



**NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES OF AMERICAN PRISONERS,
MISSING & UNACCOUNTED-FOR FROM THE VIETNAM WAR**

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**A RENEWED NAME & THE WAY AHEAD
February 28, 2023**

As many of you have heard, this has been a confusing and challenging time for all of us who have loved ones unreturned for more than 50 years. Hopefully this explanation will provide the inspiration that the work of the League will be sustained and that you will receive the answers you have fought for so long. The League has been undergoing extraordinary challenges to financially sustain ongoing efforts to achieve our longstanding accounting objectives. This has been an increasing struggle over recent years.....funds weren't coming in to cover costs for the League Office, much less salary for our few employees.

The League's 52nd Annual Meeting had been planned for July 12th – 15th, again at the Hilton Crystal City Hotel. Before the end of 2022, it was clear to the Board that the League's finances could not afford penalties involved with late cancellation. Reasons included the lack of reliable ability to assess post-COVID attendance and little confidence in the level of support that could be expected from the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA), as had occurred in 2021 due to restrictive advice from assigned Defense Department lawyers. There was no viable option, and the Board of Directors voted January 2, 2023, to cancel. The Hilton was notified on January 3rd, just before the agreed legal deadline of January 5th; therefore, no additional charges were incurred.

After much debate, due primarily to financial inability to meet basic cost-requirements to operate, the Board of Directors voted January 31st, by a 4-3 majority, to formally "dissolve" the League. This placed our 53-year-old nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization in the formal dissolution process that the League was officially informed would exist until December 31, 2023. This deeply regrettable, but unavoidable, step was announced on the League's website, as was earlier cancellation of the 52nd Annual Meeting. It turned out to be little short of providential!

The unprecedented decision to close, and the need to immediately inform those most impacted – the POW/MIA families – brought an almost unbelievable phone call. After first explaining his strong belief in all that the League has helped accomplish for our Nation, our missing men and their families, the caller made clear his strong support for the accounting mission and the League's continuation, as he did the need for preserving the 50+ year history for educational reasons. The discussion concluded with a firm commitment of generous support – full funding for the League to operate for the next five years, once we could agree on a budget and cautionary provisions.

The provisions focused primarily on the League's willingness to continue and increase its responsible role advocating expanded US Government priority to achieve our principled, reasonable accounting objectives. With this assurance, plus reasonable budget projection and a pledge to complete the final year of the League's Archival Preservation Project, this patriotic American offered to donate \$400,000 per year, over the next five years. The donor will assess the League's efforts at the end of each year and, so long as responsible issue-focused efforts are helping bring answers and reasonably increased accounting results, another \$400,000 will be donated each year until the end of five years, for a total of \$2,000,000.00. (To ensure clarity, the donor is not related nor a close friend to anyone who has been or is now missing or unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War, nor any returned Vietnam War POW, nor connected by past or current accounting-related employment.)

This completely unexpected news prompted an immediate need for the Board of Directors to take action to revoke the prior decision to dissolve. In accordance with the League's Policy on Leadership and Internal Operations, a Poll of the Board was called on the question of revoking the earlier decision to dissolve. The intention was that the League would immediately be restored to an active 501(c)(3) nonprofit status with our mission intact.

Unfortunately, during the brief period between the January 31st Board decision to dissolve and the February 11th Poll of the Board to revoke dissolution due to the anonymous pledge of full funding, a League member, then serving on the Board of Directors, applied successfully on February 7th to form a separate organization using the League’s full legal name, adding only “LLC”. Filed with the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection (DLCP) in Washington, DC, this application occurred despite official DC notice to the League that final dissolution would not occur until December 31, 2023.

This action required the League Board of Directors’ majority to apply to form a new 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Now officially named the “National League of Families of American Prisoners, Missing and Unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War,” this NEW NAME accurately includes all the families for whom we’ve sought answers since May 28, 1970, thus retaining our SACRED HISTORICAL MISSION, just with a new name. While very close to the original, the new name is sufficiently different to enable the League to move forward legally.

Challenging and frustrating as have been the recent months of confusion, the League now has ample funding to support our continuing efforts. Thankfully, and on board as this is written, is Executive Director is Dr. George “Jay” Veith! He comes to the position highly qualified, having served as the League’s Archival Research Committee (ARC) Chairman, and with extensive knowledge and experience within the accounting mission. He is very well known and respected by many Vietnam War POW/MIA families, researchers, authors, educators and DIA’s Stony Beach Team members, as well as some long involved, committed DPAA employees. He is eager to start!

It is critical you all know that because the League was “dissolved” officially, though very briefly, there now are officially no League members. We’re confident that all family members still seeking answers to end uncertainty about their missing loved one will quickly join our new nonprofit. A Membership Form is enclosed for your use. No dues required, at least this first year! We must pull together to reinforce the importance of implementing long-promised priority on our shared mission – accounting as fully as possible for America’s POW/MIA and KIA/BNR from the Vietnam War.

This urgent letter is being sent to all for whom we have mailing addresses, hoping to confirm that we have your current mailing address, phone number and email address, the latter being the quickest and least expensive way to reach out and keep all apprised of current, critical information. We must signal senior US and foreign officials that we are expecting increased accounting results in keeping with longstanding reasonable expectations. Last December 12th, League Chairman of the Board Ann Mills-Griffiths again met with Vietnam’s Minister of Public Security To Lam to convey the specific unilateral steps his government needs to take – with no further delays! We are determined to continue engaging senior foreign and US officials, in all related agencies. Their policy and implementation plans to obtain answers for the impacted families must be known to have confidence that increased, evidenced-based results can be achieved. The time is NOW!

When the League was formed to voice our concerns in 1970, it was because the USG thought they knew best.....they didn’t then, but with President Reagan’s support in the 1980s, things finally began to move. NOT SO TODAY! We need your help and support, so please join us, the Founding Directors of our newly formed nonprofit, the National League of Families of Prisoners, Missing and Unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War. You can count on us to move forward and do everything we can to help get the answers you seek, now inspired by our new Executive Director Jay Veith. He’ll be supported by our dedicated League Administrator Jennifer Giorffino who voluntarily stuck with us throughout this trying time to demonstrate her unwavering support and assistance. As ever hopefully.....and moving forward with focused determination.....

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