



Newsletter

January 2003 Manny Bacon Post 1758

Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their continued support and dedication to Post 1758 during this past year. We have had a successful year and hope it will continue into the New Year.

Mia/Pow

An Army team will travel to Papua New Guinea next week to search for the remains of nine servicemen aboard a B-24 bomber that crashed in a rain forest during World War II.

The bomber is believed to from the Army Air Corps' 360th Service Group that left Nabzab, New Guinea — about 15 miles from the crash site — on a training mission and disappeared in October 1944. Onboard were a pilot, co-pilot, navigator, bombardier, aerial engineer, radio operator and three gunners. Names were not released. A hunter discovered the crash site.

Welcome Aboard 12 New Members

Paul White, Robert Hack, John Sullivan, Engel Hale, Edward Miller, Dennis Kapuscinski, Donald Palmer, Francis Connolly, Joseph Duffy, Frank Cuvelier, Simon Kaufman, and Daniel Briscoe.

Capt. Michael Scott Speicher UPDATE

The Defense Department recently obtained additional intelligence stating that a missing Navy pilot is alive and being held by the Iraqi government, according to U.S. officials.

The intelligence officials believe that the reports refer to Navy Capt. Michael Scott Speicher, whose status was changed to "missing/captured" by the Navy in October.

The reports, received in November, state that Iraq is holding a U.S. pilot and has moved the pilot among 18 locations in the country, according to officials familiar with the documents. The reports said the pilot was being treated by a doctor.

The officials could not say how reliable the reports are or whether they represent "circular reporting" — new reports based on old intelligence information from the same source or similar sources.

A spokesman of the Defense Intelligence Agency said that it receives such dispatches several times a year.

"We investigate every single one," the spokesman said, without providing details

Cindy Laquidara, a Florida lawyer who represents Capt. Speicher's family, said in an interview that she recently spoke to an Iraqi defector who reported seeing a captive U.S. pilot in Iraq.

The defector is one of at least three Iraqis who reported that Baghdad is holding an American pilot from the 1991 Persian Gulf war.

Sen. Pat Roberts, Kansas Republican and incoming chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said in an interview that he has been pressing the Bush administration to resolve the Speicher case, as preparations for war are under way.

Information obtained recently from congressional staff visits to the region indicate that "more and more there are signs that an American POW is in Iraq," Mr. Roberts said.

In October, the Navy changed the status of Capt. Speicher to "missing in action, captured." It was the second time since 2001 that the Navy changed the downed pilot's status. He was initially declared killed in action after the F-18 jet he was flying was shot down over Iraq in January 1991. That was later changed to "missing in action" in 2001 and finally "missing/captured."

Agent Orange

In an apparent effort to equalize the treatment of all veterans exposed to AO, the VA recently announced that if exposure outside of Vietnam were proven, and the veteran had one of the ten diseases presumed by law to be related to exposure to AO, the medical connection would be presumed and the claim granted, unless something else disqualified the claimant.

In addition, the VA may give any veteran concerned about exposure to AO during use, manufacture, testing or transport outside of Vietnam, an AO physical.

These areas outside of Vietnam have been confirmed as places where AO was used:

1. The Korean demilitarized zone in 1968 and 1969 (extensive spraying).
2. Fort Drum, NY in 1959 (testing).

Other areas where veterans allege AO to have been sprayed include:

1. Guam from 1955 through 1960s (spraying).
2. Johnston Atoll (1972-1978) was used for unused AO storage.
3. Panama Canal Zone from 1960s to early 1970s (spraying).
4. Elgin AFB (Agents Orange and Blue) on Firing Range.
5. Wright-Patterson AFB (OH) and Kelly AFB (TX)

I Am Not A Number

Any member who has been waiting more than 30 days for VA health care of any kind please call me at home or E-mail me at the web site.

My phone number is 845-226-8246. Ask for Dana. Be sure to leave a message just say its about VA health care. I will return your call.

Our Web site URL is

"<http://americanlegion1758.tripod.com/index.htm>"

Department wants to hear your story.

January post meeting

After much discussion a motion was approved to use the office space in Fishkill as storage office / storage space only. Meetings will still be held in community center in Hopewell.

Further discussion followed on the post doing some kind of fund raising activity to generate funds to build a post home. To say there was a lack of enthusiasm would be an understatement. There will be more discussion at the next meeting on building fund procurement.

There was discussion on the post funding Purple Heart license plates for Purple Heart recipients. That issue was addressed at the county meeting. The county agreed to reimburse the DMV director for the plates. This means that any veteran with a Purple Heart may now get your plates without having to pay the \$10.00 fee.

John Ryan was memorialized and his name read into the roles at the post everlasting ceremony at the county meeting.

Danny and myself will be attending the midwinter conference in Albany. Lastly I have some good news. The post made it! Membership is at 105% Great job thank you all!!! Welcome aboard to all our new members.

Rally In DC

Rally in Washington DC Feb 12 2003

This rally is to show support for Col. Day and his class action suit against the US Govt. Col. Day is suing on the grounds that the US Govt. promised all veterans who served 20 years, paid medical for life. The Govt admits they made the promise but they feel they have the right to not honor it. Col. Day's case is going to the Supreme Court. More info at the following web site.

<http://www.classact-lawsuit.com/classnews.html>

For info on the rally call toll **free number, 1-800-972-6275**