



**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES
OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

1001 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NORTHWEST, SUITE 919

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036-5504

UPDATE LINE: 202/659-0133

202/223-6846

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AMERICANS ACCOUNTED FOR: Since the last written update in May 2000, the remains of 35 Americans have been identified, all but two before January, 2000, according to February 28th statistical updates from the Defense Department. Recovery dates are listed to illustrate the timing of host-country cooperation and the time required for identification. Approximately 100 remains from all three Indochina countries are now in the ID process at CILHI.

Private 1st Class Walter Boyd, USMC, MIA 5/15/75, CB, remains recovered 12/6/95
Private 1st Class Gregory S. Copenhaver, USMC, MIA 5/15/75, CB, remains recovered 12/6/95
Lance Corporal Andres Garcia, USMC, MIA 5/15/75, CB, remains recovered 12/6/95
Private 1st Class Kelton R. Turner, USMC, MIA 12/15/75, CB, remains recovered 12/6/95
Commander Roger M. Netherland, USN, 5/1/67, NVN, remains returned 9/12/89
Lieutenant Colonel James M. Jefferson, USAF, MIA 5/1/67, NVN, remains recovered 7/14/99
Lieutenant Colonel Robert Lopez, USA, MIA 3/6/68, SVN, remains recovered 10/7/94
Major William H. Seward, USMC, MIA 3/6/68, SVN, remains recovered 10/7/94
Sergeant Bernard Gause, Jr., USN, MIA 5/15/75, CB, remains recovered 12/6/95
Lance Corporal Ronald J. Manning, USN, MIA 5/15/75, CB, remains recovered 12/6/95
Second Lieutenant Richard Vandegeer, USAF, MIA 5/15/75, CA, remains recovered 12/6/95
Lieutenant Commander Roger B. Innes, USN, MIA 12/27/67, NVN, remains recovered 7/14/99
Commander Leonard M. Lee, USN, MIA 12/27/67, NVN, remains recovered 7/14/99
Chief Master Sergeant James R. Williams, USAF, MIA 12/29/67, NVN, remains recovered 12/14/93
Chief Master Sergeant Wayne A. Eckley, USAF, MIA 12/29/67, NVN, remains recovered 12/14/93
Sergeant Timothy R. Bodden, USMC, MIA 6/3/67, LA, remains recovered 2/16/99
Captain John G. Gardner, USMC, MIA 6/3/67, LA, remains recovered 2/16/99
Major Stephen P. Hanson, USMC, MIA 6/3/67, LA, remains recovered 2/16/99
Sergeant Major Billy R. Laney, USA, MIA 6/3/67, LA, remains recovered 2/16/99
Lieutenant Colonel Donald E. Fisher, USAF, MIA 12/29/67, NVN, remains recovered 12/14/93
Colonel Charles Macko, USAF, MIA 1/22/69, LA, remains recovered 11/6/96
Colonel Donald E. Paxton, USAF, MIA 12/22/69, LA, remains recovered 11/6/96
Chief Warrant Officer William A. Smith, Jr., USA, MIA 9/27/68, SVN, remains recovered 5/5/99
Major Frank C. Parker, III, USAF, MIA 12/29/67, NVN, remains recovered 12/14/93
Colonel Robert R. Dyczkowski, USAF, MIA 4/23/66, NVN, remains recovered 11/19/99
Commander Richard Rich, USN, MIA 5/19/67, NVN, remains recovered 4/26/2000
Mr. Gustav G. Hertz, Civilian, KIA/BNR 2/2/65, SVN, remains returned 4/28/89
Lieutenant Colonel Roscoe H. Fobair, USAF, MIA 7/24/65, NVN, remains recovered 1/16/98
Warrant Officer 2nd Howard B. Comer, Jr., USA, MIA 11/24/69, SNV, remains recovered 12/14/93

The names of six Americans were not publicly announced at the request of their family. The accounting for these 34 Americans brings the number still missing and unaccounted for to 1,986, 1496 in Vietnam (528 North; 965 South; 418 in Laos; 67 in Cambodia; and 8 in the territorial waters of the People's Republic of China. It is important to note that over 80% of all Americans still missing and unaccounted for in Laos and Cambodia were lost in areas under wartime Vietnamese control.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S VISIT TO VIETNAM: The former President visited Vietnam November 15-18th, just after the presidential election and just before leaving office. The League declined to participate in the extremely large, business-oriented delegation; however, we tried to make the visit as helpful as possible for the issue and met with some success, though the potential on POW/MIA concerns was not fully realized. The League provided input to former National Security Adviser Samuel "Sandy" Berger, urging the President to raise the need for unilateral Vietnamese actions to locate and return remains that cannot be recovered in the field and provide relevant archival records not yet made available. We had hoped that the President would fully reinforce former Secretary of Defense Cohen's intervention last March. Reportedly, the President did encourage Hanoi to provide needed records.

Comment: As most Americans saw on TV (relatively low-key due to the post-election fiasco in Florida), President Clinton and his family visited an excavation site involving LtCol Lawrence G. Evert, USAF, MIA 11-8-67 in North Vietnam. Colonel Evert's children were first invited to the White House for Veterans Day events, then the two sons were flown with Defense POW/MIA Office (DPMO) escorts to Vietnam where filming occurred. This reversal of US Government policy to support a "photo-op" was questionable, but Colonel Evert's family apparently appreciated the opportunity to visit and assist with the excavation. In view of the relatively easy access to the site, dangers were minimal and there was little confusion added to what is inherent with a presidential visit. Reportedly, four Evert family members recently returned to Vietnam, received a JTF-FA briefing and again visited the excavation site.

CINCPAC VISIT TO LAOS AND CAMBODIA: Admiral Dennis Blair, USN, Commander in Chief, US Pacific Command, visited Laos and Cambodia in mid-January. During meetings with high level officials in both countries, Admiral Blair stressed the importance of the accounting effort to the United States and appreciation for past cooperation, as well as encouraging expanded efforts. Admiral Blair visited incident sites in Laos and Cambodia where US and host-government specialists were conducting excavations, thus reinforcing the need for expanded cooperation to increase results. The Admiral and his delegation, including BG Harry Axson, USA, Commander of Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA), and Mr. Alan Liotta, Deputy Director of DPMO, had also planned to go to Vietnam, but at the last minute, Vietnam canceled the visit.

Comment: The League was very pleased that from the beginning, the Admiral's agenda included visits to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam on POW/MIA and other matters of mutual interest. We regret that Vietnam's leaders opted to focus on preparations for their Communist Party Congress, later postponed, rather than accommodate a visit by the highest ranking US Military Officer in the Pacific. The League has long supported increased military-to-military relations as a means to improve dialogue and cooperation. Hanoi's decision may be short-sighted in view of humanitarian assistance and substantial funding of joint field operations, primarily from CINCPAC and US Army budgets.

NEW PRESIDENT'S COMMITMENT: Prior to last year's annual meeting, the League Executive Director wrote to the candidates seeking their positions on the POW/MIA issue. Since that time, George W. Bush was elected President of the United States. In his letter of June 19, 2000, then Governor Bush stated in part, *"If I am elected President, my administration will make the POW/MIA issue a matter of priority in all relevant departments and agencies. I will work with Congress to ensure that those departments and agencies have the necessary resources, including intelligence capabilities, to carry out the POW/MIA mission. With respect to countries whose cooperation is needed to achieve the accounting we seek – including Vietnam, North Korea, Russia, china, Laos and Cambodia – my administration will make clear that we regard their full cooperation as an issue of the highest importance. My administration will also maintain a close dialogue with the families of the missing, as well as the broader public, and enlist their views on how to improve current policy."*

In San Diego on Sept. 15th, National POW/MIA Recognition Day, after honoring returned POWs, Governor Bush stated, *"We must also honor the families of those still missing and unaccounted for. There is a daily burden – not knowing, even now, what has become of their husband, or father, or brother, or son. We owe them something, too: We must have the fullest possible accounting. This must be a high priority – a presidential priority – and it must come soon. What must be done? First, should I be elected president, I will direct all relevant departments and agencies to make it their own priority. Second, I will work with Congress to provide all the necessary resources to carry out that mission. Third, I will continue to seek all relevant information from Vietnam, North Korea, Russia, China, Laos, and Cambodia. I will place this matter higher on America's diplomatic agenda, making it clear to all countries concerned that this is a test of good faith in their dealings with the United States. Fourth, my administration will share what we learn with the families of the missing – every fact we gather, all the evidence we find about their loved ones. This is a duty we owe to the families, and to those who served. It is also our duty to the men and women who currently serve – a signal that those who wear our country's uniform will never be abandoned."*

Vice President-Elect Expresses Bush Administration Pledge: During remarks at the Salute to Veterans on January 19th, Vice President-Elect Dick Cheney stated, *"Today we also remember those who are not so near – those who never came home. Those whose fate is still undetermined. We honor the memory of the fallen soldier. We have not forgotten the missing soldier, and we pledge to their families our best efforts at the fullest possible accounting."*

Comment: The League recognizes and appreciates these early commitments by President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney. Along with those named and/or confirmed to develop and implement foreign policy, the League has confidence that these commitments will be pursued with a strong sense of purpose. Any who assert otherwise have little historical knowledge on the issue and none on the record of these senior US Officials.

Bilateral Trade Agreement with Vietnam: On October 17th, Associated Press asked then Governor Bush the following question: An agreement has been signed with Vietnam that, if approved by Congress next year, will require that country to protect intellectual property and open its markets. It makes no demands on human rights. Do you support this deal? In reply, Governor Bush stated, *"I support the trade agreement with Vietnam. I believe expanded trade with Vietnam will help the forces of economic and political reform take root and grow. At the same time, we must make clear to the Vietnamese government that we expect them to cooperate fully with our efforts to obtain the fullest possible accounting of missing servicemen in Vietnam. Like all Americans, I want to see improved human rights, and living and working conditions worldwide. The best way to address these issues is not through unilateral trade sanctions, but through multilateral agreements. The primary goal of our trade policy should be to open markets abroad because the better way to raise living and working standards is to increase trade."*

Comment: Regarding US-Vietnam relations, the League supports steps by the United States in response to unilateral and joint actions by Vietnam, not steps in advance in the hope of responses. We do not believe justified former President Clinton's repeated certifications to Congress that Vietnam was *"fully cooperating in good faith;"* however, we recognize that in some joint operations-related aspects, cooperation has improved and accountability is being obtained, for which we are grateful. The League has long supported normal political and economic relations with Laos and Cambodia so long as both countries continue to increase cooperation on POW/MIA accounting efforts, as they have.

League perspective on the past years' policy approach and an assessment going into the Bush Administration will be the subject of an upcoming Special League Newsletter.

JOINT FIELD OPERATIONS: The regular schedule of Joint Field Activities (JFA's in JTF-FA's jargon) is impressive and though results are never as rapid as we hope or desire, a total of 597 Americans have been accounted for since the end of active US involvement in the Vietnam War, January 27, 1973. Nearly 170 of those returned and identified from Vietnam were unilaterally repatriated by that government, not recovered in the field by CILHI, JTF-FA or its predecessor JCRC (Joint Casualty Resolution Center).

In Laos, the Lao Government agreed to increase team size from 40 to 50 US personnel, schedule five in-country operations each year, and expand time in the field to ensure 30 working days by excluding down time for poor weather, as well as advance preparations and departure. The Lao also agreed to make exceptions to the North-South approach in scheduling field operations, and schedule a seminar for presentations by all involved US Government organizations and agencies to Lao officials. (More on this in the upcoming special edition.)

In Vietnam, the team is comprised of roughly 100 US personnel, also working 30-day periods, but four times each year at more incident sites. Officials from Vietnam's Office of Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) will visit Hawaii in April for meetings with JTF-FA, Stony Beach and CILHI. During December, the Lao and Vietnamese governments conducted unilateral investigations, based on leads provided by the US, a welcome development.

Comment: Although additional improvements could and should be made to the structure of unilateral efforts, the League has long advocated the need for such actions, especially by the government of Vietnam. It is obvious that in some cases, especially last known alive and remains discrepancy cases, joint field operations are unlikely to yield results. In many such cases, Americans were alive on the ground in captivity or proximity to capture, not in a downed aircraft; therefore, not subject to remains recovery operations. Some are now criticizing US efforts to urge unilateral Vietnamese and Lao investigations, grasping for a basis to again accuse those involved of "conspiracy" between the US and those countries to get beyond the POW/MIA Issue. The League rejects any such accusations and urges all involved review the process of getting answers before jumping to conclusions that make no sense. We NEED unilateral actions by the respective governments to resolve sensitive cases of captured and missing Americans. Such cases logically can best be solved by the government in control of the locations of incident and capture.

In Cambodia, with the small number of missing (67) and the scarcity of leads, JTF-FA and CILHI now conduct operations only once each year; however, DIA's Stony Beach Team is once again traveling regularly to Cambodia to conduct interviews in search of archival records and eye-witnesses to incidents of loss. Cambodian officials consistently provide whatever cooperation is requested by the US Government and as leads are developed, it is hoped that the operational tempo will increase.

CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY: Although much is heard about JTF-FA, results that impact directly on family members also come from the professional efforts expended by CILHI. Every few years, a new "round" of controversy and accusation is generated to undercut family member confidence in the identification process; yet CILHI is judged by its peers to be the best forensic laboratory in the world. Lest there be any confusion (as some might prefer), the League continues to have a very high level of confidence in the US Government identification process. Central to that process are CILHI, JTF-FA, LSEL (Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory) and AFDIL (Armed Forces Identification Laboratory).

The League has again met the stringent criteria for the Combined Federal Campaign and is approved for fall, 2001, National # 1174.

LEAGUE'S 31ST ANNUAL MEETING: The 31st Annual Meeting is now history, but some highlights were very important at the time they occurred, particularly the strong support provided by **Deputy Secretary of Defense Rudy deLeon**. Once again, he demonstrated the importance of high level support and involvement, the benefits that can be derived from decisions that must then be implemented by the bureaucracy. Positive developments that occurred at the operational level – increased personnel and funding for the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI), reintegration of DIA's POW/MIA team (Stony Beach) into the field investigation process, as well as additional staff and new offices at Hickam AFB for this DIA team, funding increases and policy level support for the Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL) in San Antonio, and increased funding for Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) – can be traced directly to the interest, commitment and actions of Rudy deLeon and his staff.

Former **Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera** echoed the themes expressed by Secretary deLeon during the annual dinner, at which the US Air Force Singing Sergeants entertained. The **Honorable Orson Swindle**, COL, USMC-Ret., a member of the Federal Trade Commission and a returned Vietnam War POW, read the honor roll of America's POW/MIAs during the inspirational Candlelight Ceremony to conclude the annual dinner.

In seeking a way to honor someone for dedication and service far above and beyond even that on which the annual League Award is based, the League Board of Directors decided to present a Distinguished Service Award, a new award proposed and approved by the board. **Richard T. Childress**, Director for Asian Affairs from 1981-89 in the Reagan/Bush Administration and retired US Army Colonel who also served in Vietnam, was selected by the Board to be so honored. It is unknown when or if the **League Distinguished Service Award** will again be presented. It is on permanent display in the League's national office.

Operational Briefings at this past year's annual meeting were extremely informative. Many family and associate members who attended expressed the view that JTF-FA, Stony Beach, CILHI, LSEL and AFDIL outdid themselves in providing briefings that were of interest to all, not redundant, and gave real insights into the mission they are working to accomplish. It is clear that despite problems, both in the past and continuing, the operational processes have improved. To the extent that accounting can be obtained through field recoveries and identification of remains, results are due in no small part to advancing technology and increased professionalism.

Resolutions Adopted: The following resolutions were adopted by the voting members assembled for the 31st Annual Meeting of the National League of Families. All were passed unanimously with the exception of Resolution #1 on which there was one (1) negative vote. All resolutions were promptly transmitted to the Clinton Administration and all organizations and agencies involved. Comments on the current status follow each resolution.

#1 Regarding the Trip by the Secretary of Defense to Vietnam

RESOLVED, that the League commends Secretary of Defense Cohen for urging Vietnam's leadership to resume unilateral actions to achieve the accounting, thus reinforcing the need for a two-track approach.

Status: Although late in the second Clinton Administration, this March 2000 intervention by Secretary Cohen signaled Hanoi the US recognizes what the League has long maintained – there is urgent need for renewed actions by Vietnam to locate and return identifiable remains and provide relevant records to help obtain answers. Total reliance on joint field operation will not succeed in achieving the fullest possible accounting; unilateral actions by the Vietnamese area also required.

#2 Regarding DIA's Stony Beach POW/MIA Team

RESOLVED, that the League commends recent JTF and DPMO steps to reintegrate DIA's Stony Beach (team) into the accounting process and urges both organizations to fully utilize all assets and resources available in Stony Beach and elsewhere.

Status: Recent field operations in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have increasingly utilized DIA's Stony Beach interviewers. BG Harry Axson, USA, Commander of JTF-FA, is to be commended for his willingness to accept this long-standing League recommendation. The efforts of Vice Admiral Tom Wilson, USN, Director of DIA, to reinforce the importance of Stony Beach also contributed to integration and to obtaining suitable offices for this specialized team. Now, information indicates that more obstacles to occupying their designated space have appeared, but a solution must be found. Two years in Hawaii without the ability to fully utilize their classified files is unacceptable!

#3 Regarding CILHI

RESOLVED, that the League reinforces confidence in CILHI and the continued urgent need for additional personnel and resources to accomplish its mission as quickly as possible and with its established professionalism.

Status: Since adoption of this resolution, 22 additional personnel have been authorized and hiring is in process. Though progress was ongoing at the time of the annual meeting, it was a tedious, time-consuming process involving many internal bureaucratic struggles, but success is largely due to the strong support of Deputy Secretary of Defense Rudy deLeon. There is a continuing need to address questions of increased demands on limited resources, and the League is closely following the pace of activities to ensure that while all wars are covered and staffed, the Vietnam War effort is not reduced.

#4 Regarding Full Funding for LSEL

RESOLVED, that the League is concerned over initial cuts in funding and personnel of LSEL. The League calls on the US Air Force and all relevant USG organizations to recognize the unique and valuable contributions that LSEL has made, and increasingly will be called upon to make, on POW/MIA accounting and urges them to commit the necessary funding and resources.

Status: Following several weeks of effort urging implementation of the sentiments expressed in this resolution, a decision was made to hold the October Board of Directors meeting at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. A primary focus of the visit was to enable the board and executive director to tour the lab, receive briefings and meet with US Air Force civilian and military leaders at Brooks AFB where LSEL is located. In summary, LSEL's capabilities and facilities are impressive, and assurances of full support from the Brooks AFB leadership were welcome, but some concerns remain. With limited budgets, the divided LSEL focus – current mishap investigations/developing life support systems and their historical mission, i.e., POW/MIA accountability – the League is continuing to closely monitor the situation to ensure that commitments made are fulfilled.

#5 Regarding POW/MIA Memorial Sculpture

RESOLVED, that the League appreciates the dedication and artistic concept provided by Mark Hendricks to sculpt a monument to honor America's POW/MIAs.

Status: This project's implementation has slowed due to unavoidable circumstances; however, it is still evolving and of significant interest to the League.

#6 Regarding Support for Service Casualty Offices

RESOLVED, that the League strongly supports the commitment of increased personnel, assets and resources to handle POW/MIA accounting matters, including communication with family members.

Status: The League was assured by the Clinton Administration that across-the-board reductions in the Defense Department would not adversely affect POW/MIA accounting matters. The League will monitor to ensure that these commitments are met.

#7 Regarding Declassification of NSA and CIA Documents

WHEREAS, the National Security Agency (NSA) committed to complete by December 1999 a Mandatory Document Review for declassification of NSA-originated documents in the collection of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs; and

WHEREAS, NSA defaulted on its promise, due in part to delays caused by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), but has recommitted to completion of this document review by December 2000; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia calls on the National Security Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency to adhere to the agreed date of December 2000 for declassification of these documents; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the League calls on the House and Senate Select Committees on Intelligence to monitor this review process to insure full compliance by December 2000, as promised by the National Security Agency.

Status: According to DPMO, the NSA completed its review of nearly 3,000 pages of NSA-originated material in the retired Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs files from 1992-93. The declassified files, returned to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) on January 2nd, should soon be available for public access. (In this regard, noted author/researcher Jay Veith and League member Victoria Echanis Wallace deserve special thanks for their efforts.)

#8 Regarding Re-issuance of the POW/MIA Stamp

WHEREAS the POW/MIA stamp was designed to honor America's POW/MIAs; and

WHEREAS the USPS has determined to remove this stamp from circulation and destroy the remaining inventory as of June 30, 2000; and

WHEREAS the National League of POW/MIA Families strongly supports the position of the DOD and DPMO, reflected by DASD Robert L. Jones in a recent letter to the US Postmaster General, advocating re-issuance of the POW/MIA stamp; now therefore be it

RESOLVED by the National League of POW/MIA Families, gathered in Washington, DC for the 31st Annual Meeting, that strong support be conveyed to the Postmaster General for the re-issuance of this stamp in a denomination that will be continuously in circulation so that this nation may constantly be reminded of the obligation to account for those who have honorably served their country and have not yet returned to their families and their homeland.

Status: The League wrote in support of this project, but to date, there has been no word that the US Postal Service intends to re-issue the POW/MIA stamp.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTON: Enclosed are applications to run for election to serve a two-year term, 2001-2003. Those who are willing to serve must understand that travel and housing costs to attend board meetings must be at their own expense. That, in itself, warrants the appreciation of every League member. Each candidate must submit a short statement (50 words) of personal background on the issue and a longer statement (300 words) explaining his/her view of what the League's direction should be over the next two years. Please think this over carefully and **return the application to the League office** by mail, fax (202-785-9410) or email, downloading the form from the web site (www.pow-miafamilies.org) and completing it on line to return to the League at info@pow-miafamilies.org. If you use more than the permitted number of words, the overage will be deleted. The League's charter and bylaws (available by request to the national office) require that a bi-annual election be held for our 7-member Board of Directors and outlines the duties and responsibilities. This democratic process sets the League apart from many groups now involved in the issue, as does the yearly financial audit, conducted by a CPA firm, and publication of the League's Annual Report.

32nd ANNUAL MEETING: The League's 32nd Annual Meeting will be held **June 21 – 23rd** at the **DoubleTree Hotel**, Arlington, VA, across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. All League members (family and associate) are invited to attend, as are family members who are not League members. Concerned citizens who are not League Associate Members are also welcome and may contact the League's national office regarding registration. **All Primary-Next-of-Kin (PNOK)**, including League family members, will also receive information packets through their Service Casualty Office. Due to limited room availability, early registration and reservations are encouraged

Registration: Enclosed with this newsletter is the Registration Form. The cost to register for the 32nd Annual Meeting is \$40 per League member and \$50 per person for non-League members. Highlights of the three-day program are outlined below. On the Registration Form, you will note the optional cost of \$35 per person to attend the **32nd Annual Dinner**, taking place on Thursday, June 21st. Those who have attended in past years can attest to the quality of this special event, enjoyed by all and concluded with a **Commemorative Candlelight Ceremony** honoring America's POW/MIAs. This year, the U.S. Army Band and Chorus have been asked to perform as part of the patriotic program during the dinner. These outstanding musicians have performed for the League on many occasions over the years. Tickets for the 32nd Annual Dinner/Candlelight Ceremony **must** be purchased in advance. Tickets will **not** be sold at the meeting.

Transportation: The Department of Defense (DOD) will again authorize commercial transportation to attend the annual meeting; **two family members per missing man are authorized to travel**. The metropolitan DC area has three major airports: Reagan National (previously Washington National), Dulles International and Baltimore-Washington International. DOD does **not** provide transportation between the airport and the hotel; however, the DoubleTree Hotel has a shuttle service to and from Reagan National Airport (the closest), and public transportation is readily available from any of the three airports.

Primary-next-of-kin (PNOK) of the 1,986 Americans still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War should soon receive a package of information and forms to complete related to transportation, as well as reservations and registration for the League's 32nd Annual Meeting. Those who wish more detailed information should contact their Service Casualty Office or the League's national office at 202-223-6846.

DOD-supported travel is, by law, intended only for use by the families to travel to Washington, D.C., for the purpose of attending the annual meeting, during which U.S. Government briefings will occur.

Hotel Reservations: Cost per room is \$109 per night, plus tax, for single/double, and \$119 per night for triple/quad. These rates are extremely good for the Washington, DC area. A reservation form for the DoubleTree Hotel is enclosed for your use. Be sure to include a check for the cost of the first night, or use a credit card number; otherwise, your room will not be held past 3:00 p.m. on your date of arrival. ***Send the hotel reservation form ONLY directly to the DoubleTree Hotel.***

Congressional Visitation Program: A coordinated plan to visit Members of the House and Senate will be briefed to all participants prior to departure for Capitol Hill on Wednesday, June 20th, at 10:00 a.m. The Board of Directors urges everyone who is able and willing to participate by carrying our message to Congress. The League will provide current material for delivery to each office, including the list of men missing from the Senator's or Representative's state. Those interested should check the noted block on your **League Registration Form**.

Program Highlights: Wednesday evening, June 20th, a **Newcomers Orientation** will be held from 6:45 – 7:45 p.m. to welcome those who may be attending for the first time. (Yes, that situation still arises.) Check the posted bulletin boards in the hotel for location.

The **Opening Session**, 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 21st, will include a **Keynote Address** by a senior Bush Administration official, League Executive Director Ann Mills Griffiths' report for the year, and the **National POW/MIA Recognition Day** poster for **September 21, 2001** will be unveiled.

The afternoon will begin with the **Policy Forum**, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., lead off by Richard T. Childress, League Adviser and National Security Council Director for Asian Affairs from 1981-89 during the Reagan Administration. His introduction will be followed by an **Interagency Panel** of senior officials from the Departments of State and Defense and the National Security Council who will make presentations and respond to questions.

An **Intelligence Community Forum** from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. will include presentations from senior intelligence officials. A panel of specialists from DIA's Stony Beach Team and a member of the U.S.-Russian Commission on POW/MIAs' team in Moscow, Task Force Russia, will respond to questions regarding their in-country interview efforts in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Russia and the nations that previously comprised the former Soviet Union.

Following a break in preparation for the **32nd Annual Dinner**, no-host cocktails will be available in the foyer outside of the Crystal Ballroom prior to the 6:45 p.m. patriotic introduction by the **U.S. Army Band**. A **Joint Services Honor Guard** will perform the **POW/MIA Honors Ceremony** and, following dinner, musical selections will be performed by the **U.S. Army Chorus**. The dinner speaker has not yet been determined, and a **Candlelight Ceremony** will conclude the 32nd Annual Dinner.

On Friday, June 22nd, the **Department of Defense Forum** will begin at 9:00 a.m., recessing at 12:00 noon, resuming at 2:00 p.m. and concluding at 4:30p.m. During the morning session, presentations will be made by the Defense POW/MIA Office, (DPMO) Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) and Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory (LSEL). The **U.S. Military Service Luncheons** for all POW/MIA families and guests who responded to their invitation will be held from 12:15 – 1:45 p.m. The afternoon session will focus on the work of the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI) and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL). Recognizing the importance of the recovery and identification process and the budget competition among the services and the Defense Department for funds, the League has also invited LTG Tim Maud, USA, **Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel**, to address the families on CILHI-related personnel and resources. Hopefully, there will be some time for limited questions/answers during the latter presentations, closing at 4:30 p.m.

On Friday evening, the Military District of Washington (MDW) will provide bus transportation to the US Marine Corps Barracks at 8th & I Street, for a concert by the **U.S. Marine Corps Band** and a demonstration by the **U.S. Marine Corps Silent Drill Team**, plus a pass in review by the Marines stationed at 8th and I. The program is being dedicated in honor of American POW/MIAs and their families. En route to the program, the option of stopping by the **National Vietnam Veterans Memorial** and the **Korean War Memorial** will be available. Transportation for those who wish to go directly to the U.S. Marine Corps Barracks will also be available, and all buses will return to the DoubleTree Hotel immediately following the program.

On Saturday, June 23rd, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, the **League Business Session** will be held. Only League family members whose dues are current will be eligible to vote on any matter raised by resolution or from the floor. Unless already paid, all dues, for families and Associate Members, were due on January 1, 2001. **The deadline for payment of dues to vote at the 32nd Annual Meeting and to continue receiving League newsletters and information is May 30, 2001.** Look at the label on the next League mailing in April to determine whether your dues are current.

Following a break for lunch, the **Department of Defense Panel Discussion**, moderated by Chairman of the Board Jo Anne Shirley, will take place from 1:30 – 5:00 p.m. This lengthy period is set aside for family members to raise questions to all organizations with direct oversight and operational responsibility for POW/MIA accounting efforts. Representatives from DPMO, JCSD, DIA/Stony Beach, JTF-FA, LSEL, CILHI and AFDIL will be prepared to respond to all questions.

The concluding event on Saturday evening will be a **Game Night Social** to have a good time and to help raise funds for the League. A wide variety of activities is planned this year, and no one will be asked to sing anything! Come prepared to enjoy yourself and bring your friends and family.

SILENT AUCTION TO BE HELD: There will again be a Silent Auction that this past year was again successful. At the end of the general session each day, items identified in advance will be closed, and those with the highest bid will then be the proud owners. Depending on the items donated, a very few may be retained for live auction during the fun night on Saturday evening. ***Please participate by bringing at least one special item for this important fundraising event.***

ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM ADS: Once again, special ads can be purchased for inclusion in the 32nd Annual Meeting program. League members, concerned citizens, veteran organizations, civic and religious groups, and corporate sponsors are all urged to help support the League by placing an ad. Do your part and place an ad "In Honor of" your missing relative or friend, and ***please contact any and all of the above to ask for their support.*** Most people are willing to respond if asked. A special form is provided on the last page of this newsletter to copy for others and to complete for yourself. The League can't operate without funds!

MESSAGE FROM LEAGUE TREASURER KAREN MC MANUS: As you were reminded earlier in this mailing, unless already paid, all dues were payable on January 1, 2001. As I've said before, a \$25.00 annual donation to the League is not much when you consider what the League does for every American still missing, their families and our country. You might also consider what we, as an organization, have done to help POW/MIA families around the world. All nations must now try to account for those who serve! I want to again thank each of you who regularly and reliably donate monthly – whether \$100, \$15, \$3, \$75, \$50, or \$10 – each donation is deeply appreciated and a source of encouragement. I am convinced that without the League, most of the 597 Americans now accounted for would still be missing and their families still waiting for answers. And, there would be no responsible, non-government representation in our nation's Capitol that deals solely with POW/MIA matters. If you have not done so, please send your dues today.

POW/MIA MEMORIAL GIFTS: As families get answers, many request that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the National League of Families in honor of the man previously missing, but now accounted for. These donations are deeply appreciated and urgently needed to continue our important work. Each "memorial donation" is acknowledged to the relative whose loved one is finally home, and to the donor. To help others get answers, remember the League for your donations. And, don't ignore "matching fund" programs at various corporations in which donations are matched by the employer.

NOK RESPONSIBILITY: Eligible relatives are strongly urged to **deposit blood samples** with the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL) to facilitate the identification process. The League is increasingly concerned over the backlog of cases awaiting identification – **approximately 100 previously recovered remains are stored at CILHI, awaiting identification.** On 20% of these, mtDNA has been extracted and sequenced, but no match can be made with the blood samples now on deposit. Although there are still 1,986 Americans missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War, only approximately 1,225 samples (25 more than last year), representing 852 families, have been submitted by qualified Vietnam War next-of-kin (NOK).

Comment: For most family members awaiting answers, failure of a qualified family member to supply a blood sample is hard to understand. Whether or not specifically asked to submit a blood sample, the process can be expedited by providing reference samples in advance. This also expands the database for comparison purposes when mtDNA technology is utilized. The League has a high level of confidence in CILHI and AFDIL, both praised by the community of board-certified forensic anthropologists and odontologists as the best in the world. Most League members have provided such samples, but some family members are unaware of the need. It is important that they (including Korean and Cold War families) be reached. Please spread the word that maternal blood relative samples are sought. **It is entirely possible that many of these remains could be identified if all eligible family members came forward to volunteer a blood sample for mtDNA comparison.**

APOLOGY FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: Our inability to produce the League Newsletter with the normal regularity is a sensitive subject for me. I deeply regret and have been burdened by my inability to communicate more regularly with our members and supporters. Since our dedicated, reliable volunteers, Trudy Terla and Bill Walters, moved from the area last summer, the demands on my time have been enormous and impossible to handle adequately in the League office. Some of you contributed to a specific fund to hire a full-time assistant, but I could not be comfortable in offering a new employee any assurance of a continuing position. The need to constantly monitor the Clinton Administration's policies and intervene to try to change them for the better required a great deal of time. In an attempt to sustain and increase viable accounting efforts, many tasks routinely accomplished in past years were not possible. There is now hope. Dedicated League members have stepped up to help, and some tasks can now be accomplished via the Internet. In addition to our seven-member Board of Directors, three family member volunteers warrant special thanks: Candace Lokey (PA) is now handling the Adoption Program, Susie Ragan (MD, previously GA/CA) is assisting with distribution of Updates via the Internet, and JoAnn Shaw (FL, also previously GA) is working to accumulate data on our POW/MIA Flag Program. She is conducting a poll as to where, when, by what authority our flag is flying across the country and worldwide. (Please send information from your area to the League office at the address on page one, or email it to info@pow-miafamilies.org to help in collecting this data.) Their assistance on specific tasks, and other projects now being considered by volunteers around the country, will expand the League's reach and effectiveness on public awareness a time crucial to the accounting effort. Although funds are still scarce, the League is holding its own and, in fact, for the first time in many years, entered 2001 with a positive balance. I deeply appreciate the support and prayers sent my way from so many of you.



**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES
OF AMERICAN PRISONERS AND MISSING IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**

1001 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NORTHWEST, SUITE 919

202/223-6846

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036-5504

UPDATE LINE: 202/659-0133

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF POW/MIA FAMILIES

**32nd ANNUAL MEETING
PROGRAM AD RATES**

FULL PAGE (8 1/2" x 11") - \$500*

1/2 PAGE (8 1/2" x 5 1/2") - \$250*

1/4 PAGE (4 1/4" x 5 1/2") - \$125*

BUSINESS CARD - \$50*
(As submitted)

"IN HONOR OF" - \$20
(Submit Name of POW/MIA)

PATRON - \$10
(Your Name Listed)

Submit camera-ready advertisements or text with payment to:

**National League of Families of
American Prisoners & Missing in Southeast Asia
1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 919
Washington, DC 20036
202-223-6846**

Final Deadline for Receipt is May 30, 2001

***Donors at this level receive League Newsletters/Updates for One Year**

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