



The Bright Light

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News Briefs

JTF-FA Commander to Speak at MIA/POW Ceremony



Brigadier General Harry B. Axson JR.

The public is invited to attend a POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremony at Hickam AFB at 8:30 a.m. at the Officer's Club on September 15th. The guest speaker at the event is JTF-FA's Commanding General Harry B. Axson, JR.

A remains arrival ceremony will follow at 10 a.m. behind the Base Operations building. The remains are those of servicemen lost during the Korean war. Mr. Robert L. Jones, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs will officiate. A reception for attending veterans will follow inside the Base Operations building.

Joint Field Activities

Vietnam

- 62nd JFA Aug 28-Sept 27
- 63rd JFA Oct 30-Nov 28
- 64th JFA Feb 8-Mar 9
- 65th JFA May 3-Jun 1
- 66th JFA July 5-Aug 3

Laos

- 01-1L JFA Sept 29-Oct 28
- 01-2L JFA Jan 9-Feb 7
- 01-3L JFA Mar 10-Apr 5
- 01-4L JFA Jun 4-Jul 3
- 01-5L JFA Aug 5-Sept 3

Cambodia

- 01-1C JFA 10 Jan - 6 Feb



Americans and Vietnamese work together to recover remains.

JTF-FA leads the way to Fullest Possible Accounting in Southeast Asia

By JO1 Jeff McDowell
Public Affairs

Much has been publicized and debated about the U.S. Government's mission to locate missing and unaccounted-for Americans from the war in Southeast Asia. While 578 Americans have been identified and returned to their families, there is still work to be done to account for the remaining 2,005 others who never came home. The mission of Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of Americans still unaccounted-for as a result of the war in Southeast Asia. JTF-FA operations include investigations, archival research, an Oral History Program, and remains recovery operations.

The task force was created in response to Presidential, Congressional and public interest, as well as increased opportunities for case resolution. The opportunities included increased willingness of the governments of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to share information regarding unaccounted for Americans, to include increased access to files, records and witnesses in these countries.

JTF-FA consists of more than 150 in-

vestigators, analysts, linguists and other specialists representing all four services and Department of Defense civilian employees. The task force's operations are supported by mortuary affairs specialists, archeologists and anthropologists from the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI); representatives of the Defense POW/MIA Office; and augmentees from U.S. Pacific Command component commands. JTF-FA is headquartered at Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii, with three detachments located in Bangkok, Thailand; Hanoi, Vietnam; and Vientiane, Laos. The detachment in Thailand also supports operations in Cambodia.

What most Americans do not realize is these remains recovery missions do not just happen; it takes years of research on the U.S. Government's part to locate and analyze loss incident accounts, aircraft shoot-down records and ground battle after-action reports.

If a loss site investigation, witness interview, or crash site survey results in the discovery of remains, excavations are conducted by JTF-FA and CILHI casualty recovery specialists. The remains are then transported to CILHI, located at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, where positive identification of the remains through anthropological and forensic analysis is the goal.

"While 578 Americans have been returned...there is still work to be done to account for the 2,005 others who never came home."