



**August 10, 2018**

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**1. Korean & Cold War POW/MIA Families Meet:** The VFW Washington Office joined the Coalition of Families of Korean and Cold War POW/MIAs this week at their annual meeting in Arlington, Va. This year's atmosphere was supercharged with hope after last week's return of 55 cases of American remains from the Korean War. The remains are now at the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency identification lab in Hawaii where they are being anatomically arranged and sampled for DNA sequencing. There are approximately 7,690 unaccounted-for Americans lost on the Korean Peninsula, with an estimated 5,300 being north of the DMZ. Cold War losses in the vicinity number 111. American-led recovery teams have not operated in North Korea since 2005 due to security reasons, but the possibility they could resume is being met with the full support of the families and the VFW, who will ensure any increase in mission requirements is met with a corresponding increase in mission funding.

**2. Purple Hearts Reunited:** Tuesday was National Purple Heart Day, and fittingly the VFW was proud to help unite retired Army Staff Sgt. Mike Jeffrey with his Purple Heart in a ceremony in Washington, D.C. VFW National Veterans Service Assistant Director and Purple Heart recipient Brad Hazell had the honor of assisting in the presentation of the medal to Mike, a member of VFW Post 10281 in Vine Grove, Ky., who was a Cavalry Scout assigned to the 8th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, when he was wounded in October 2006 during combat operations in Iraq. His original medal was engraved with the wrong name, so he turned it in but never received a corrected version until the event, which was hosted by [Purple Hearts Reunited INC.](#) Seven other medals were presented that day to the families of veterans from World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam. Pinning the Purple Heart on Mike was his younger brother Army Sgt. 1st Class Joe Jeffrey.

**3. Apply Now for 2019 VFW-SVA Legislative Fellowship:** The application process for the 2019 class of VFW-SVA legislative fellows is now open. Ten VFW members who attend schools with an approved Student Veterans of America chapter will be selected for a semester-

long program to advocate on policy issues faced by veterans, service members, and their families. The capstone of the program is participation in the 2019 VFW Legislative Conference. [Read more information or apply.](#)

**4. TRICARE Webinar:** TRICARE will hold a webinar on Aug. 23 to answer questions about benefits. The “Ask TRICARE” webinar will include a panel of subject matter experts to answer your questions about TRICARE health care, pharmacy, and dental programs. Panelists will include representatives from major TRICARE offices and programs, including TRICARE For Life, Policy and Benefits, Reserve Select, Retired Reserve, Overseas Program, Pharmacy Program, and Dental Plans. [Register for the webinar.](#)

**5. MIA Update:** The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has released the names of five newly identified servicemen, and the burial dates of three others. Returned home for burial with full military honors are:

-- **Army Air Forces Flight Officer Richard W. Lane**, 21, of Beatrice, Neb., was buried yesterday in Gage, Neb. In December 1944, Lane served with the 815th Bombardment Squadron, 483rd Bombardment Group (Heavy), 15th Air Force. He was killed on Dec. 27, 1944, when the B-17G aircraft he was copiloting was shot down on a bombing mission over Austria.

[Read about Lane.](#)

-- **Marine Corps Reserve Pvt. Emil F. Ragucci**, 19, will be buried Aug. 14 in his hometown of Philadelphia. In November 1943, Ragucci was assigned to Company E, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, which landed against stiff Japanese resistance on the small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll of the Gilbert Islands. Ragucci died on the first day of the battle, Nov. 20, 1943. [Read about Ragucci.](#)

-- **Army Sgt. 1st Class Rufus L. Ketchum**, 38, will be buried Aug. 14 in his hometown of Superior, Wis. In late November 1950, Ketchum was a member of Medical Detachment, 57th Field Artillery Battalion, 31st Regimental Combat Team, 7th Infantry Division, deployed east of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea, when they were forced to withdraw south due to overwhelming numbers of Chinese forces. McKinney was reported missing in action on Dec. 6, 1950. [Read about Ketchum.](#)

-- **Navy Seaman 2nd Class Wilbur C. Barrett** of Kansas, was assigned to the battleship USS Oklahoma, which on Dec. 7, 1941, was moored at Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, when it quickly capsized after sustaining multiple torpedo hits. Interment services are pending. [Read about Barrett.](#)

-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Martin F. O’Callaghan Jr.** was a P-38 Lightning pilot with the 96th Fighter Squadron, 82nd Fighter Group. In February 1945, O’Callaghan was on a strafing mission near Maribor, Yugoslavia, now Slovenia, when his aircraft was struck by anti-aircraft fire. While attempting an emergency landing, his aircraft crashed and burst into flames. Interment services are pending. [Read about O’Callaghan.](#)

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-- **Army Air Forces 2nd Lt. Hulen A. Leinweber**, 22, of Fort Bend County, Texas, was a P-51 Mustang pilot with the 40th Fighter Squadron, 35th Fighter Group. On June 10, 1945, while on a strafing mission in the Philippines, his aircraft reportedly was struck by anti-aircraft fire, causing the right wing to break off and his aircraft to crash. Interment services are pending. [Read about Leinweber.](#)

-- **Army Pfc. John A. Taylor** was a member of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, stationed in South Korea. On Aug. 11, 1950, his regiment

encountered a Korean People's Army unit near the village of Haman. Taylor's company was ordered to move southwest, where they were ambushed and forced to disperse. Taylor was reported killed in action on Aug. 12, 1950, but his remains were not recovered. Interment services are pending. [Read about Taylor.](#)

-- **Army Master Sgt. Carl H. Lindquist**, 32, of Willmar, Minn., was a member of Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 31st Infantry Regiment, 7th Infantry Division. In late November 1950, his unit engaged with forces of the Chinese People's Volunteer Forces on the east side of the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea. He was reported missing in action on Nov. 29, 1950. Interment services are pending. [Read about Lindquist.](#)

To sign up new veterans' advocates, click here: <http://capwiz.com/vfw/mlm/signup.htm>.

As always, we want to hear your advocacy stories. To share your stories or photos with us, simply email them directly to [yfwac@vfw.org](mailto:yfwac@vfw.org).