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# 38th Parallel

A publication to remember, honor and thank the Korean War Veterans



*Tech. Sgt. Michael Dorsey*

**A happy veteran listens to Randy Travis sing “Three Wooden Crosses” at the National Salute to Korean War Veterans at the MCI Center in Washington, D.C., July 26.**

## Armistice Day Weekend caps Korean War commemoration

More than 5,000 Korean War veterans and their families and friends spread across the lawn near the Korean War Veterans Memorial on the Mall in downtown Washington, D.C., on July 27 during the final day of the Korean War Armistice Day Weekend.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz, host of the Armistice Day ceremony, had nothing but respect for the veterans.

“Today, as our nation pays homage to the brave men and women who marched into battle through the monsoons and freezing winters to ensure the freedom of the Korean people, we should never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice,” Wolfowitz said.

“Korean War veterans, much like veterans before them, returned to the farms, factories and cities across the United States to help propel the nation

into a new era. Indeed across the globe, members of the United Nations fighting force returned home to help their countries move into the future. It is my distinct honor to be with you here today.”

Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also praised Korean War veterans in his speech.

“When I joined the Marine Corps, I knew a little bit about the Korean War,” he said. “When I went to the Naval Academy and afterwards, in my first years in the corps, I began to understand the incredible acts of bravery in places like Pusan and Inchon and the Frozen Chosin and Heartbreak Ridge and Mig Alley ... those of us in service today owe a great debt of gratitude to those of you in this audience today who served

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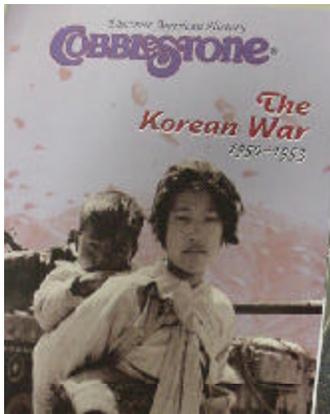


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# Official 50th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee draws to a close

September 30 marks the end of the United States 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee's (KWCC) official 37 month commemoration period to thank and honor the nation's 1.8 million Korean War veterans. While the KWCC will administratively close on that day, a core staff will continue committee business until December 30, when the KWCC officially closes all operations. With the committee coming to an end the KWCC will cease accepting applications for the Commemoration Partner Program and order requests for commemoration materials.

When the KWCC initially kicked off the official commemoration period on June 25, 2000, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Korean War, the goal was to reach out across the United States to all Korean War veterans, their families and next of kin, to thank and honor them for their service and sacrifices for preserving our freedom and halting the spread of communism.



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Since that time, the KWCC has conducted nine regional and national events in Washington, D.C., San Antonio, Oklahoma City, Phoenix, Detroit, San Francisco, Tampa, Fla., Savannah, Ga. and Syracuse, N.Y. The KWCC supported more than 200 additional commemoration ceremonies including parades, wreath-layings, receptions, conferences, symposiums, seminars, musical tributes, and concerts. Recently, the KWCC hosted its largest events, the National Salute to Korean War Veterans at the MCI Center, a wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery and an Armistice Day ceremony at the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the armistice.

A critical part of the KWCC outreach effort was the grass-roots Commemoration Partner Program that allowed communities, organizations, and other groups to join us in thanking Korean War veterans in their workforce, community, church or organization at the local level. The number of Commemoration Partners passed the 10,000 goal in the fall of 2002 and grew to over 13,000 groups who continue to thank and honor Korean War veterans and ensure that the legacy of their service and sacrifices, and the lessons of the Korean War will never be forgotten.

America's education system was also an active Commemoration Partner, incorporating larger more comprehensive lessons on the Korean War into the standard history curriculum. More than 140,000 of Cobblestones, the consolidated history of the Korean War authored for students, were distributed to school systems across the United States. In addition, hundreds of schools invited Korean War veterans to speak with the students in person about their experiences in the Korean War. This program was a huge success and

brought the students face to face with the Korean War and America's heroes who fought it. For the veterans it was a chance to tell a story too long left untold, and to bask in the awe and appreciation demonstrated by the students.

Another aspect of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean War commemoration period was awarding the Korean War Service Medal (KWSM) to all Korean War veterans who served in the Korean theater, adjacent waters, or the air between June 25, 1950 and July 27, 1953. The Republic of Korea originally awarded the KWSM at the end of the war to America's veterans who served there, however, regulations in effect at the time prohibited servicemen from wearing foreign medals. Congress subsequently lifted that prohibition and the Department of the Air Force was designated the Executive agent for distributing the medal to Korean War veterans who met the criteria.

To date, more than 158,000 medals have been awarded to Korean War veterans from across the United States. Requests for the KWSM will continue to be processed until further notice. For more information about the KWSM visit the KWCC official Web site at [www.korea50.mil](http://www.korea50.mil), call the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, toll free at 1-866-229-7074, or visit [www.afpc.randolph.af.mil](http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil).

The official KWCC Web site will remain online through Dec. 30, and the final edition of the KWCC newsletter, the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, will be released in October 2003, however, it will only be available online at [www.korea50.mil](http://www.korea50.mil) in the media section.

The current edition will be the final edition to appear in print. Information about KWCC events and activities occurring through December 2003 will continue to be listed on the official Web site until it is officially shut down. Information about these events can also be obtained by calling the KWCC toll free number 1-866-korea50 (567-3250).

## Remembering POWs



*Courtesy of National Archives*

**Second Lieutenant Edward G. Izbicky shows an American flag he and some of his fellow prisoners made while in a communist prison camp to Brig. Gen. Edward H. Underhill, Fifth Air Force vice commander at the Freedom Village Reception and Processing Center. Izbicky explained that the white cloth for the flag came from torn bed sheets, the blue material was cut from POW uniforms, and the red material was taken from Communist basketball shirts found in one of the compounds. He wrapped the flag in a scarf he wore around his neck until he was safely delivered into friendly hands. Izbicky was flying F-86 “Sabre” jets with the U.S. Air Force 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Interceptor Wing when he was captured Feb. 19, 1953. The Korean War Commemoration Committee will host, with the City of San Francisco, a ceremony Sept. 19 commemorating those POWs who returned home 50 years ago. The event begins at Fort Mason’s Herbst International Exhibition Hall at 10:30 a.m. San Francisco was the port of entry for those who returned under Operation Big Switch.**

# Armistice Day Weekend Photos

*Photos by  
Tech Sgt. Michael Dorsey*



Country music star Randy Travis sings “Three Wooden Crosses” for the audience at the MCI Center.



Actor and author James McEachin narrates the “Hills of Valor,” tracing the U.S. military from the Revolutionary War to the present.



Wreaths from the 22 nations represented along the walkway at the Korean War Veterans Memorial were laid.



Korean American Cultural Foundation dancers perform at the MCI Center.

## Coming Home



*Courtesy of National Archives*

**Prisoners of War recently repatriated in the United Nations POW exchange (Operation Big Switch) pose for a group photograph with their flight nurses at Tachikawa Air Base, Japan in September 1953. The port of entry for those returning to the U.S. was San Francisco. The Korean War Commemoration Committee will host, with the City of San Francisco, a ceremony Sept. 19 for those POWs who returned home 50 years ago.**

## Search continues for Korean War MIA

The Department of Defense said that U.S. and North Korea representatives concluded talks in Bangkok about arrangements to conduct joint operations aimed at recovering the remains of American servicemen still missing from the Korean War.

The operations are scheduled to take place later this year in Unsan County, about 60 miles north of Pyongyang; and near the Chosin Reservoir in the northeast part of North Korea.

The meetings, led by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Affairs Jerry Jennings, were held in Bangkok, Thailand, July 10-11. Jennings focused on enhancing the safety of the U.S. recovery teams and improving the U.S. remains recovery process.

As a matter of policy, remains recovery talks deal exclusively with the issue of recovering the remains of missing Americans. POW/MIA accounting is a separate, stand-alone humanitarian matter, not tied to any other issue.

The two countries will meet again in November to plan for operations in 2004 to continue this humanitarian mission.

Since 1996, American and North Korean teams working in North Korea have recovered the remains of more than 170 service members. These teams have operated north of Pyongyang and at the Chosin Reservoir in the northeast area of the country.

More than 8,100 Americans are still missing from the Korean War. *(Armed Forces Press Service)*



Tech. Sgt. Michael Dorsey

## This Date in History

**July 27, 1953:** After three years, one month, and two days, combat ended in Korea as the armistice was signed at Panmunjom. Signed at 10 a.m., it became effective at 10 p.m., the same day. Korea remains in an armistice status without a formal peace treaty to this day. Sergeant Harold R. Cross, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 5th Regimental Combat Team, was killed by a mortar blast at 8:40 p.m., the last American soldier killed in action in the Korean War.

**July 27, 1953:** Air Force Capt. Ralph S. Parr, 4th Fighter-Interceptor Wing, achieved the last air victory of the Korean War when he destroyed an Il-12 transport plane. In addition, the victory qualified him as the eleventh and last double ace of the war.

**July 27, 1950:** Australia, New Zealand, and Turkey all offered ground troops for Korea.

The 3rd Battalion, 29th Infantry Regiment, attached to the 19th Infantry Regiment, U.S. 24th Infantry Division, was ambushed at Hadong. One half of the battalion was reported killed or missing in action.

**July 26, 1951:** The U.S. 2nd Infantry Division's 38th Infantry Regiment

attacked in the Taeusan area along the edge of the Punchbowl, securing the objective by the 30th.

**July 25, 1953:** Staff Sgt. Ambrosio Guillen, Company F, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division, earned the 131st and last Medal of Honor for action in the Korean War.

**July 25, 1950:** The independent U.S. 29th Infantry Regimental Combat Team was committed to action near Chinju. The North Koreans ambushed its 3rd Battalion at Hadong, killing 313 and capturing 100.

Thailand, the first Pacific nation to do so, offered to send 4,000 ground troops to Korea.

**July 24, 1950:** After 19 days of continuous combat, the U.S. 24th Infantry Division had been driven back 100 miles, suffered more than 30 percent casualties, and had more than 2,400 men missing in action.

**July 23, 1950:** The carrier USS *Boxer* made history with a record-breaking Pacific crossing of eight days and 16 hours while transporting 145 F-51 Mustangs, 1,000 U.S. Air Force personnel, and several hundred tons of

cargo.

**July 22, 1953:** Major John H. Glenn, future astronaut and U.S. senator, claimed his third MiG kill in the last aerial victory of the Korean War by a Marine pilot.

First Lieutenant Sam P. Young, 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing, was credited with the final MiG kill of the Korean War.

**July 21, 1950:** General William F. Dean was reported missing in action as his 24th Infantry Division fought its way out of Taejon. Since the Communists kept his capture a secret, he was presumed dead. In early 1951, President Truman presented the Medal of Honor to his wife in a White House ceremony. He was the only general officer and, at 51, the oldest man to receive the Medal of Honor during the Korean War.

**July 20, 1953:** Air Force Maj. Stephen L. Bettinger qualified as the 40th and last ace of the Korean War. Because he was shot down during this engagement and subsequently captured, he was not officially credited with his fifth victory until after his repatriation.

**July 19, 1953:** Air Force Capt. Ronnie

L. Moore and Lt. Col. Vermont Garrison, both of the 4th Fighter-Interceptor Wing, qualified as the ninth and 10th “double ace” of the Korean War. Colonel Garrison had also achieved ace status during WWII with seven kills in Europe.

**July 17, 1953:** Lieutenant Guy P. “Lucky Pierre” Bordelon scored his fifth aerial victory and qualified as the only U.S. Navy ace of the Korean War and the only Korean War ace who did not fly an F-86 Sabre jet. Lieutenant Bordelon, detached to K-6 airfield from the carrier USS *Princeton*, flew an F4U-5N Corsair named “Annie Mo.” All his victories were the so-called “Bedcheck Charlies” engaged on nighttime harassment bombing missions.

**July 17, 1952:** The U.S. 2nd Infantry Division’s 23rd Infantry Regiment sustained heavy casualties, including 39 killed and 84 missing in action, during the Battle for Old Baldy.

**July 11, 1953:** Lieutenant Col. John F. Bolt became the 37th Korean War ace and the only Marine Corps pilot to qualify as an ace during the Korea War. He also has the distinction of being the only jet ace in Marine Corps history and the only Marine to become an ace in

two wars (WWII and Korea). Bolt was flying an F-86 Sabre, “Darling Dottie,” attached to the Air Force’s 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing.

**July 11, 1952:** Far East Air Force established a one-day record by flying 1,330 sorties.

**July 11, 1950:** A 10-member demolition party of sailors and marines led by Commander William B. Porter conducted the first naval commando operation of the Korean War.

**July 3, 1950:** Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Leonard H. Plog, flying a F9F Panther jet fighter, shot down a Yak-9P, claiming the first U.S. Navy aerial victory of the Korean War.

**June 30, 1953:** U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Henry “Hank” Buttleman, 51st Fighter-Interceptor Wing, became the 36th and youngest ace of the Korean War at 24 years old. He accomplished this feat only 12 days after his first kill.

**June 30, 1951:** Marine Capt. Edwin B. Long scored the first night kill of the Korean War and the first in a F7F Tigercat victory ever by downing a PO-2 near Kimpo.

**June 28, 1950:** Far East Air Force aircraft dropped the first psychological warfare leaflets over Korea.

**June 27, 1950:** Flying a F-82G Twin Mustang in a defensive mission over Kimpo Airfield, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. William G. “Skeeter” Hudson, 68th Fighter (All-Weather) Squadron, destroyed a Yak-7U fighter and was officially credited with the first aerial victory of the Korean War. Lieutenant Carl Fraser occupied the second cockpit as co-pilot.

**June 26, 1950:** Far East Air Forces cargo planes began the evacuation of 700 U.S. State Department and Korean Military Advisory Group employees and their families. FEAF also sent 10 F-51 Mustang fighters to the ROK forces.

**June 25, 1950:** The North Korean People’s Army (NKPA) crossed the 38th Parallel at 0400 hours with 60,000 troops to launch an all-out offensive on the Republic of Korea. The United Nations Security Council, in the absence of the USSR, adopted a resolution calling for the withdrawal of North Korean forces to the 38th Parallel. *(Courtesy United States Forces Korea)*



**Army Gen. Mark Clark signs the armistice agreement on July 27, 1953 at Panmunjon, North Korea while VADM Robert Briscoe and VADM J.J. Clark look on. The armistice agreement ended fighting on the battlefield between United Nations forces and North Korea. *(Photo courtesy of National Archives)***



*Tech. Sgt. Michael Dorsey*

**Marine Corps Gen. Peter Pace, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, delivers his speech on the Mall near the Korean War Veterans Memorial on July 27.**

## Armistice from Page 1

in Korea. "I want to say a very deep and sincere thank you to all of you who are veterans of the war in Korea," Pace added. "Those of us in uniform promise you that what you did for your country, what we have inherited from you we cherish, we respect, we will uphold, and we will never, ever tire in pursuing the same goals that you pursued."

Before the wreath laying at the Korean War Veterans Memorial and an F-16 flyover to end the ceremony, a commemorative stamp of the memorial was unveiled on stage.

The weekend finale came following a packed audience at the MCI Center on July 26 during the National Salute to Korean War Veterans.

The afternoon extravaganza featured country music singer Randy Travis as well as Ed McMahon and James McEachin, both Korean War Veterans. McMahon, a Marine Corps pilot was the emcee. This was his second tour of duty with the

Department of Defense in the nation's capital. He was the emcee for the Musical Salute to Korean War



*Staff Sgt. Tim Volkert*

**Thousands of Korean War veterans families, active duty military and others gathered at the Mall near the Korean War Veterans Memorial for a wreath-laying ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the Korean War armistice July 27.**

Veterans at Constitution Hall a year ago. McEachin, a soldier with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, read the "Hills of Valor," a moving script that guides listeners through military history from the Revolutionary War to the present.

But perhaps the most moving part of the ceremony was the unit roll call that identified each military branch of service and their major units involved in the war on the giant screen for all to see.

"The unit roll call was very touching for the Korean War veterans," William Wroolie, national commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, said. "It brought home the events of the Korean War for them and it may have also brought some closure.

"It was impeccable. You could tell there was a lot of effort and a lot of work put into it. Overall, it did exactly what it was supposed to do, pay tribute to the Korean War veterans. Probably one of the finest shows I've seen for the veterans."

# HONOR ROLL

## Louis J. Sebille

**Rank:** Major

**Organization:** U.S. Air Force, 67th Fighter-Bomber Squadron, 18th Fighter Bomber Group

**Place and date:** Near Hanchang, Korea, Aug. 5, 1950

**Entered service at:** Chicago, Ill.

**Birth:** Nov. 21, 1915 Harbor Beach, Mich.

**Citation:** For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. During an attack on a camouflaged area containing a concentration of enemy troops, artillery, and armored vehicles, Major Sebille's F-51 aircraft was severely damaged by anti-aircraft fire. Although fully cognizant of the short period he could remain airborne, he deliberately ignored the possibility of survival by abandoning the aircraft or by crash landing, and continued his attack against the enemy forces threatening the security of friendly ground troops. In his determination to inflict maximum damage upon the enemy, Major Sebille again exposed himself to the intense fire of enemy gun batteries and dived on the target to his death. The superior leadership, daring, and selfless devotion to duty which he displayed in the execution of an extremely dangerous mission were an inspiration to both his subordinates and superiors and reflect the highest credit upon himself, the U.S. Air Force, and the armed forces of the United Nations.



Sebille flew 68 combat missions in World War II as a B-26 bomber pilot. He became commanding officer of the 67th Squadron, 18th Fighter-Bomber Group in the fall of 1948. When the Korean War began, his squadron was one of the first sent to Japan.

