2008 FAMILY UPDATE LOCATIONS 2008
City selections are based on past update schedules and demographic mapping of family members’ home locations.

- 2008 Family Updates and Annual Briefings 2008 •
  - May 17 - Tulsa, OK • June 19-21 Senate Briefings, Washington D.C. •
  - July 26 - Chicago, IL • August 23 - Salt Lake City, UT •
  - October 16-18 Korean/Cold War Government Briefings, Washington D.C. •
  - November 15 - San Diego, CA •

Casualty Assistance (Air Force Personnel Center) 800-531-5501 • Casualty Assistance (U.S. Army) 800-892-2490
Casualty Assistance (U.S. Navy) 800-443-9298 • Casualty Assistance (USMC) 800-847-1597

Treasurer’s Corner by Gail Stallone:
We wish to thank the following members and organizations for the generous donations for 2008.

Korea War Veterans Nassau #01, New York
Vietnam Veterans of America, Hicksville NY

Charles Angle
David McDonald
Darlene Ticehurst
Peggy J Ross
Darwin F Schwartz
William Stratton
Helen Logan Swann
Daniel Zeigler

Contact your Congressional Rep through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard - 1-202-224-3121 or House Cloak Room at 1-202-225-7350 (R) and 1-202-225-7330 (D).

Congressional Contacts:
http://congress.org/congressorg/home/
US Senate : http://www.senate.gov/
House : http://www.house.gov/
White House: http://www.whitehouse.gov/

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IN MY OPINION
by IRENE L. MANDRA

Dear Members,

In our last newsletter, February 2008, I promised to send a letter off to North Korea. I know that it would be a miracle if they were to answer me but given the climate lately with the Philharmonic being heard and seen in North Korea, I thought we might have a go at it. Please read the enclosed letter.

March 1, 2008

The Honorable Mats Foyer
Swedish ambassador to Pyongyang
Munsu-dong, Daehak Street
Taedonggang District, Pyongyang-850 2 381 7485

Dear Kim Jong IL:

We are the families of the missing from the Korean & Cold Wars. Persistent rumors enhanced by decades of visual observation support the belief that live American POWs from the Korean War are held in North Korea.

The families of these missing soldiers seek your help in identifying and returning these prisoners. In the past contacts with North Korea have led to the exhumation of soldier’s remains and in some cases the identity of the individual.

Resolution of the continuing uncertainty to the fate of the missing serviceman would provide solace to the families. The process would contribute to the healthy environment in which current negotiations on nuclear disarmament are being held.

It would renew the motivation to sign a peace treaty between the United States and North Korea. The return of live Americans would be welcomed, appreciated and applauded as a humanitarian gesture.

Very Truly,
Irene L. Mandra
National Chairperson

CC: Permanent Mission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea
To the United Nations
820 2nd Ave. 13th floor
New York, N.Y. 10017

Permanent representative: H.E. Mr. Pak Gil Yon,
Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary

REMINDER! An Enrollment form may be found on the last page of your newsletter. Pass it on!

NEW BOOKS
The Korean War: by Max Hastings/ Simon & Schuster
From Library Journal: The Korean War has been misunderstood and neglected. Hastings had the unique opportunity of interviewing Chinese and North Korean veterans, a source denied to most Western historians.

He shows how Korea served as a prelude to Vietnam and why Americans were making the same mistakes 15 years later. One minor criticism: Hastings devotes much space to the operations of the British Commonwealth Division. The Commonwealth never had more than 20,000 men in Korea; the United States had well over 500,000. Recommended for most academic and public libraries; for a more extensive history buy Edwin P. Hoyt's trilogy, Pusan Perimeter, On to the Yalu, and Bloody Road to Panmunjon.

Chit Chat News By Irene L. Mandra May 2008

Congratulations to Jennie and Ron Beabout on their Fifty Anniversary. We wish you many more wonderful years.

Get well wishes for our member Kay McMahan on her back surgery. We are so glad that all went well:

Our sincere sympathy for member Dick Kim, whose wife Sherry passed away March 14, 2008. You and your family are in our prayers.

Our sincere sympathy for the passing of Donald Morgan our member, who was also active with Rolling Thunder. He will be sorely missed.

Up Date On our member, Legal Advisor Diane Carroll, whose home caught fire over the holidays, most has been repaired on the inside and Diane and her family has moved back to their home. Repairs will continue on the outside. Thanks for all your prayers.

I mentioned in our last newsletter that some of the members and I will be in Hawaii the beginning of April. We are schedule for a tour of JPAC. Our director Charlotte Mitnik and I have an appointment with Admiral Crisp at JPAC. We have many issues to discuss and I will let you know in our August newsletter the results.

On the Web:
The Korean War : Weapons, History and Combat Photos
February 13, 2008
Admiral Donna L. Crisp
Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command
310 Worcester Avenue
Hickam AFB, HI 96853-5530

Dear Admiral Crisp:

Six members of Korea/Cold War families of the missing and I will be arriving in Hawaii April 2 in order to attend a dinner for the EX POWs of Korea on the third. We have contacted Johnny Webb, to make arrangements to tour JPAC on the fourth of April.

Mr. Webb has been so kind in making the arrangements for us. We would like to meet with you and have a short visit in order to discuss our concerns for Korea/Cold War remains.

Would you please allot us some of your precious time so that we can meet with you?

Sincerely,
Irene L. Mandra
National Chairwoman

The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command
310 Worcester Avenue, Bldg. 45
Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii 96853-5530
808.448.1934

Public Affairs Office
Email: PAO_Mail@jpac.pacom.mil

JPAC now has an international toll-free telephone number. Dial 1-866-913-1286 to call JPAC free of charge.

This line is available to all, but is specifically designed for those who may have information relating to missing Americans. JPAC has linguists on staff for most countries where MIAs are believed to be located who are available to interpret for callers who do not speak English.

AT&T Access CODE PAGE:
http://www.usa.att.com/traveler/access_numbers/index.jsp
If your country is not listed, you may still contact us at 808.448.1934 OR VIA EMAIL - pao_mail@jpac.pacom.mil

COLD WAR BOOKS : COLD WAR BOOKS : COLD WAR BOOKS

The Cold War: A New History by John Lewis Gaddis
America, Russia, and the Cold War, 1945-2002, Updated: Updated by Walter LaFeber
The Cold War: The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917-1991 by Ronald E. Powaski

Gulag: A History by Anne Applebaum

Truman by David McCullough

The Specter of Communism: The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1917-1953 (A Critical Issue) by Melvyn P. Leffler

The Great Transition: American-Soviet Relations and the End of the Cold War by Raymond L. Garthoff
From Irene Mandra

Points to be spoken about at JPAC Meeting - April 2008

I think it is an important fact that JPAC be aware that the Korean War Families dominate the updates all over the country from 65% to 80%. What I would like to see is fairness for all the families that wait for closure from all the wars. Korea should be staffed in the same manner as Vietnam.

It's upsetting to my organization that we have 540 sets of remains on the shelf at JPAC, not counting the remains that we have at the Punch Bowl cemetery, an additional 860 or so. We have had 91 identifications in 15 years, why don't we have additional personnel working on the 540 sets of remains. Could we not take personnel from within JPAC to work on these remains?

Vietnam has dominated the remains issue for all these years with 1,700 or so MIAs. Korea and World War II have tens of thousands of MIAs. All these men died for their country, we should not favor one war over another. We all cry for our missing. Our membership is older and dying without answers, our government should consider that all these boys died for their country, I am not asking for preference but only fairness.

Why don't we have a permanent investigative team in South Korea where we have over 1000 recoverable remains, the way we have in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam? With the Joint Forensic Review agreement with South Korea, it now makes sense to keep an investigative team in S. Korea.

Expansion has gone on for two years; the problem is getting qualified people and keeping them in Hawaii, which leads me to the conclusion that, JPAC should be moved to the mainland. Let me emphasize that last statement. We are in favor of moving JPAC to the mainland, where it can better serve the entire POW/MIA community and be removed from PACOM command as it has shown a serious lack of intelligent oversight for years.

It is a known fact that we can't find nor keep anthropologists in Hawaii due to family issues and the cost of living. THERE IS A SERIOUS PERSONNEL PROBLEM AT JPAC THAT IS A KNOWN FACT. In 1986 the House Armed Services committee investigation came to the same conclusion, and still nothing has been done.

Moving JPAC to the states would accomplish the hiring process; it would answer our problem of finding and keeping anthropologists, besides being cost efficient. There is land at Rockville Maryland. If the cost of moving would be prohibitive, would you consider moving the identification Lab. We would have the opportunity to hire more readily. Interns would love the opportunity of working for such a prestigious lab as JPAC. It would be a solution to our personnel problem.

We would love to have updates on current recovery operations in South Korea that started March 15, and since we are not engaging North Korea why can't we expand operations in South Korea?

Page 4

Korean War Trivia & Facts May 2008

- The Korean War was the first conflict where jets took off from aircraft carriers, F-9F Panther jet aircraft served in the dual role of fighter and strike aircraft. Unfortunately, it's straight wings placed it at a disadvantage against the fast and maneuverable MIG-15. The Sabres handled better than the MG15 at high speeds and was more resilient.

- Helicopters made their first appearance in the Korean War. They proved their usefulness as a means of light transport and frequently engage in search and rescue and medical evacuations missions.

- The true edge that American fighter pilots possessed though, was their extensive training and combat experience from the Second World War.

- Who signed the Armistice for the United Nations ending the Korean War on July 27, 1953?

General Mark Clark. General Mark Clark, Commander in Chief United Nations Command, at 10:00 A.M. on July 27, 1953, signed the Armistice Documents ending the Korean War.

- Which U.S. Soldier was the Highest Ranking Officer to be captured by North Korean Troops?

Major General William F. Dean. Major General William F. Dean was captured by North Korean Troops in the Battle of Taegon 22 July 1950.

- Which is the Operational code-name for the first prisoner of war exchange, between UN Allies and the Communist? Operation Little Switch. Operation Little Switch, occurred on April 20 to 26,1953. About 8,000 sick and wounded prisoners were exchanged.

- What was the Operational code-name for the Invasion at Inchon?

Operation Chromite. Operation Chromite, The Invasion of Inchon began at 6:25 a.m. on September 15,1950

- On which Parallel is the DMZ that divides North and South Korea?

38th Parallel. South Korea came into being after World War Two, the result of a 1945 agreement reached by the Allies at the Potsdam Conference, making the 38th Parallel the boundary between a northern zone of the Korean peninsula to be occupied by the U.S.S.R., and southern zone to be controlled by the U.S. Forces.

- Which U.S. Air Force Jet Fighter shot down a MIG-15 in the world's first all-jet dogfight in the Korean War?

F-80C Shooting Star. On September 8, 1950, an F-80C Shooting Star flown by Lt. Russell J. Brown, flying with the 16th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, shot down a Russian-built MIG-15 in the world's first all-jet dogfight.

- On what date did the Korean War officially start?

June 25,1950. North Korean ground forces crossed the 38th Parallel into South Korea about 4:30 a.m. on June 25,1950.

- On what date did fighting in the Korean War end?

July 27,1953. The Cease-Fire was signed at 10:00 a.m. July 27,1953 at Panmunjon.

- When the Korean War ended on July 27,1953, the U.S. Air Force B-29s had flown over 21,000 sorties, nearly 167,000 tons of bombs had been dropped and 34 B-29s had been lost in combat, sixteen to fighters, four to flak and fourteen to other causes. B-29 gunners had accounted for 34 Communist fighters.
H.Res.111: Sign onto letter supporting our veterans

"Hello. I just wanted to let you know that we have begun circulating the following letter to all 263 cosponsors of H.Res.111 asking that they sign on. The letter is addressed to Speaker Pelosi asking that she support H.Res.111. Please feel free to spread the word, as we would like to get as many signatures as possible.

The list of cosponsors can be found here: http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bdquery/z?d110:HE00111:@@@P

Thank you all for your support.

Kind regards,
Carol L. Danko
Legislative Assistant
Congressman Peter King (NY-3)
202-225-7896"

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

We are writing to respectfully ask for your support of H.Res.111, Establishing a Select Committee on POW and MIA Affairs. This resolution is extremely important to our veterans, which is why it has the bipartisan support of over 260 members of congress. As cosponsors of H.Res.111, we ask you to join us in supporting the formation of this select committee to recognize the servicemen captured and lost in combat.

Over 88,000 American military personnel are still unaccounted for from the wars and military conflicts the 20th and 21st centuries. To this day, many families still do not know the fate of their loved ones who went to combat for our nation.

A House Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs would allow us to develop broader and more thorough records on our missing armed forces personnel. It will lead to information that will resolve many unanswered questions. This is the very least we owe these patriotic and courageous Americans.

Please know that H.Res.111 has the support of many veterans and POW/MIA groups including the American Legion, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Rolling Thunder, and Korea Cold-War Families of the Missing. We thank you for your prompt attention to this matter and look forward your support on this issue.

Sincerely,
(YOUR NAME)

H.Res 111 has enough co-sponsors; we need to get it out of the rules committee. We need to keep the pressure on speaker Nancy Pelosi and Chairperson of the rules Committee, Louise McIntosh-slaughter. Please send letters to both speaker Pelosi and Chairperson McIntosh-slaughter stressing the need for a new look at the POW/MIA issue. Send your letter to:

Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Office of the Speaker
H-232, US Capitol Washington, DC 20515
Phone 202-0100 or toll free at 866-727-4894
Fax: 202-225-8259 OR 202-225-4188

Rules committee Chairperson
Honorable Louise McIntosh-Slaughter
2469 Rayburn bldg
Washington D.C. 20515
Phone 202-225-3615 or toll free 866-727-4894
Fax 202-225-7822

We ALL Need H. Res 111
From the National Alliance of Families
The Top Seven Reasons We Need H. Res 111 calling for the formation of a House Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs "To conduct a full investigation of all unresolved matters relating to any United States personnel unaccounted for from the Vietnam era, the Korean conflict, World War II, Cold War Missions, or Gulf War, including MIA's and POW's....." Among the unresolved matters:

1. The Gulag Study 5th Edition issued Feb. 11, 2005 - compiled by the Joint Commission Support Directorate (JCSD), the investigative arm of the U.S./Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, concluded; "Americans, including Americanservicemen, were imprisoned in the former Soviet Union...."

2. The Tourison Memos - My review of JCRC casualty files has surfaced several messages which list a total of nine American servicemen Vietnam has acknowledged were captured alive, all of whom are listed by DOD as having been declared dead while missing.... Thisinformation has come from Vietnamese officials a piece at a time over the past two years. Another memo states: My review of POW/MIA casefiles disclosed DIA/JTTFA message traffic referring to individuals DOD now hasinformation survived into captivity. Thirteen cases are cited representing 19 servicemen. These memos were written by former Defense Intelligence Agency analyst Sedgwick Tourison, during his tenure as an investigator with the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs. Whatever the reason, this information was not made public during the life of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs.

3. Failure to Investigate the "185 Report" - In 1993, the Defense POW/MIA Office (DPMO) received a report that 185 American POWs had been held in Southeast Asia after 1973, possibly as late as 1976. The report was recognized as possibly credible. During the mid-1990's a Russian geologist was interviewed and reported that he was told in 1976 by Vietnamese counterparts that the Vietnamese Government at that time was holding live American POWs. Neither report has been properly investigated.

4. Failure to Authorize Live Sighting Investigations and the attempt to limit Stony Beach activity. Reports of live POWs in Southeast Asia are not investigated.

5. Failure to Properly Investigate Reports of POWs in North Korea - A Background Paper prepared, in 1996, by I.O. Lee, analyst Defense POW/MIA Office (DPMO) stated: "There are too many live sighting reports, specifically observations of several Caucasians in a collective farmby Romanians and the North Korean defectors' eyewitness of Americans in DPRK to dismiss that there are no American POW's in North Korea."

6. Failure to Properly Investigate the case of Capt. Michael Scott Speicher - A wellplace source provided the following information to the National Alliance of Families the summer of 2003; "The one source that claimed to have been held with Speicher and fed him on a dailybasis stated they had been held for 10 years in the underground prison; that individual was released and left Iraq. The individual that reported feeding the pilot was talking to an individual outside Iraq when he made the claim, and the U.S. side never interviewed him.... Don't bemused by those who would pooh pooh the Speicher reporting."

7. Failure to follow-up on the Conclusions and Recommendations of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, January 1993 - "There is evidence, moreover, that indicates the possibility of survival, at least for a small number, after Operation Homecoming.... Isn't it time we ask the next question..... what happened to that small number?
The Corporal Roger A. Dumas
Korean War Peace Treaty
POW/MIA Initiative

(written by Bill Dumas)

PURPOSE

Before a Peace Treaty between North Korea (DPRK) and the United States (UN Command) can be signed officially ending the Korean War there must be a resolution to insure a full accounting of all American and UN Command POW/MIs.

BACKGROUND

In 1953, the Korean War hostilities ended with a signing of the Armistice between North Korea (DPRK) and the United States. To this day, a peace treaty has never been signed to officially end the war because a final resolution to the exchange of POWs was never achieved.

GOAL

Before a normalization of relations with the DPRK can occur, the Korean War Peace Treaty must be signed. President Bush has stated that he would consider signing a peace treaty with North Korea when the nuclear issue is resolved.

This treaty must not be signed until the POW/MIA issue is resolved.

It is imperative that Congress mandate the Defense Dept. Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) provide to any future peace treaty negotiations a list of all unaccounted for POW/MIs including the list of 2058 Last Seen Alive. It is very possible that some of these servicemen may be alive in the DPRK today as the South Korean government believes over 400 South Korean servicemen are still alive in the DPRK.

CPL ROGER A. DUMAS

Cpl. Roger A. Dumas was captured by Chinese and DPRK forces near the Yalu River on November 4, 1950 and imprisoned in POW Camp #5. During Operation Big Switch, the final release of UN Command POWs, Roger was seen being led away from the repatriation area by Chinese guards and never released. Roger Dumas’ name remains on the Last Seen Alive list.

Evidence shows that not only Roger but hundreds of other American servicemen were also not released to the UN Command. Evidence collected by the Defense Dept POW/Missing Personnel Office reveals many of these POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union Gulag prison system.

INITIATIVE CONCEPTION

On October 15, 2006, Bill Dumas, nephew of Roger A. Dumas met with Deputy Asst. Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel, Ambassador Charles Ray, and presented the idea that DPMO assure the POW/MIA issue be resolved before a peace treaty is signed to officially end the Korean War.

Ambassador Ray said this was an interesting approach that he would give serious consideration to. He asked DPMO staffers to verify that the prisoner exchange was in fact the final stalemate that prevented the signing of the peace treaty. Amb. Ray advised that DPMO could provide a recommendation to the President but it would be up to the President to include a POW/MIA initiative to a peace negotiation.

Later that week Bill Dumas presented this POW/MIA resolution idea to the final plenary session of the annual DPMO Korean War Family Update Meeting. The DPMO moderator advised that this initiative be disseminated to all veterans, POW/MIA organizations and family members in order to gain support from members of Congress. He said it would be up to Congress to order the Defense Department to facilitate this initiative.

HISTORICAL DETAILS

The issue of prisoner exchange was the final stalemate in the peace negotiations during the war. In fact, for over half of the three-year war, POW repatriation was the last issue to be resolved.

South Korean President, Sygmond Rhee allowed thousands of DPRK and Chinese POWs that the U.N. Command was holding, to defect and not return to the DPRK or China. The North Korean government considered this tantamount to not returning all of their POWs and in retaliation would not return all of the U.N. Command POWs it was holding.

Without ever resolving the POW repatriation issue, a peace treaty could not be signed and instead the hostilities ended by the compromise signing of an Armistice.

To this day, North Korea and the United States are technically still at war.

THE NUCLEAR ISSUE

During the previous week, the U.S. public got an extremely rare occasion to hear the voice of DPRK U.N. Ambassador Pak Gil Yon expressing how the nuclear bomb test was a proud moment for his nation.

In 1985 Amb. Pak Gil Yon made a very unusual overture by calling Bob Dumas, (brother of POW Roger Dumas) at his home after hearing about Bob’s federal court case to reclassify Roger a POW. Amb. Pak invited Bob to meet with him in New York to discuss how the POW/MIA issue could be negotiated on a presidential one-on-one level.

This was the start of a 10-year relationship between Bob and Amb. Pak and other ambassadors at the North Korean Mission to the U.N. Bob had several meetings with Amb. Pak, Amb. Ho Jong and over 250 phone conversations with Pak, Ho and other DPRK ambassadors and embassy staff.

Bob asked Amb. Pak in 1994, “Would your country ever use a nuclear weapon against South Korea, Japan or the U.S.?” Amb. Pak replied, “If we used a nuclear weapon we know our country would be destroyed in 20 minutes and be reduced to water. We’re not that stupid.”

It is clear from these conversations with the DPRK ambassadors that North Korea has always desired direct one-on-one negotiations with the U.S. president, a non-aggression pact, a POW/MIA resolution and ultimately a signed peace treaty to officially end the Korean War.

The saber rattling in the form of nuclear bomb testing is clearly an extreme measure that seeks to force the U.S. into direct negotiations and because there really is no military option for the U.S. in Korea, these direct talks are going to happen and the Korean War peace treaty will be signed.

Bill Dumas
213-948-9998
wd@BillDumas.com
www.MissingPresumedDead.com
March 26, 2008
SOLDIER MISSING IN ACTION FROM THE KOREAN WAR
IS IDENTIFIED

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

He is U.S. Army Sgt. Harry J. Laurence of Cleveland, Ohio. He will be buried April 9 in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

Representatives from the Army met with Laurence’s next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process, and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the Secretary of the Army.

Laurence was a member of L Company, 31st Infantry Regiment, then making up the 31st Regimental Combat Team (RCT), 7th Infantry Division. The team was engaged against the Chinese Peoples Volunteer Forces near the Chosin Reservoir, North Korea from Nov. 27-Dec. 11, 1950. The unit was forced to retreat to the south due to intense enemy fire. Laurence was among many soldiers reported missing in action.

In 2001, joint U.S. and Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted two excavations of a mass grave near the Chosin Reservoir. The site correlates closely with defensive positions held by the 31st RCT at the time of the Chinese attacks. The teams recovered remains believed to be those of 11 U.S. servicemen. Analysis of the remains subsequently led to the identifications of three individuals, including Laurence.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC also used dental comparisons in Laurence identification.

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

It is with deep sadness that we report the remains of Army Sgt. Keith “Matt” Maupin have been recovered and identified. Maupin was captured April 9th 2004. One week later he appeared in a video released by his captors. Several months later, his captors released a grainy video depicting Sgt. Maupin’s execution in captivity. Due to the poor quality of the tape, analysts could not confirm the identity of the individual in the video.

The following was reported by Nishi Gupta of HOI 19 News “We have confirmed tonight that the remains of Army reservist Matt Maupin have been found.”

“A spokeswoman for Maupin’s family says military representatives visited Matt’s father, Keith, at the Yellow Ribbon Support Center in Cincinnati.”

“Keith Maupin was told DNA tests from remains and a shirt confirmed they were of Matt’s, said the spokeswoman.”

“The family plans to issue a prepared statement and is asking for privacy in this matter.”

To the Maupin family we offer our heartfelt sympathy during this difficult time.

Pentagon Cites MIA Deal With China
By ROBERT BURNS – February 25, 2008

WASHINGTON (AP) — China has agreed to a long-standing U.S. request for access to sensitive military records that Pentagon officials believe might resolve the fate of thousands of U.S. servicemen missing from the Korean War and other Cold War-era conflicts, a Pentagon official said Monday.

The arrangement is scheduled to be publicly announced Friday in Shanghai after a final set of talks to work out certain details, according to Larry Greer, spokesman for the Pentagon’s POW-MIA office.

The deal marks a modest step forward for U.S.-China military relations, which have been strained in recent years, in part by sharp U.S. criticism of China’s military buildup. China has periodically cooperated with the Pentagon on matters related to the search for MIAs, but it has balked at repeated requests to open its military archives for documents of interest to the Pentagon.

China entered the Korean War on North Korea’s side in the fall of 1950 and succeeded in driving U.S. forces out of the north. Chinese troops killed and captured thousands of American troops; the Chinese also managed many of the POW camps established in North Korea during the war.

More than 8,100 U.S. servicemen are still unaccounted for from the Korean War.

Greer said that at least initially, the arrangement to be announced on Friday will not give U.S. researchers direct access to Chinese records. Instead, Chinese archivists with security clearances acceptable to the People’s Liberation Army will do the document searches and turn over relevant records to U.S. analysts.

Details such as the frequency and volume of the document searches, as well as expenses, are yet to be worked out, Greer said.

Charles A. Ray, the deputy assistant secretary of defense for POW-MIA affairs, was en route to Shanghai Monday to participate in the signing ceremony Friday, the spokesman said.

China has consistently maintained that all POW questions were settled at the end of the war, but nearly every U.S. administration since then has prodded Beijing to provide information on missing servicemen. The requests include cases of U.S. airmen who went missing after being shot down by the Chinese.

Declassified U.S. Army records from the 1950s make clear that the United States knew of hundreds of American prisoners in China during the Korean War, closely tracked their movements and feared for their lives.

In January 1998, then-Defense Secretary William Cohen asked top Chinese officials to open PLA record archives and other files. He got no explicit assurances at the time, but in follow-up contacts in the years since, the Chinese have said they would be willing to consider making some arrangement.

Greer said Ray is encouraged by progress that led to the agreement to be signed on Friday.

“This joint archival effort is expected to open more avenues of research to enable U.S. specialists to narrow their searches for the specific locations where American remains may be buried,” Greer said.
Let Us Never Forget Freedom Isn’t Free
A Veteran Died Today (Just A Common Soldier)

He was getting old and paunchy and his hair was falling fast, and he sat around the Legion telling stories of the past. Of the war he had fought in and the deeds that he had done. In his exploits with his buddies they were heroes, everyone.

And 'tho sometimes, to his neighbors, his tales became a joke, all his buddies listened, for they knew whereof he spoke. But we'll hear his tales no longer, for ol' Bob has passed away, and the world's a little poorer for a veteran died today.

No, he won't be mourned by many, just his children and his wife.

For he lived an ordinary, very quiet sort of life.
He held a job and raised a family, quietly going on his way; and the world won't note his passing, 'tho a veteran died today.

When politicians leave this earth, their bodies lie in state, while thousands note their passing and proclaim they were great. Papers tell their life stories, from the time they were young, but the passing of a veteran goes unnoticed and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution to the welfare of our land some jerk who breaks his promise and cons his fellow man?
Or the ordinary fellow, who in times of war and strife, goes off to serve his country and offers up his life?

The politician's stipend and the style in which he lives are sometimes disproportionate to the service that he gives.
While the ordinary veteran, who has offered up his all, is paid off with a medal and perhaps a pension, small.

It's so easy to forget them, for it is so long ago, that our Bobs and Jims and Johnnys went to battle, but we know. It was not the politicians and their compromises and ploys, who won for us the freedom that our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger, with your enemies at hand, would you really want some cop-out, with his ever-waffling stand? Or, would you want a veteran, who has sworn to defend his home, his kin and country, and would fight until the end?

He was just a common veteran and his ranks are growing thin, but his presence should remind us we may need his likes again.
For when countries are in conflict, then we find the military's part is to clean up all the troubles that the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor while he's here to hear the praise, then at least let's give him homage, at the ending of his days. Perhaps just a simple headline in the paper that might say Our country is in mourning, for a veteran died today.

1987 A. Lawrence Vaincourt

General Order No. 11
Headquarters, Grand Army of the Republic
Washington, D.C. - May 5, 1868

Decoration Day
I. The 30th day of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form or ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit.

We are organized, comrades, as our regulations tell us, for the purpose, among other things, "of preserving and strengthening those kind and fraternal feelings which have bound together the soldiers, sailors, and marines who united to suppress the late rebellion." What can aid more to assure this result than by cherishing tenderly the memory of our heroic dead, who made their breasts a barricade between our country and its foe? Their soldier lives were the reveille of freedom to a race in chains, and their death a tattoo of rebellious tyranny in arms. We should guard their graves with sacred vigilance. All that the consecrated wealth and taste of the Nation can add to their adornment and security is but a fitting tribute to the memory of her slain defenders.

Let no wanton foot tread rudely on such hallowed grounds. Let pleasant paths invite the coming and going of reverent visitors and found mourners. Let no vandalism of avarice or neglect, no ravages of time, testify to the present or to the coming generations that we have forgotten, as a people, the cost of free and undivided republic.

If other eyes grow dull and other hands slack, and other hearts cold in the solemn trust, ours shall keep it well as long as the light and warmth of life remain in us.

Let us, then, at the time appointed, gather around their sacred remains and garland the passionless mounds above them with choicest flowers of springtime; let us raise above them the dear old flag they saved from dishonor; let us in this solemn presence renew our pledges to aid and assist those whom they have left among us as sacred charges upon the Nation's gratitude,—the soldier's and sailor's widow and orphan.

II. It is the purpose of the Commander-in-Chief to inaugurate this observance with the hope it will be kept up from year to year, while a survivor of the war remains to honor the memory of his departed comrades. He earnestly desires the public press to call attention to this Order, and lend its friendly aid in bringing it to the notice of comrades in all parts of the country in time for simultaneous compliance therewith.

III. Department commanders will use every effort to make this order effective.
By command of: JOHN A. LOGAN, Commander-in-Chief.
N. P. CHIPMAN, Adjutant-General
Seoul to begin new search for war dead

SEOUL, March 2 (Yonhap) -- South Korea will launch fresh efforts this week to find the remains of South Korean and U.S. troops who went missing or were killed in action (KIA) during the 1950-53 Korean War, the Defense Ministry said Sunday.

The search by the Agency for KIA Recovery and Identification will last until mid-November while Washington's Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command will join efforts in April or May to search for their own, the ministry said in a press release.

"We have found only about one percent of nearly 130,000 missing soldiers despite the massive support from the people. But we believe we will be able to report significant results within the next five years as the government's efforts for this project will more than double this year," Col. Park Shin-han, head of the KIA recovery agency, was quoted as saying.

Seoul's official search for its soldiers killed during the fratricidal war began belatedly in 2000 and the agency was only established in 2006. Still, the agency has found the remains of 1,560 South Korean troops killed during the Korean War as well as those of eight U.S. troops.

Over 8,100 U.S. soldiers remain missing since the end of the Korean War, according to the ministry. Some 28,000 U.S. service members are still stationed in South Korea as a legacy of the war, which only ended with a ceasefire.

Yonhap News Service

South Korea to press North on POWs - March 26, 2008

South Korea's new conservative government wants North Korea to answer questions about the fate of its prisoners of war and abducted civilians, officials say.

South Korea's recent liberal administrations had largely skirted the issue of more than 1,000 civilian abductees and POWs captured during the 1950-1953 Korean War for fear it would jeopardise warming ties with the prickly neighbour.

"North Korea must recognise that the relationship of cooperation between the South and the North is about getting help and giving help," President Lee Myung-bak said ahead of a report from the Unification Ministry on its policy agenda.

"I believe we will hold serious dialogue on the prisoners of war and abductees as a humanitarian issue, as well as the separated families," Lee said.

Vice Unification Minister Hong Yang-ho said it was the government's top priority to press the North on the issue of prisoners of war and missing civilians.

"We will be bringing it up with priority at every channel of communication with the North," Hong told reporters.

Under the two liberal presidents who ruled for 10 years prior to conservative Lee, the two Koreas mostly avoided direct discussions on returning POWs and abductees.

In official talks, the two had used the euphemism "people who went missing during and after the war" to describe the group.

North Korea has insisted that it is not holding any South Koreans against their will, but has allowed 25 prisoners of war and civilian abductees to meet their relatives from the South as part of regular reunions of families separated during the war. © 2008 Reuters


A Proclamation by the President of the United States of America

America is blessed to have brave men and women willing to step forward to defend our freedoms and keep us safe. The members of the United States Armed Forces have proudly held fast against determined and ruthless enemies, protected our citizens from harm, and freed millions from oppression. On National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, we pay tribute to the courageous and selfless individuals who were taken captive while serving the cause of peace and securing liberty across the globe.

America's former prisoners of war set an example of vision, valor, and unshakeable love of country that inspires our citizens. Through unspeakable conditions, they upheld their oath to defend America with honor and dignity. Their extraordinary spirit, patriotism, and resolve helped defeat tyranny and build democratic and just societies, enabling decent men and women around the world to live in freedom.

Our Nation is extremely proud of our former prisoners of war, and we owe them and their families a debt we can never fully repay. On National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day, we honor our country's heroes who were prisoners of war, recognize their sacrifice, and express our deepest gratitude to those who helped write a more hopeful chapter in our history.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE W. BUSH, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 9, 2008, as National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day. I call upon the people of the United States to join me in honoring the service and sacrifices of all of America's former prisoners of war. I call upon Federal, State, and local government officials and private organizations to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-second.

GEORGE W. BUSH

POW BOOKS : POW BOOKS : POW BOOKS

Remembered Prisoners of a Forgotten War: An Oral History of Korean War POWs (Kindle Edition)
by Lewis H. Carlson

The Coldest Winter (Kindle Edition)
by David Halberstam

The war in the wards: Korea's unknown battle in a prisoner-of-war hospital camp
by Stanley Weintraub (Author)

Prisoners of War: From Gallipoli to Korea. (Hardcover)
by PATSY ADAM-SMITH (Author)

Historic Korean War Film Collection DVD - North and South Korea, Prisoners of War, War Relief Efforts and More
The Privateer’s Lost Crew - April 2008

On the morning of April 8, 1950, a PB4Y2 Privateer patrol bomber took off from a U.S. airbase in Wiesbaden, West Germany.

Enroute to Copenhagen, Denmark, the aircraft was shot down by Soviet fighters over the Baltic Sea. The Americans insisted it was an unarmed flight that was attacked in international airspace. The Russians claimed the aircraft was conducting a reconnaissance mission over Latvia. There were no survivors. It was the first of many shoot-downs to flare up the cold war between the superpowers.

The incident 58 years ago this week has been shrouded in mystery. While small pieces of wreckage were found, the aircraft and the bodies of the 10 crewmen were never recovered. Had there been survivors who were imprisoned in the Gulag archipelago? What was the nature of the mission? Was it a secret reconnaissance overflight that had been inadvertently discovered by Soviet radar? Had the plane been secretly recovered by the Russians?

The Privateer flew out of Wiesbaden at 10:31 a.m. The plane and its crew had been stationed at Port Lyautey, French Morocco and was on temporary assignment with NATO. Two hours later, the plane radioed to say it had crossed the German coastline and was still in the British zone. American radar continued tracking the aircraft up until 2:57 p.m. It is believed the plane was intercepted by four Soviet Lavochkin-11 fighters shortly after. They ordered the Privateer to land at an airfield in nearby Latvia. In their reports, the Soviet pilots claimed the American plane opened fire. The interceptors returned fire.

According to the eyewitnesses, the plane descended sharply and entered the clouds. It crashed into the sea some 10 kilometres from the coastline around 5:39 p.m.

Hours later, American, British and Swedish vessels arrived at the position of the last radar contact. The only wreckage they discovered was two life rafts. A fishing vessel found the nose wheel a week later. Seat cushions, radio logs and other debris washed up on the coastline. In Washington, President Harry Truman said the incident was being investigated, while the congress demanded the Soviets pay for the act of shooting down a “wholly unarmed” aircraft. The U.S. State Department conveyed a stern diplomatic note of condemnation to the Soviet embassy. The case was not taken to the International Court of Justice.

The Russians stuck to their position that the Americans violated Soviet airspace and the aircraft was 21 kilometres into Latvia in the vicinity of Liepaya. Scrambled fighters had been fired upon before the Privateer turned towards the Baltic. They also insisted it was a B-29 Flying Fortress bomber that they intercepted (the Privateer and the B-29 are similar in appearance).

The U.S. military accepted that there would be no survivors. Truman order Rear Admiral Richard L. Conolly, commander of the U.S. fleet in east Atlantic, to investigate. Congress directed the Secretary of the Navy to posthumously decorate the Privateer’s four officers and six enlisted men. The U.S. navy issued a presumptive finding of death in April, 1951.

Despite this, rumours continued to surface from behind the Iron Curtain that there were survivors. The most credible report came from John Noble, an American citizen released from the Gulag in 1955. Continued

Noble said he was told by a Yugoslav national that eight survivors from a U.S. navy plane shot down in the Baltic were being held in the Vorkuta, a Siberian city above the Arctic Circle. A second report verified seemed to verify this. A Polish witness told U.S. army investigators probing American MIA’s in Russia that a 40-year-old American arrived in a Vorkuta coal mine in June, 1953. He learned the American was the pilot of a spy plane shot down near Latvia. (A released Japanese prisoner also claimed to have met the American, who received burns to his face from the crash).

Some investigators have pointed to the fact that two life rafts were immediately recovered from the crash site as proof there were survivors. While one of the rafts was heavily damaged, U.S. authorities noted that all of the supply pockets in the other raft had been opened manually.

The case of the Privateer’s crew was added to the agenda of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission, formed after the fall of the Soviet Union to investigate outstanding POW issues from the cold war. Two witness accounts seemed to dispute any contention the crew survived to languish in a Soviet prison. First, a former sailor by the name of Victor Shevchuk told the Russian newspaper Izvestiya that he was aboard one of the Soviet search vessels in April, 1950.

He claimed they had found the Privateer and recovered several items from the wreckage. Divers had spotted the crew’s remains in the cockpit, Shevchuk told reporters. Then in 1993, the commission interviewed Anatoly Gerasimov, one of the pilots who intercepted the plane. He stated they fired warning shots after the Privateer failed to obey instructions to land. He testified they then received orders to shoot down the aircraft. Gerasimov stated the Privateer “caught fire, exploded in the air, and fell in pieces to the sea.” The attack took place 40 kilometres off the coast of Lithuania, Gerasimov said.

This might have put an end to any speculation about the fate of the crew, except Gerasimov gave a different version of events to a film documentary a few years later. During the interview, he stated they had shot down the plane, however, 10 parachutes were seen dispatching from the wreckage. The plane exploded seconds after. The pilots were instructed to radio where the men landed. Gerasimov was instructed not to tell the commission about the parachutists.

In November, 2000, the commission’s working group looked over documents which detailed the search by Soviet naval forces (which claimed 45 ships and 160 divers could not find any trace of the aircraft). The Associated Press reported in 2001 that the Pentagon was continuing to probe the possibility that American servicemen were held in Soviet labour camps.

Even if they survived to be sentenced to life imprisonment, it’s doubtful the men will be found alive. It’s feared the Soviet carried out wholesale executions of foreign POWs, especially American MIAs from the Second World War and Korea, and possibly as recent as the late 1980s. While it’s widely accepted German and Italian soldiers were held in the Gulag prison system, the revelation that countless American and allied soldiers were also held against their will would have precipitated a hot war. It’s one of the greatest atrocities ever committed, and these servicemen deserved better.

Lest we forget the crew of the Privateer last seen on April 8, 1950: John Fette, Howard Seeschaf, Robert Reynolds, Tommy Burgess, Frank Beckman, Joe Danens, Jack Thomas, Joseph Jay Bourassa, Edward Purcell and Joseph Norris Rinnier.

by S. Chase © 2008 The Daily Observer, Ottawa Canada
Korean War aviator Edwin Nixon, 79, of Bellevue, was shot down in 1953 and taken prisoner. The Navy and his family thought he had died until he was repatriated. After returning home, he still encountered official snafus over his status as the years went by.

Bellevue "dead" man having time of his life with new book
By Sherry Grindeland
Seattle Times Eastside bureau - April 9, 2008

Having been declared dead keeps coming back to haunt Edwin "Nick" Nixon. More than a half-century after his jet was shot down over Korea, the former prisoner of war still has to prove to the U.S. government that he's alive.

He still gets periodic letters from the IRS and Social Security questioning his existence, and his name remains on the killed-in-action list at the Garden of Remembrance outside Seattle's Benaroya Hall.

The longtime Bellevue resident recently published a book to set the record straight once and for all: "Killed in Action — Dead ... Wrong!"

Nixon, now 79, was 24 when he supposedly died March 1, 1953. An obituary said he was a man who had everything to live for. His plane was shot down on his final mission before a leave, and his first child was due in six months.

Anti-aircraft fire crippled his F9F Panther jet as he was returning from a bombing run to the USS Philippine Sea, an aircraft carrier. He debated about bailing out from 5,000 feet, but instead executed a controlled crash landing rather than risk becoming a target in his parachute.

On the ground he escaped the burning plane and waved at the other planes with his bright-yellow life vest. No one saw him.

"My colleagues never came down close, but they claimed to have seen my body slumped in the plane," Nixon said.

The 1950 University of Washington graduate and Navy ensign was stranded behind enemy lines, with burns on his face and a broken back.

A commanding officer wrote: "With deepest regrets and sympathy I close out the flight log of this outstanding Naval officer and aviator."

The log, along with Nixon's personal effects and uniforms, was mailed to his parents and wife in Seattle. Memorial services were held aboard ship and at a Seattle church.

Nixon endured six months of prison camps, physical abuse, brainwashing and starvation before being released Aug. 30, 1953.

News media broadcast names of those released, but Nixon's father, a prominent Seattle physician, waited until the Navy verified the report to tell his daughter-in-law Marianne, who was giving birth to a daughter.

"To this day I can remember my father-in-law with tears streaming down his face," said Marianne. "I knew right away. There could be only one wonderful news."

The military rushed Nixon home, where the family briefly enjoyed celebrity status, including being honored guests in a parade. Military honchos put Nixon on the speaking circuit with Bryce Lilly, a survivor of the World War II Bataan Death March who happened to be Nixon's fraternity brother.

"Bryce's story was more compelling, so I learned to go first when we were speaking," Nixon said.

"My son told me to write the book so they'd have the story," said the flannel-shirted Nixon, a passionate Republican.

He finished his Navy gig at Sand Point Naval Air Station. Although he had planned to be a doctor like his dad, he went into the insurance business to support his family. He doesn't regret the choice. He and his wife have two sons in addition to the daughter born as he was being released from POW camp.

Strangers as well as friends ask for copies, but the 79-year-old Nixon probably should mail one to the head of Social Security, which periodically questions his existence. He had a similar problem with the IRS in the 1970s.

"Now I've got the name and phone number of a woman at Social Security who fixes it," said the soft-spoken Nixon. "I used to have to write letters and go to the local office to prove I was alive."

Although he's been moved to the POW section on many Korean War lists, his full name — Edwin Allen Nixon Jr. — remains listed in the Garden of Remembrance outside Seattle's Benaroya Hall with those killed in action.

On his home desk is a model of a Panther, the plane he was flying when he crashed. He keeps his Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal and POW medal in boxes in the desk drawer. His other souvenirs are his leather flight jacket and the residual aches and pains from his war wounds. Considered disabled, he's supposed to use a cane but usually leaves it leaning against the wall.

Periodically, he runs into someone who attended one of his funerals.

"At least they all seemed glad to see me," Nixon said.

U.S. Department of Defense
Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs)
Soldier Missing in Action from The Korean War is Identified
IMMEDIATE RELEASE
No. 294-08
April 10, 2008

Soldier Missing in Action from The Korean War is Identified

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

He is Sgt. Virgil L. Phillips, U.S. Army, of Columbus, Ind. He will be buried on April 19 in Loogootee, Ind.

Representatives from the Army met with Phillips' next-of-kin to explain the recovery and identification process, and to coordinate interment with military honors on behalf of the secretary of the Army.

In November 1950, Phillips was assigned to Company K, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division then operating in Ulsan, North Korea, near a bend in the Kuryong River known as the Camel's Head. On Nov. 1, parts of two Chinese Communist divisions struck the 1st Cavalry Division's lines, collapsing the perimeter and forcing a withdrawal. In the process, the 3rd Battalion was surrounded and effectively ceased to exist as a fighting unit. Phillips was one of the more than 350 servicemen unaccounted-for from the battle at Ulsan.

In 2003, a joint U.S.-Democratic People's Republic of Korea team (D.P.R.K.), led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), excavated a burial site near the Camel's Head. The team recovered human remains and other material evidence. Information from the D.P.R.K. indicated that the remains were initially buried near the battle site, but were later moved to a location nearby because of construction in the area.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA and dental comparisons in the identification of Phillips' remains.

CONTINUED
Families United in a Search for Truth, Dignity, Acknowledgment and Closure

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