one of the main things, is that I really expected to be much more heavily controlled by the military in terms of the work I was making. In fact, we weren't censored at all, and that was important because we've managed to make a work that is honest to us and to the soldiers. It's a warts-and-all view of things out there — the good and the bad — but it's also done with a lot of affection. And that really resonates for the civilians back home who don't really understand the experience of what it's like to be a soldier but who don't want to be fed military propaganda.

**DAV:** How do you think being British colors your perspective of the American soldier? Did this change after your experiences at Restrepo?



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**Hetherington:** I spent eight years living away from the U.K. and haven't been embedded with British troops, so I can't make a military comparison. However, I think Brits are culturally more cynical than Americans; it's in our genes to be pessimistic. Think of all that bad weather and the fact that Britain has already fought wars in Afghanistan. So I'd have these conversations with Sebastian about whether the U.S. was going to succeed building a road through the valley as they had planned. Sebastian was the optimistic American saying that they'd succeed, and I was the pessimistic Brit saying that it wouldn't work. But as for the soldiers themselves, I liked them from the start and found a common bond. Sometimes I think being a Brit actually helped because I was not part of their society but at the same time a bit of an object of curiosity... I mean they all used to [give me a hard time], and I'd throw it back at them for being Yanks, which all made us laugh.

**DAV:** How much are journalists accepted by the military in Afghanistan? At Restrepo? Is it different there than at other parts of the combat theater because of the intensity and the intimacy of that small firebase?

**Hetherington:** It's hard for me to make sweeping generalizations, but on the whole I think the U.S. military understands that journalism is important and that trying to censor journalism is really something that we expect from places like China or Iran. The soldiers get this too, and often on Facebook I read postings by soldiers saying that they were fighting to support democratic ideals like freedom of speech. You know, one of the really amazing things about the guys out there is that they also understood that they were fighting for people who opposed the war, and they accepted that. Their tolerance is something society at home would do well to emulate.

Perhaps this was because all that was important was being a good soldier and making sure that you didn't get anyone else, or yourself, killed. I think that being in so much combat in a remote outpost like Outpost Restrepo did have some kind of positive effect on them. I mean, the group bond was incredibly strong. As one soldier said, "There are guys in the platoon that outright hate each other, but they would all die for each other." So he's talking about a brotherhood rather than a friendship that is particularly profound and which adds a lot

of significance and meaning to their lives. It's no wonder they come home and actually miss being "out there," a fact that most civilians can't get their heads around.

**DAV:** Describe what it is like to view war through a lens. How is it different than, say, a sniper who also sees much of combat through a lens?

**Hetherington:** I've never been a sniper or carried a weapon in war, so it's hard for me to make a comparison. What I do know is that I would put myself in very dangerous situations when filming or photographing. It's like I have an "off" switch in my head that I hit when I have to go and do something that is dangerous which leaves me able to focus on the job I've got to do. In some ways, I imagine it's a bit like soldiers who are trained to stand up in a firefight and shoot back. They put themselves at risk but are so focused on the job that they can overcome their fear. I remember one time in the Korengal when Tad Donoho was firing a [grenade launcher] from his knees as we were being attacked by insurgents, I was about a foot or so from him also on my knees and filming him. Later he asked me if I had seen the tracers pass between our heads. I hadn't, but I later returned to the spot where we'd been and saw the trees were completely chewed up. I hadn't noticed it at all because I'd been so consumed with what I was filming. I felt pretty shaken up thinking about it.

**DAV:** Tell us one story that best sums up the experience of being there in that firebase with those soldiers.

**Hetherington:** There are so many that it's hard for me to pinpoint something that could be representative. I was on the same combat operation where Sal Giunta earned the Medal of Honor (he's the first living recipient since Vietnam) for stopping insurgents from dragging away his friend Joshua Brennan during a close quarter ambush. Sal represents the best of Battle Company — tough and humble. He's quick to remind people that other soldiers, including all the guys in First Platoon, were also part of that action. Like I've been saying, it's a big family. ●

*"Restrepo" is available on DVD. Sebastian Junger's War and Tim Hetherington's Infidel are available from bookstores and online retailers.*



## Soldier KIA During Vietnam War Identified

### **Soldier KIA During Vietnam War Identified**

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

Army Capt. James M. Johnstone, of Baton Rouge, La., will be buried Dec. 12, in Arlington National Cemetery. On Nov. 19, 1966, Johnstone was the pilot of an OV-1A Mohawk aircraft that crashed while conducting a daytime reconnaissance mission over Attapu Province, Laos. Nearby U.S. aircrews reported seeing the wing of Johnstone's aircraft hit a tree during a climb to avoid a nearby ridgeline. No parachutes were seen exiting the aircraft. Heavy enemy presence in the area prevented recovery efforts.

From 1993 to 2009, joint U.S.-Lao People's Democratic Republic (L.P.D.R.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), interviewed multiple witnesses, and conducted several investigations and excavations of the crash site in Attapu Province. The teams located human remains, military equipment, an identification card bearing Johnstone's name, and aircraft wreckage of an OV-1A, which correlated with the last known location of Johnstone's aircraft.

To identify the remains, scientists from JPAC analyzed circumstantial evidence and used forensic identification tools, such as dental comparisons.

Today, the U.S. government continues to work closely with the governments of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia to recover Americans lost during the Vietnam War.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO website at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call 703-699-1169.

### **Soldiers Missing From Vietnam War Identified**

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of three servicemen, missing in action from the Vietnam War, were recently identified and are being returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

Army Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class William T. Brown of La Habra, Calif., Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Donald M. Shue of Kannapolis, N.C., and Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Gunther H. Wald of Palisades Park, N.J., will be buried as a group on Aug. 30, in a single casket representing the three soldiers, in Arlington National Cemetery. Brown and Shue were each individually buried on Sept. 26, 2011, at Arlington and May 1 in Kannapolis, N.C.

On Nov. 3, 1969, the men and six Vietnamese soldiers were part of a Special Forces reconnaissance patrol operating in Quang Tri Province, near the Vietnam-Laos border. The patrol was ambushed by enemy forces and all three Americans were wounded. Brown was reported to have suffered a gunshot wound to his side. Due to heavy enemy presence and poor weather conditions, the search-and-rescue team was not able to reach the site until eight days later. At that time, they found military equipment belonging to Shue, but no other signs of the men.

Between 1993 and 2010, joint United States/Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted multiple interviews on nine different occasions in Quang Tri Province. Additionally, the S.R.V. teams unilaterally investigated this case, but were unable to develop new leads. Among those interviewed by the joint teams were former Vietnamese militiamen who claimed in 1969 they ambushed three Americans in the area near the Laos-Vietnam border. In 2007, a Vietnamese citizen led investigators to human remains that he had discovered and buried near the site of the ambush. In 2008, a military identification tag for Brown was turned over to the U.S. Government from a U.S. citizen with ties to Vietnam. Finally, in April 2010, joint teams excavated a hilltop area near Huong Lap Village, recovering additional human remains, military equipment, another military identification tag for Brown, and a "Zippo" lighter bearing the name "Donald M. Shue" and the date "1969."

Scientists from the JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used circumstantial and material evidence, along with mitochondrial DNA - which matched that of some of the soldiers' family members - in the identification of the remains.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, call 703-699-1169 or visit the DPMO Web site at [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo).



## Soldier Missing from Korean War Identified

04/10/2013 12:59 PM CDT

### IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Soldier Missing from Korean War Identified**

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that a serviceman, who was unaccounted-for from the Korean War, has been identified and will be returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army Lt. Col. Don C. Faith Jr. of Washington, Ind., will be buried April 17, in Arlington National Cemetery. Faith was a veteran of World War II and went on to serve in the Korean War. In late 1950, Faith's 1st Battalion, 32nd Infantry Regiment, which was attached to the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), was advancing along the eastern side of the Chosin Reservoir, in North Korea. From Nov. 27 to Dec. 1, 1950, the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces (CPVF) encircled and attempted to overrun the U.S. position. During this series of attacks, Faith's commander went missing, and Faith assumed command of the 31st RCT. As the battle continued, the 31st RCT, which came to be known as "Task Force Faith," was forced to withdraw south along Route 5 to a more defensible position. During the withdrawal, Faith continuously rallied his troops, and personally led an assault on a CPVF position.

Records compiled after the battle of the Chosin Reservoir, to include eyewitness reports from survivors of the battle, indicated that Faith was seriously injured by shrapnel on Dec. 1, 1950, and subsequently died from those injuries on Dec. 2, 1950. His body was not recovered by U.S. forces at that time. Faith was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor - the United States' highest military honor - for personal acts of exceptional valor during the battle.

In 2004, a joint U.S. and Democratic People's Republic of North Korea (D.P.R.K) team surveyed the area where Faith was last seen. His remains were located and returned to the U.S. for identification.

To identify Faith's remains, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) used circumstantial evidence, compiled by DPMO and JPAC researchers, and forensic identification tools, such as dental comparison. They also used mitochondrial DNA - which matched Faith's brother.

Today, more than 7,900 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War. Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously turned over by North Korean officials or recovered from North Korea by American teams.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO website at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call 703-699-1169.

#### **Marine Missing in Action from Korean War Identified**

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

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

In 1954, United Nations and Communist Forces exchanged the remains of war dead in what came to be called "Operation Glory." All remains recovered in Operation Glory were turned over to the Army Central Identification Unit for analysis. Those which were unable to be identified, given the technology of that time, were interred as unknowns at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii - the "Punchbowl."

In 2012, analysts from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) re-examined the case records and determined that advances in technology could likely aid in the identification of the unknown remains as Gzik. Once the remains were exhumed, scientists from JPAC used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools, including dental records and radiographs, to validate Gzik's identification.

Using modern technology, identifications continue to be made from remains that were previously buried as unknown. Today, 7,947 Americans remain unaccounted for from the Korean War.



### Soldier Missing from World War II Identified

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a serviceman from World War II have been identified and are being returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army 1st Lt. John E. Terping, of Mount Prospect, Ill., will be buried on April 3, in Arlington National Cemetery. On May 7, 1944, Terping was a pilot of a B-24D Liberator that departed Nadzab, New Guinea on a bombing mission. Due to mechanical troubles, the B-24D was delayed in departing the airbase and was unable to join the formation after takeoff. The aircraft, Terping, nor the nine other crewmen aboard the plane were seen after takeoff. In 1946, the War Department declared all ten men to be presumed dead.

In 1973, a Papua New Guinea Forest Department official reported a wartime aircraft in the mountains northeast of the city of Lae. In October 1973, a team of Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) responded to the report and visited the site, where they found aircraft wreckage that corresponded to that of a B-24D. At that time the RAAF recovered possible human remains, which were transferred to the U.S. Army Mortuary in Tachikawa, Japan; however, given the limited technology at the time, no human remains were individually identified. In 1974, the remains were buried as a group at Arlington National Cemetery.

In April 2006, a Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) team was sent to investigate and survey the crash site. The team recovered aircraft wreckage, including a radio call sign data plate that matched the aircraft, from a B-24D and additional remains.

To identify the remains, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory used circumstantial evidence and forensic identification tools such as dental comparisons and mitochondrial DNA, which matched Terping's brother.

At the end of World War II, the U.S. government was unable to recover and identify approximately 79,000 Americans. Today, more than 73,000 are unaccounted-for from the conflict.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call 703-699-1169.

### Airman Missing in Action from WWII Identified

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

Army Air Forces Staff Sgt. John E. Hogan, of West Plains, Mo., will be buried Aug. 24, in Arlington National Cemetery. On Sept. 13, 1944, Hogan and eight other crew members were on a B-17G Flying Fortress that crashed near Neustadt-on-Werra, Germany. Only one of the crewmen is known to have successfully parachuted out of the aircraft before it crashed. The remaining eight crewmen were buried by German forces in a cemetery in Neustadt.

Following the war, U.S. Army Graves Registration personnel attempted to recover the remains of the eight men, but were only able to move the remains of one man to a U.S. military cemetery in Holland. In 1953, with access to eastern Germany restricted by the Soviet Union, the remains of the seven unaccounted for crewmen were declared non-recoverable.

In 1991, a German national who was digging a grave in the cemetery in Neustadt, discovered a metal U.S. military identification tag and notified officials. Due to German burial law, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) wasn't granted access to the site until 2007 and excavated the location in 2008. The team recovered human remains and additional metal identification tags from three of the crewmembers.

Scientists from JPAC used forensic identification tools, circumstantial evidence and mitochondrial DNA – which matched that of Hogan's cousin – in the identification of his remains.

At the end of the war, the U.S. government was unable to recover and identify approximately 79,000 Americans. Today, more than 73,000 are unaccounted for from the conflict.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call 703-699-1169.

U.S. Department of Defense  
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)  
Updates from the U.S. Department of Defense



# Reflections: On the Anniversary of the Purple Heart

by James J. Klug, National Historian

**T**HE ANNIVERSARY of General George Washington's creation of the badge of Military Merit on August 7, 1782, provides an opportunity to celebrate and to review our heritage. Two hundred

and thirty-one years ago the foundation of our beloved Order was set by General George Washington in Newburgh, N.Y. The faith and courage

exhibited by our first Commander are the very traits that he specified as necessary to receive the Badge of Military Merit. This was the first decoration awarded for valor by the Continental Army. Review boards were soon formed and candidates' reports were examined. On April 27, 1783, General Washington met with the review board at the Cantonment, New Windsor. The general approved the recommendations of the board for Sergeant Churchill 2ed. Regiment of the Light Dragoons and Sergeant William Brown of the late 5th Connecticut Regiment and Sergeant Daniel Bissell of the Second Connecticut Regiment for the coveted Badge of Military Merit.

It seems strange, indeed, that

such an important and coveted award is reported to have been awarded to only three recipients, all from Connecticut. Extensive research by National Sr. Vice Commander Ron Siebels seems to indicate additional awardees. In addition, this historian has discovered other possible recipients. These new recipients' records will be verified soon.

This original *Providence Gazette & Country Journal* newspaper, dated August 31, 1782, contains the first public report of General Washington's general order. The preservation and guardianship of this priceless document is of primary importance for this

historian. The Order issued by General Washington at his headquarters in Newburgh, N.Y., on August 7, 1782 may have provided the encouragement the first Patriots needed to fight on to victory. From the American Revolution to the war in Afghanistan, our fighting men and women hold true to the early sacrifices and traditions of a nation that will settle for nothing less than freedom.

The anniversary of the Military Order of the Purple Heart gives us the opportunity to reflect back 231



years to our beginning. As your historian, I have enjoyed the challenge of preserving as much of our history and heritage as I can. I have secured historic treasures from across the United States and many countries. These military historic treasures range from March 25, 1776, to the late 1980s. Some recent historic items include a 1941 Department Convention photograph to a POW letter sent from Oflag 64 German prison camp, which came from a collector in Italy. As historian and caretaker of these historic documents and treasures I appreciate the opportunity to preserve the history of our nation's armed forces and especially that of the Order.

To the Patriots that have earned this nation's oldest and honored valor decoration, we have much to be thankful for. \*



National Historian James J. Klug in his office surrounded by the history of the Order



National Sergeant-At-Arms Ken Swords faithful reproduction of the original 1783 Badge of Military Merit.



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