



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

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AMERICANS RECENTLY ACCOUNTED FOR: Most recently, DPAA posted on its website the news that **LTC Robert G. Nopp, USA**, of OR, listed as MIA 7/14/66, was recovered 2/17/16 and ID'd 2/1/18. On January 18th, DPAA released notice that **Col Edgar F. Davis, USAF**, of NC, listed MIA in Laos on 9/17/68, recovered 4/29/15 and ID'd 12/22/17, is now accounted for, the first such announcement since September 11th of last year. At that time, DPAA reported the accounting for **CAPT James. R. Bauder, USN**, of CA, listed as MIA 9/21/66 in North Vietnam, recovered 6/11/17, and ID'd 8-28-17.

The number still missing (POW/MIA) and otherwise unaccounted-for (KIA/BNR) from the Vietnam War is 1,600. Of the 1,600, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Cambodia or Laos under Vietnam's wartime control: Vietnam-1,253 (VN-458, VS-795); Laos-292; Cambodia-48; PRC territorial waters-7. (Country-specific numbers fluctuate when investigations result in changes to loss locations.)

Since formation in 1970, the League has sought the return of all POWs, the fullest possible accounting for the missing, and repatriation of all recoverable remains. The total accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War in 1973 is **983**. A breakdown by country of these 983 Americans is: Vietnam – 665, Laos – 273, Cambodia – 42, and the PRC – 3. In addition, 63 US personnel were accounted for between 1973 and 1975, the formal end of the Vietnam War, for a grand total of 1,045. These 63 Americans, accounted for by US-only efforts in accessible areas, were not due to cooperation by post-war governments in Vietnam, Laos or Cambodia. Combined, a total of 281 have been accounted for from Laos, 720 from Vietnam, 42 from Cambodia and 3 from the PRC.

DPAA DIRECTOR ON MISSION TO SOUTHEAST ASIA: DPAA Director Kelly McKeague, supported by Policy & Plans Director John Hamilton, Vietnam War Policy specialist Jack Kull and Lt Col Bernard Smith, USAF, the Director's Senior Military Assistant, are currently meeting with senior Vietnamese and Lao officials, as well as US Ambassadors, Country Team members and DPAA Detachment staff in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand. This is Director McKeague's first official visit to these critical countries since being named DPAA Director on September 5, 2017. This visit is a crucial step in furthering mission as the US seeks to maximize the favorable environment that has created a unique opportunity to expand the pace and scope of accounting efforts advocated by Vietnam since first proposed to a League Delegation in 2009.

LEAGUE DELEGATION RETURNED FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA: A National League of POW/MIA Families Delegation, led by Chairman of the Board/CEO Ms. Ann Mills-Griffiths, traveled to Southeast Asia (Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, & Thailand) January 11th, and returned January 30th. She was joined once again by the League's Senior Policy Advisor since 1989, Richard Childress, COL, USA (Ret), and, for the first time, MIA daughter Cindy Stonebraker, elected member of the League's Board of Directors. Parallel to the League Delegation, and representing the Special Operations Association (SOA) and Special Forces Association (SFA) was Mike Taylor, LTC, USA/SF (Ret), Vice President of SOA and Chairman of the joint SOA/SFA POW/MIA Committee. Mrs. Elli Childress and Mrs. Laura Taylor accompanied their respective husbands and participated in some social events and cultural activities.

Both delegations met in each country with US Ambassadors and Embassy officials, Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Stony Beach specialists and DPAA Detachment personnel. While in Hanoi, the League Delegation met briefly with **US Secretary of Defense James Mattis** who was in-country for meetings with Vietnam's Prime Minister and Minister of National Defense, as well as other senior Vietnamese officials. The League Delegation also met with senior Lao, Vietnamese and Cambodian officials to discuss concepts to advance the accounting mission. In addition to meeting with US officials, SOA/SFA's Mike Taylor met with American and foreign veterans, some of whom fought as enemies during the war. While in Laos, representatives of both delegations (Stonebraker, M. Taylor and L. Taylor) visited a remote recovery site to thank US and Lao personnel for their often dangerous efforts during Joint Field Activities (JFAs) to account for missing Americans. A comprehensive report will be distributed as soon as possible, but suffice it to say that primary objectives were met and all participants hold the view that, difficult as such missions are, this was well worth the effort.

H. RES. 129 PASSES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES: On February 12th, the US House of Representatives passed this important resolution by a vote of 411 – 0, sending a unified message to the American people – including our Armed Forces serving today and our veterans, as well as foreign nations. Introduced by **Representative Sam Johnson (R-TX)**, a returned POW from the Vietnam War, His strong message on the Floor of the House occurred almost precisely 45 years after he and America’s other returned POWs were released from many years of captivity in Vietnam. Passage of this resolution reflects true bipartisan, non-political support for the humanitarian accounting mission.

It is the US Senate’s turn to act. The identical measure was simultaneously introduced in the US Senate by **Senator John S. McCain (R-AZ)** as **S. RES. 61**. Non-partisan, non-political passage by the US Senate would further reinforce our country’s support for achieving the fullest possible accounting for those who serve our nation – past, present and future. It needs to happen now!.

CONTACT YOUR SENATORS; URGE IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF S. RES. 61

ELKO POW/MIA AWARENESS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CHILI FEED RESOUNDING SUCCESS: The Elko POW/MIA Awareness Association once again held its annual fundraiser for the League. Held on the Saturday of Presidents Day Weekend each year, the “Chili Feed” brings together a remarkable community of people dedicated to supporting our Armed Forces – active duty, veterans and our UNRETURNED veterans – still missing and unaccounted-for from our nation’s past wars and conflicts. The committed, patriotic people of Elko’s surrounding communities are inspirational and extraordinarily generous in supporting the League, at one time saving the League’s National Office from being forced to close. Director of the Elko POW/MIA Awareness Association Les Brown also serves as No. NV State Coordinator and Sergeant-at-Arms Committee Chair for the annual meeting.

STONY BEACH TEAM PERMANENT STATUS IN VIETNAM NOT YET CONFIRMED: In early December, the League was informed that the Government of Vietnam had formally given approval for a Defense Intelligence Agency Stony Beach specialist to be permanently assigned to the US Embassy in Hanoi. The information, therefore the announcement, appears to have been in error, or at least premature, though provided as solid and reliable. All should have been able to celebrate the successful result of many, many years of effort, in particular by the League. Permanent assignment of a Stony Beach specialist was a high priority of discussions with Vietnamese officials. Strong support was also provided by past US Ambassadors and others posted in Vietnam, including immediate past US Ambassador to Vietnam Ted Osius, but also successive DIA Directors. US Ambassador to Vietnam Dan Kritenbrink is fully supportive, but Vietnam’s approval has not yet been formalized. Despite this temporary delay, the League deeply appreciates the efforts of all who helped form the DIA Stony Beach Team in 1986, supported them through years of personnel reductions, and fought attempted reassignments

Chairman’s Comment: The Stony Beach Team is comprised of highly trained specialists, language-capable, culturally familiar investigators who augment DPAA Investigation Teams, as they have done effectively for years despite sporadic, insufficient integration by DPAA and having to rotate on a temporary basis in and out of Vietnam. A favorable decision on permanent presence of Stony Beach by Vietnam’s leadership is overdue, but a positive response now is in keeping with current assurances of openness, an end to limits on the numbers of US personnel in-country simultaneously, increasing military-to-military and economic cooperation, and the current political environment. I am confident Vietnam’s leadership will act soon to approve permanent change of station (PCS) for DIA’s Stony Beach specialist. When that occurs, it will be most welcome, deeply appreciated and will expedite investigations to develop leads by interviewing firsthand witnesses before it is too late. There has long been a permanent Stony Beach specialist in Cambodia, filling the gaps since the former JTF-FA Detachment was pulled out and its responsibilities transferred to Detachment 1 in Bangkok. The Stony Beach specialist is on-site point-of-contact with very high level Cambodia POW/MIA Committee members. A few years ago, and after 14+ years of consistent League effort, the Lao Government agreed to permit a Stony Beach specialist to be permanently assigned to the US Embassy in Vientiane. For greatest effectiveness in expanding the pace of interviews and investigations, smaller teams must be able to pursue opportunities as they arise, not limited to the timeframe of in-country DPAA Joint Field Activities (JFAs).

DPAA-HOSTED FAMILY UPDATES: DPAA-hosted Family Member Updates (FMUs) are scheduled for 2018 and no longer restricted solely to family members. Responsible VSO representatives can now be included, as are League and other NGO officials who are not family members. Following are upcoming dates and locations: March 24th, El Paso, TX; April 21st, Rapid City, SD; and May 19th, Louisville, KY

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