



# The Torch

Keeping the Promise

Vol. 5, No. 1

Spring 2011

## Torch getting 'greener'

The next quarter's issue of The Torch newsletter will be "greener" than the issue you're now reading.

Though costs of printing and mailing paper copies of The Torch have escalated dramatically in recent years, advances in electronics have enabled editors to place newsletters in the hands of subscribers more rapidly – at considerably lower cost -- than with "snail mail."

The Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, which publishes this newsletter, is committed to reducing costs to the taxpayer while still fulfilling the mission of the fullest possible accounting of our missing. Outreach to families, veterans and the general public is a key component of the mission.

The costs of viewing electronic copies of The Torch are miniscule compared with printing and mailing paper copies.

Let us know how you would like to receive The Torch. Please fill out the coupon on page 2, and either mail it to us, or email it to: [outreach.DPMO@osd.mil](mailto:outreach.DPMO@osd.mil).

Many readers know that all issues of The Torch are carried on the DPMO web site at [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo). Click on "news" and look for "newsletters."

We are encouraging readers to switch from paper copies to simply reading it on the DPMO web site. The electronic publication offers several advantages. First, it saves precious resources including taxpayer dollars. Second, the electronic version can be updated almost instantly with the latest news, and with more news, than the quarterly, printed version.

Yet, we know that some readers do not have access to computers. We need to know how you want to receive The Torch. Please fill out the short coupon on page 2, and either mail it to us, or send us an email at [outreach.DPMO@osd.mil](mailto:outreach.DPMO@osd.mil).



## Vietnam crash takes 16 lives: Remembering, 10 years later

April marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a helicopter crash in Vietnam which took the lives of seven Americans and nine Vietnamese who were searching for American MIA losses.

Then-President George W. Bush issued a statement which read, in part: "The families of the service personnel lost in today's tragic accident know better than most the contribution their loved ones made in bringing closure to scores of families across America. Today's loss is a terrible one for our nation."

The Americans lost were: Lt. Col. Rennie M. Cory, Jr., outgoing commander of JPAC's Detachment 2 in Hanoi; Lt. Col. George D. Martin, incoming Det. 2 commander; Maj. Charles E. Lewis, deputy commander of Det. 2; Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Tommy J. Murphy; Master Sgt. Steven L. Moser; Tech. Sgt. Robert M. Flynn; and Hospital Corpsman Chief Pedro J. Gonzales.

Also killed in the crash were two members of the Vietnamese Office for Seeking Missing Persons, and seven Vietnamese aircrew members.

Officials from Vietnam, JPAC and DPMO joined American and Vietnamese family members in honoring those lost in the crash with a brief ceremony in Vietnam.



Rennie Cory, III, (left) and Caroline Cory, son and daughter of Lt. Col. Cory, attended the ceremony in Vietnam honoring their father and the other Vietnamese and Americans who lost their lives in 2001 while investigating several loss sites. Several Vietnamese family members, who also lost loved ones, participated in the ceremony, along with U.S. and Vietnamese officials. The monument is inscribed with the names of those killed is placed near the crash site.

# Operation Frantic

## Secret missions from secret bases

By Darryl M. Lewis, DPMO

Research analysts from DPMO are continuing a search for information about missing Americans who participated in a secret U.S.-Soviet operation during World War II called “Operation Frantic.”

The plan reflected the Western Allies’ desire to assist Joseph Stalin’s Soviet Union quickly and was a set of hastily planned and executed shuttle bombing missions between June 2 and Sept. 19, 1944.

The analysts are researching information on the secret operation in the Russian archives in Podolsk, Russia. DPMO field investigators also have explored possible crash sites and interviewed witnesses in Ukraine.

U.S. Army Air Forces bombers and fighters taking off from bases in the United Kingdom and Italy flew east conducting raids on vital Axis oil refineries and industrial plants in Germany, Romania, Hungary, Poland, and France.

These shuttle missions relied on stops at three secret airfields in the Soviet Union after reaching their targets. U.S. planners hoped the missions would strengthen Soviet-American relations and demonstrate that Axis forces were also vulnerable from American air attacks on the German Eastern Front.

The American aircraft landed at the clandestine airfields, near the Ukrainian towns of Poltava, Piryatin, and Mirgorod, which the Germans destroyed after their 1941 invasion of the Soviet Union, and which the Red Army had recently recaptured.

Despite their relatively remote location, each base had running water and electricity, while most other supplies were sent from Iran or arrived by ship at Archangelsk, Russia and then were sent over land to Ukraine. Many personnel manning the bases secretly arrived in caravans from Iran.

The flights had to cover heavily defended German occupied territory. Many planes and men were lost to dog fights and anti-aircraft fire. Some of the crews were never seen again.

### Family Updates

The following family updates will be conducted for families of service members missing in action:

**May 21** — Green Bay, Wis.

**June 25** — Princeton, N.J.

**July 21-24** — Southeast Asia annual government briefing and National League of Families annual meeting, Washington, D.C.

(See [www.dtic.mil/dpmo](http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo) for more information or to register.)



U.S. government photo

U.S. Army Air Forces Fifteenth Air Force B-17 Flying Fortresses and Red Air Force Yak-9 fighters share an airfield as aircrews swap stories, 1944.

### JCSD Acting Director

Mr. Dave Martin has been selected to replace Mr. Norm Kass as Acting Director of the Joint Commission Support Directorate in DPMO.

Dave comes from the Policy staff in the Pentagon, is an Army Foreign Area Officer specializing in the former USSR, and served a brief internship in the Moscow office in the early 2000s.



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241 18th St. South, Suite 800  
Arlington, VA 22202**

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## POW/MIA Budget Request Goes to Hill

DPMO is one of several DoD agencies that works to recover and identify service members missing from past conflicts. It also provides policy control and oversight within the office of the Secretary of Defense. Funding that effort requires an annual budget submission to the Hill, through the Pentagon's leadership.

The Fiscal Year 2011 budget request submitted by DPMO was \$24.2 million. That amount will fund personnel payroll, facilities, family updates, mission travel that includes interviews in foreign countries and archaeological investigations, technology improvements and other support. The Fiscal Year 2012 budget request submitted in February to Congress was \$22.4 million and will sustain the current operations at DPMO.

## Laos update

A joint field activity in Laos was recently canceled due to a lack of air transportation to planned recovery sites. The next field activity will commence in the country and in Cambodia following a U.S. Pacific Command-approved waiver to ensure helicopter support to upcoming JFAs.

DPMO joined with JPAC in bi-annual U.S. – Laos POW/MIA consultative talks in Vientiane, Laos. Among the topics discussed were the results of the recent joint recovery operation and planned recoveries for the remainder of the year.

## Recent identifications

The following servicemen have been accounted-for since Sept. 2010:

### WWI

Pvt. Henry A. Weikel, USA

### WWII

Staff Sgt. Berthold A. Chastain, USAAF  
Pfc. Victor P. Corsini, USA  
2nd Lt. Regis E. Dietz, USAAF  
2nd Lt. Dewey W. Foster, USAAF  
Capt. Lewis J. Geerlings, USAAF  
Staff Sgt. Clyde L. Green, USAAF  
Capt. George W. Grismore, USAAF  
Staff Sgt. Joseph J. Karaso, USAAF  
Pfc. Harold D. Kenner, USA  
2nd Lt. Edward J. Lake, USAAF  
Tech. Sgt. James G. Maynard, USAAF  
2nd Lt. Martin P. Murray, USAAF  
Pvt. Donald D. Owens, USA  
2nd Lt. Richard S. Ryrholm, Jr., USAAF  
Staff Sgt. Joe R. Sanchez, USAAF  
2nd Lt. William J. Shryock, USAAF  
Pfc. Mervyn E. Sims, USA  
Tech. Sgt. Hollis R. Smith, USAAF  
Staff Sgt. Marvin J. Steinfeld, USAAF  
Staff Sgt. Glenn E. Webb, USAAF  
Tech. Sgt. Robert S. Wren, USAAF

### Korea

Cpl. Charles Arce, USA

Cpl. Nehemiah E. Butler, USA  
Sfc. James C. Caldwell, USA  
Cpl. Primo C. Camabuci, USA  
1st Lt. Robert F. Dees, USAF  
Master Sgt. Michael C. Fastner, USA  
Sgt. Carl B. George, USA  
Cpl. Patrick R. Glennon, USA  
Cpl. Floyd E. Hooper, USA  
Pfc. Peter Kubic, USA  
Cpl. John W. Lutz, USA  
Sgt. Brunko R. Miljus, USA  
Cpl. Harold B. Moore, USA  
Pfc. Myral N. Moore, USA  
Sfc. Melvin R. Musgray, USA  
Master Sgt. Clifford L. Ryan, USA  
1st Lt. Jack J. Saunders, USA  
Cpl. A.V. Scott, USA  
Sfc. Wallace L. Slight, USA

### Vietnam

Maj. Thomas J. Beyer, USAF  
Sp. 4 Randall D. Dalton, USA  
Col. James E. Denny, USAF  
Lt. Cmdr. William P. Egan, USN  
Maj. Richard G. Elzinga, USAF  
Staff Sgt. Samuel E. Hewitt, USMC  
Chief Warrant Officer 3 George A. Howes, USA  
Sgt. 1st Class James L. Moreland, USA  
Master Sgt. Ralph J. Reno, USA  
Sgt. 1st Class Donald M. Shue, USA  
Capt. Darrell J. Spinler, USAF  
Maj. Robert L. Tucci, USAF



Photo by Hilary Woodier

## Holiday for Heroes

Bill Woodier, DPMO, lays a wreath at a headstone in Arlington National Cemetery to recognize the holiday season. Approximately 2,000 volunteers gathered Dec. 11 to adorn tombstones with more than 10,000 evergreen wreaths. The annual event recognizes sacrifices veterans and their families have made for our country. A private company, based in Maine, started the program in 1992 to honor our nation's fallen heroes.

## Korean War records declassified by Russians

DPMO's Moscow office reports that the Russians are honoring a U.S. request to declassify the records of the 64<sup>th</sup> Fighter Aviation Corps.

In September 2010, Lt. Col. Larry Beisel, DPMO's Moscow office chief, requested the Central Archives of the Russian Ministry of Defense declassify the 87<sup>th</sup> Anti-aircraft Artillery Division records. This unit was stationed in North Korea during the war and provided air defense against United Nations' forces for almost two years. In January 2011, DPMO researchers were allowed to review the first batch of newly-declassified files from this unit.

## WWII losses in Tunisia

A team from the World War II division of DPMO researched missing personnel from the Tunisian Campaign of 1942. From September 2010 until February 2011, the team established leads on 41 missing personnel in three areas near Tunis. They planned to interview government officials and witnesses on these losses and were prepared to survey possible sites. However, since December 2010, local unrest has prevented access to Tunisia. The mission was postponed until later this year, due to security concerns, at the recommendation of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis.



Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office  
2600 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301-2600



Photo by U.S. Air Force Maj. Carie A. Parker

## DPMO shares holiday spirit

Teacher's assistant Marilyn Wiggins (left) and U.S. Air Force Maj. Joseph Silver, DPMO, help 1st-grader AeSyaun Rackett, 6, select a toy car for Christmas. Personnel from DPMO donated toys, school supplies, hats and gloves to children in two classrooms at John Tyler Elementary School in Washington, D.C. Each year since 1984 the Partnership in-Education Program has adopted the school to supplement the educational program with assistance during the holiday season. DPMO has participated since 1997, helping hundreds of children in the nation's capital.

## For your information

Family members seeking more information about missing loved ones may call their respective Service Casualty Office:

**U.S. Air Force**  
1-800-531-5501

**U.S. Marine Corps**  
1-800-847-1597

**U.S. Army**  
1-800-892-2490

**U.S. Navy**  
1-800-443-9298

**U.S. Department of State**  
202-647-5470

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