

POW/MIA Update: August 28, 2008

AMERICANS ACCOUNTED FOR: There are now **1,753** US personnel listed by the Defense POW/MIA Office (DPMO) as missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War. The remains of **Col David H. Zook, USAF**, listed as MIA October 4, 1967, were recovered June 18, 1992, identified on May 23, 2008, and the ID was just released by DPMO. **Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Manuel R. Denton, USN**, listed as KIA/BNR October 8, 1963, was buried as part of a group on August 7th at Arlington National Cemetery. The remains of **WO 1st Class Arthur F. Chaney, USA**, and **WO 2nd Class Bobby L. McKain, USAR**, both listed as KIA/BNR in South Vietnam on May 3, 1968, were turned over to US officials by a US citizen on June 11, 1985, identified on March 11th 2008, and recently released by DPMO as identified. The remains of **SGT Timothy J. Jacobsen, USA**, listed as MIA April 16, 1971 in South Vietnam were recovered June 7, 1995 and identified March 24, 2008, announced by DPMO as identified on July 28, 2008. The accounting for these four US personnel brought to 829 the number of US personnel accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975. 90+% of the 1,754 still listed as missing and unaccounted-for were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnam's wartime control.

PRESIDENT ADDRESSES VFW – AFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO POW/MIA ACCOUNTING: On August 20th, in Orlando, FL, President Bush repeated his longstanding commitment to continue priority accounting efforts. As part of his address, after noting passage of “a GI Bill for the 21st century,” he stated, “*We also owe something to your brothers-in-arms who never returned home. We will always cherish the memories of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. We will never stop searching until we can account for every missing soldier, sailor, airman, Coast Guardsman, and Marine.*” Due to long-standing support and involvement, there obviously was applause from VFW members attending their national convention. Resolutions considered and passed that pertain to the POW/MIA issue are available from the VFW or from the League's national office. .

UPDATE ON JPAC OPERATIONS: The 92nd Joint Field Activity (JFA) in **Vietnam** begun June 11th recently ended following the August 9th return of one Recovery Team (RT) that was extended for several days in an effort to complete excavation at one site. A brief ceremony, attended by US Ambassador to Vietnam Michael Michalak, was held prior to the earlier redeployment of the JPAC teams to honor five US personnel whose remains may be among those recovered and repatriated. The 45-day work period included five RTs, one Phase Two Testing Team (P2T), one Investigation Team (IT), one Underwater Investigation Team (UIT), one Research and investigation Team (RIT) and one Vietnam Office for Seeking Missing Persons (VNOSMP) unilateral recovery team in a restricted area where US personnel are not allowed. According to press reports, the “blood chit” of Major Bobby M. Jones, USAF, was discovered at a site believed to be the location of the downed F4 in which he was listed as MIA. While such information is not routinely available this quickly, Major Jones' sister, League Board Chairman Jo Anne Shirley, made public comments about these details as being a source of great relief to her and to her mother, Christine Jones.

In **Laos**, working level POW/MIA talks took place in Vientiane. Led by Detachment III Commander LTC Brandt Deck, USA Special Forces, the talks included officials from JPAC headquarters in Hawaii and DPMO in Washington, DC. The 105th JFA in Laos extended over a 30-day period and concluded at the end of July. Five RTs operated in northern Laos, in Houaphan and Xiengkhoang Provinces. In Europe, a JPAC anthropologist recently completed assisting the US Army Mortuary Affairs Activity-Europe in the disinterment of US remains from the Ardennes American Cemetery, Neupre, **Belgium**. These unknown remains were sent to JPAC's laboratory in Hawaii for forensic analysis.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES: POW/MIA hearings were held by the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Personnel July 10th to obtain Defense POW/MIA Office (DPMO) and JPAC testimony from Ambassador Charlie Ray and RADM Donna Crisp, USN. (Copies of the testimony are available by phone or email request to the League.) The League supports oversight by the House and Senate Armed Services and Foreign Affairs/International Relations Committees. The League continues to strongly oppose another wasteful, time-consuming special committee or commission unless and until there is no other constructive choice. In that event, the League would reconsider, but that time is NOT yet here.

League family members present for the 39th Annual Meeting in June voted unanimously to oppose formation of another Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, as called for in H. Res.111. Claims of conspiracy and cover-up are again being alleged by a small but vocal minority; however, past investigations have found no evidence to support such charges. Past select/special committees and/or commissions have completely tied up assets and resources, and the accounting was put on hold to allow time and attention to respond to Congress or officials named to serve on special commissions. It is our understanding that efforts by those supporting another select committee have shifted to calls for appointing an independent counsel, presumably to conduct further investigations.

NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY – SEPTEMBER 19, 2008: This year's official date will again be on the third Friday in September, and the national ceremony will be held on that date. The 2008 poster was unveiled at the League's 39th Annual Meeting and distributed there in limited number, but is available to the general public by calling **703-699-1131**. A recording will inform the caller on information needed to prompt a shipment of posters. A second way to order is to visit the DPMO web site at www.dtic.mil/dpmo and look at the link on the home page with instructions on how to order posters. There are still some 2007 posters left, and the ordering requirement is the same. Per DPMO, the posters were again ordered in both the large and small sizes.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC): The League has been certified as having successfully met the stringent criteria for the 2008 campaign. Our official number is the same as last year, **#10218**, assigned by the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Washington,

DC. **The League is the ONLY nonprofit organization representing American POW/MIAs, KIA/BNRs and their families eligible for donations through CFC & United Way.** Despite the reality of many competing charities and much need, especially in a time of war, the League is proud of our eligibility, due to tough requirements that must be met and is in urgent need of tax-deductible donations. The League is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt, non-profit organization; Federal Tax ID #23-7071242.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND THE 40TH ANNUAL MEETING JULY 22-25, 2009: Next year's annual meeting promises to be special in many ways, including commemorating over 35 years since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, and over 40 years since the League was formed May 28, 1970. Transitions are taking place, and there will be much to discuss and decide in terms of the League's and the issue's future. Importantly, it will also be the first year of a new administration. Any such political turmoil brings with it many changes in leadership and focus that, hopefully, will benefit the issue, but require close attention and actions by all members. Please do your part and start planning now to participate, arriving early if possible to call on Members of Congress and visit meaningful sites in Washington BEFORE the important sessions start on Thursday, July 23rd. COIN Assist transportation is anticipated.

CHECK THE LEAGUE'S UPDATED WEB SITE

www.POWMIALeague.org

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