

Ventura County NAVY DISPATCH

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Remains of Navy aviator identified after being MIA from Vietnam War from the DoD

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced Sept. 20 that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

He is Lt. Cmdr. James E. Plowman, U.S. Navy, of Pebble Beach, Calif. He was buried Sept. 20 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C.

On March 24, 1967, Plowman and a fellow officer departed the USS *Kitty Hawk* (CV 63) in their A-6A Intruder on a night strike mission of an enemy target in North Vietnam. Radar contact with their aircraft was lost over the Ha Bac Province as they were departing the target area. A pilot from another aircraft reported two missile warnings on his radar screen immediately before contact was lost with Plowman's aircraft.

Between 1993 and 1996, joint U.S.-Socialist Republic of Vietnam (S.R.V.) teams, led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC), conducted three investigations in the province. The team interviewed two local villagers who saw the 1967 crash, and both men recalled seeing human remains at the site. The team also surveyed the purported crash site and found several small fragments of aircraft wreckage.

In 1996, another joint U.S./S.R.V. team excavated the suspected crash site. The team found human remains from amid the scattered wreckage. The team was also handed some remains by a local villager who claimed to have recovered it while scavenging the crater for metal.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from JPAC and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used mitochondrial DNA in the identification of the remains.

Joint interagency group working to stop flow of drugs into U.S.

by Kathleen T. Rhem

Agents and experts from many different government agencies are working together out of a headquarters in Key West, Fla., to stem the flow of drugs and other contraband into the U.S. from Latin America.

The Joint Interagency Task Force South is "a model for interagency cooperation," Army Gen. Bantz J. Craddock told Pentagon reporters Sept. 20. Craddock is the outgoing commander of U.S. Southern Command, which maintains operational control of the task force.

Military assets are often best suited for finding and tracking means by which criminal gangs move drugs, weapons and illegal immigrants into the United States. However, the military can't arrest people in domestic operations. This is where interagency cooperation is vital.

Craddock explained that military assets within JIATF South detect and monitor drug traffickers moving from Latin America into the U.S. That's the point in the process where representatives of law enforcement agencies step in.

"Every time there is an end game on the high seas or on land, there has to be a duly-authorized law enforcement detachment there," Craddock said.

Coast Guard, Drug Enforcement Agency, or Customs and Border Protection agents work closely with the military to be on hand to make arrests. "JIATF South has a very mature, established process to be able to ensure that out on the seas, where we have grey-hulled Navy ships that can't do arrests, there is a law enforcement detachment consisting of one or more of those agencies on board," Craddock said.

President issues proclamation in honor of Gold Star Mothers

Since June 23, 1936, the last Sunday in September has been recognized as Gold Star Mother's Day, thanks to Senate Joint Resolution 115.

On Sept. 20, President Bush issued a proclamation declaring that Sept. 24 was observed as Gold Star Mother's Day.

"I call upon all government officials to display the flag of the United States over government buildings on this solemn day," he said in the proclamation. "I also encourage the American people to display the flag and hold appropriate ceremonies as a public expression of our nation's sympathy and respect for our Gold Star Mothers."

Gold Star Mothers have lost a son or daughter in service to the country.

Every generation has produced patriots willing to sacrifice for the nation. Many of these individuals have made the ultimate sacrifice. It's because of their sacrifices, and those of their mothers, that America lives in freedom, he said.

"In the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944, 'There's nothing adequate which anyone in any place can say to those who are entitled to display the gold star in their windows,'" Bush said. "On Gold Star Mother's Day, we pay special tribute to the mothers of those lost while defending our country and extending the blessings of liberty to others."

U.S., Chinese Navies complete SAREX

by MC3 Ashley Hickman

The Chinese crew of the People's Liberation Army (Navy) (PLA(N)) destroyer *Qingdao* (DDG 113) and U.S. Navy Sailors from the USS *Shoup* (DDG 86) and Torpedo Weapon Recovery Vessel *Swamp Fox* (821) conducted a Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX) off the coast of Southern California Sept. 20.

of bilateral exercises that the U.S. is conducting with the Chinese," said Commander, Destroyer Squadron 7 Capt. Michael Gilday. "In the past few years, the dialogue between both countries has deepened. Military-to-military contact is an important part of that relationship."

China and the U.S. Pacific



Lt. Cmdr. Andrew Liggett, exercise coordinator, speaks with a Chinese interpreter during a Search and Rescue Exercise aboard Swamp Fox. Navy photo by MC3 Ashley Hickman

SAREX is a routine exercise that focuses on understanding the procedures necessary to find and save those who are lost at sea. U.S. Navy ships regularly cooperate with foreign navies around the world in this type of exercise.

"This is the first in a series

Fleet have participated together in the Hong Kong SAREX several times, most recently in 2003, but had no direct interaction due to the exercise scenario.

During this SAREX in San Diego, damage controlmen and corpsmen from both *Shoup* and *Qingdao* combined forces in simulated flooding and medical emergency drills on *Swamp Fox* to get a better understanding of how each navy operates.

"We demonstrated how we would save the ship not only from fire and flooding, but also

H2H links firefighters to servicemembers

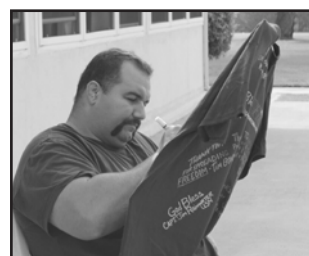
by Scott Sutherland
staff writer

"From small things, big things one day come." - Dave Edmunds

It's a patriotic body that literally wants you to take the shirt off your back.

For organizers and support staff of the HeroToHero.US organization, the first leg of their journey began after the Sept. 2001 terrorist attacks on the U.S. But it wasn't until 2003 that H2H founder Liz Jackson and her support team officially named the group. The troop morale campaign is based on linking two groups of heroes - firefighters, policemen and first responders, and deployed heroes fighting the global war against terrorism on foreign soil.

"In 2003, as the anniversary of 9/11 loomed and the word 'hero' was being tossed around pretty freely," said Jackson, "I asked a Soldier how it felt to be a hero. He smiled, and replied, 'Ma'am, I'm not a hero ... just doing my job.' I asked who he considered to be a hero. He said, 'When I'm deployed, I need to focus. I can't be worried about my family.



A Ventura County firefighter signs a t-shirt before it gets shipped to a Seabee overseas. Official Navy photo

Those people who make sure my family is safe - firefighters, police, all of them... those are the Heroes."

When she asked the domestic first responders the same question, she said they told her that the servicemembers serving overseas were their heroes.

To bring that mutual admiration society to the eyes and ears of the American public, Jackson and Co. formed HeroesToHeroes.US (they had to use .US because a group with the same name exists as .com). Firefighters sign t-shirts that have their respective fire

Free Squaw Valley lift tickets available to servicemembers

Squaw Valley USA is proud to offer free lift tickets to active military personnel everyday during the 2006/2007 season.

In its fourth consecutive season, the Military Discount Program is Squaw Valley's way of acknowledging the hard work and sacrifice of the military.

Squaw Valley USA Founder and Chairman Alex Cushing, who recently passed away, served in World War II as a lieutenant commander. His service in the Navy transpired into a strong, lifelong connection with the military. Offering free military lift tickets is a policy that came straight from his heart. Cushing attested to his affinity for the program in his last annual letter to Squaw Valley season pass holders:

In a statement from Squaw Valley USA, "first and foremost, we will continue to strengthen our policy of free skiing and riding for our

active duty military - one of the truly successful programs we have ever done. . . No one else in the ski business has even attempted to match what we do."

To receive a free lift ticket, service members must bring an active duty ID to Special Tickets. Normal blackout dates will apply including Dec. 26-31, Jan. 13-14 and Feb. 17-18.

Site of the VIII Winter Olympic Games, Squaw Valley USA is located five miles north of Lake Tahoe along the Truckee River on Highway 89. The year-round resort offers 4,000 acres of lift served terrain including two half pipes and three terrain parks, ice-skating, snowtubing, indoor rock climbing, an Olympic Winter Games Museum, shopping, dining and more.

For more information call (530) 583-6985, or visit www.squaw.com.

from medical casualties," said Senior Chief Hospital Corpsman Cindy Cruzan, independent duty corpsman aboard *Shoup*. "It was very exciting. The Chinese Sailors did a very good job and were very professional. It was difficult with the language barrier, but through demonstration and a lot of acting out, we were able to accomplish what we intended, which was demonstrate our abilities to save the ship."

This joint SAREX directly

contributes to military maritime objectives of improved air and maritime safety, and underscores the Pacific Fleet's commitment to supporting ongoing cooperative efforts in the Pacific region.

"Both navies have a good understanding of each other's seamanship and airmanship operations," said Gilday. "I am confident if our navies were in the position to conduct a joint search and rescue operation in the real world, we would be able to."

station logos and locations inscribed. They then put them in the hands of the H2H.US staff, who then mailed them to troops overseas. Now, three years later, HeroesToHeroes.US have shipped over 11,000 autographed t-shirts to service member deployed overseas.

"And while we'd love the troops to all be home and safe," said Jackson, "we'll continue to be here for them as long as they are away."

Within the boundaries of Navy Region Southwest, a "shirt off your back" campaign is underway, and expansion into the local Navy market is imminent. Karen Barton, a Navy wife and MWR employee with Naval Base Ventura County, is on the H2H.US support team as the Navy Seabee liaison. Seabees are the Navy's construction force. Barton's been active keeping Ventura County fire and police personnel involved, serving the morale of Seabees who stationed at Port Hueneme and who are currently deployed.

"I started with NBVC where the firefighters on base were kind enough to 'give the shirts

off their backs for our heroes overseas," said Barton. "It's my goal to reach out to the entire Ventura County area and give all the police, firefighters, EMT, paramedics, and others, the opportunity to say thank you to our men and women that are putting their lives on the line everyday, just as the men and women from overseas thank them for protecting their families while they are away on their own mission."

Barton, as the ombudsman of currently-deployed Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 18, is heading up the family project with a challenge to all our Battalion families to "collect just one shirt from their area for the HeroToHero project.

"We hope this will help make the families who are left at home connected to their loved ones while they're away," said Barton.

For more information, go to www.herotohero.us.

To contact the staff at Navy Dispatch, drop an e-mail to editor@navydispatch.com.