

## **NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POW/MIA FAMILIES**

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**U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING FROM THE VIETNAM WAR:** There are now 1,791 US personnel listed as missing and unaccounted for by the Department of Defense. Recently, the identifications of five Americans previously missing/unaccounted for from the Vietnam War were announced as identified. The League extends best wishes to each family, hoping this final answer brings long-awaited peace of mind. The accounting for these Americans brings to 794 the number of US personnel accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. Over 90% of the 1,791 still listed as missing were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnamese wartime control.

Captain Herbert C. Crosby, USA, OK, MIA 1/10/70, SVN, RR 1/23/89, ID 7/24/06  
Sergeant 1st Class Francis G. Graziosi, USA, NY, MIA 1/10/70, SVN, RR 1/23/89, ID 7/24/06  
Commander Peter Mongilardi, Jr., USN, NJ, KIA/BNR 6-25-65, NVN, RR 4/13/94, ID 8/25/06  
Major Frederick J. Ransbottom, USA, OK, MIA 5/12/68, SVN, RR 6/19/06, ID 10/30/06  
Staff Sergeant William E. Skivington, USA, NV, MIA 5/12/68, SVN, RR 6/19/06, ID 12/5/06

**VIETNAM APPROVES USE OF U.S. NAVY SHIP FOR UNDERWATER RECOVERIES:** After more than a decade of repeated League efforts, reinforced in more recent years by the current and former Commanders of the US Pacific Command, ADM Tom Fargo (now retired) and ADM William J. Fallon, the Vietnamese leadership approved using US Navy vessels; however, the detailed approval process utilized for the official port calls earlier this year will be necessary, as will details of the specific mission proposed for such a recovery. In most shallow-water recoveries, utilizing the US Navy asset won't be required, but ensuring that both governments support the process, if needed, is a significant policy change by Vietnam and deeply appreciated by the League.

**LEAGUE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HOLDS TALKS IN HAWAII:** In an effort to follow-up on the League's late October delegation to Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, League Executive Director Ann Mills Griffiths met December 12-16th with ADM William J. Fallon, Commander US Pacific Command (PACOM), ADM Gary Roughead, USN, Commander US Pacific Fleet (PACFLT), and ADM Tom Fargo, USN (Ret), former PACOM Commander, as well as the leadership and many directorates of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), the Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA) Stony Beach team of POW/MIA investigators and the Navy's Mobile Diving Salvage Unit #1 (MDSU #1). Primary topics with the PACOM and PACFLT Commanders were steps to follow-up Vietnam's very recently announced approval for US Navy vessels to conduct underwater recoveries when required, support for JPAC and its POW/MIA accounting mission, and construction of the long-awaited facility for JPAC and its Central Identification Laboratory (CIL). Since both the League and ADM Fallon had recently visited all three Indochina countries, sharing perceptions and experiences was helpful, and ADM Roughead will soon visit Vietnam, so again the timing was advantageous. To follow-up the League's longstanding advocacy for helping the people of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, discussions were also held with the US Air Force's International Health Affairs team, and the Army's 25th Division Engineering team, both great contributors within the PACOM humanitarian assistance programs.

**DASD AMBASSADOR CHARLES RAY TRAVELING:** DASD Ray visited Moscow in November to advance objectives of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs. This was his first visit since assuming the POW/MIA accounting mission. The League is hopeful that President Putin will respond to President Bush's request to name a counterpart to US Chairman General Robert H. Foglesong, USAF (Ret). Ambassador Ray will visit Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia later this month on his first visit to the region, and all the Southeast Asian government officials, as well as US Ambassadors and JPAC, are eagerly anticipating his involvement and leadership on the issue.

**RESIDENT BUSH'S VISIT TO VIETNAM:** The President visited Vietnam November 17-20th for the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC). Regional leaders attending included the Presidents of Russia, the PRC and other countries directly linked to POW/MIA accounting interests. The President reportedly kept his June 21, 2006, promise in a letter to the League pledging to raise the need for increased POW/MIA cooperation when meeting with SRV leaders. The joint statement issued at the end of the meeting between Vietnamese President Nguyen Minh Triet and President Bush stated: "The two leaders expressed satisfaction with progress on resolving outstanding issues from the war and agreed that the two sides would continue co-operation in this respect. President Triet reaffirmed his Government's continued efforts to assist the United States to ensure the fullest possible accounting for Americans who remain missing in action, through both joint and enhanced unilateral actions. President Bush reaffirmed US contributions to help obtain information on Vietnamese MIA cases." (emphasis added)

**LEAGUE TRIP TO SOUTHEAST ASIA:** In advance of the President's visit to Vietnam, a League Delegation met with senior Vietnamese officials October 23-25th in Hanoi. Executive Director Ann Mills Griffiths and Senior Policy Advisor Richard T. Childress held meetings with Vietnam's leaders to define accounting expectations in the hope of increased cooperation and results, and the timing of this visit was critical. Progress was obtained on improving access to the Western Highlands where many incidents occurred, and reaching agreement to use US Navy assets for underwater recoveries. Although more circumspect on archival records, the Vietnamese accepted all League requests for unilateral provision of archives and documents. The delegation is hopeful that Vietnam's leadership will again, as in the mid-1980s, make a significant decision for more unilateral actions, but implementation remains the key.

In Cambodia, meetings were held with the entire leadership, including His Majesty King Norodom Sihamony, the Prime Minister and all other officials with POW/MIA responsibilities. To say that Cambodia is fully cooperative with all US requests for POW/MIA cooperation would be an understatement. Cambodia's cooperation is outstanding; they agree with all US requests! The new Cambodian monarch, already revered by Cambodia's people, was supportive and fully knowledgeable. The League thanked all Cambodian leaders and urged officials there to again ask the Vietnamese for relevant records.

Officials in Laos were very responsive, as evidenced by the many high level meetings and assurances of practical cooperation and flexibility. Discussions were held with many senior leaders, from the Deputy Prime Minister to Defense Minister and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials who lead the POW/MIA accounting effort. Within existing asset and resource limitations, Lao Government cooperation is high and increasingly flexible. In every instance, Lao officials were urged to press Vietnam for relevant archival records and to search their own archives thoroughly.

Regional US Ambassadors were most supportive of this mission. JPAC cooperation and support were tremendous and critical to success. The DIA leadership's support enabled the Stony Beach specialists to participate in all important meetings. The League has consistently worked to reestablish integration of Stony Beach into the accounting process as occurred when formed, before early JTF-FA Commanders forced their exclusion. Work to restore full integration is still needed, but soon two full-time Stony Beach personnel will be assigned in Hanoi; one has long been permanent in Phnom Penh. In Laos, Stony Beach's work is still limited to in-country participation during JPAC's scheduled field operations.

**UPDATE ON JPAC OPERATIONS:** Joint field operations will resume later this month in Vietnam and Laos and in February in Cambodia. Technical discussions will also be held in both countries. JPAC leaders also recently conducted a swing through several countries in Europe discussing future field operations related to WWII, and a JPAC team just returned from South Korea and discussions there on continuing joint cooperation. The South Korean Government is establishing its own recovery organization to locate and identify remains of their citizens killed during the Korean War. JPAC has provided helpful guidance and advice in this process. Deputy JPAC commander Johnie Webb is now holding talks in Papua New Guinea regarding upcoming WWII recovery operations.

**POW/MIA decals** for windows (inside) are \$20 per 100, and **POW/MIA lapel pins** are \$3 each

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NATIONAL COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC) ELIGIBILITY NUMBER IS **1174**

Help us achieve our humanitarian goals by sending your check to National League of POW/MIA Families, 1005 North Glebe Road, Suite 170, Arlington, Virginia 22201. Without the League, the POW/MIA issue would long ago have been ignored by the U.S. Government. Donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.