

The original documents are located in Box 6, folder “3/4/76 - Medal of Honor Presentation” of the Betty Ford White House Papers, 1973-1977 at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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FACT SHEET
Mrs. Ford's Office

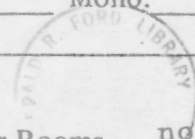
Event Medal of Honor Ceremony
Group --
DATE/TIME Thursday, March 4, 1976 2:00 p. m.
Contact Military Office Phone 2153
Number of guests: Total 200 Women x Men x Children x
Place State Floor (East Room - Presentation)
Principals involved President and Mrs. Ford
Participation by Principal yes (Receiving line) no
Remarks required yes
Background The President will present Medals of Honor to four U. S. servicemen.

REQUIREMENTS

Social: Guest list (Military Office will distribute)
Invitations no Programs no Menus no
Refreshments coffee, tea, soft drinks, pastries and sandwiches
Entertainment no
Decorations/flowers yes
Music yes
Social Aides yes
Dress Business Suits/Military Uniforms and short dresses for the ladies Coat check yes
Other --

Press: Reporters yes
Photographers yes
TV Crews yes ?
White House Photographers yes Color yes Mono. no
Other --

Technical Support: Microphones yes PA Other Rooms no
Recording yes
Lights no
Transportation cars - SW Gate
Parking South Grounds
Housing --
Other -- (Risers, stage, platforms) platform



Project Co-ordinator Pat Howard Phone 2927

Site diagrams should be attached if technical support is heavy.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

Medal of Honor Presentations

Thursday - March 4, 1976

The East Room

Oval Office Departure: 1:48 p.m.

From: - Terry O'Donnell ^{TOD}

BACKGROUND

You will present the Medal of Honor to Captain Lance P. Sijan, USAF, (posthumous Award to be received by Mr. Sylvester Sijan, his father); Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, USN; Col. George E. Day, USAF; and Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris, USN Reserve. The Medal of Honor is given for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty."

Prior to the presentation ceremony in the East Room, you will meet and be photographed with:

The Sijan Family in the Library
The Stockdale Family in the Map Room
The Day Family in the State Dining Room
The Norris Family in the Red Room

Not including today's presentations, 232 Medals of Honor have been given for Southeast Asia. Of these, 84 have been live and 148 posthumous.

Captain Lance P. Sijan, USAF (Posthumous) - He was shot down over North Vietnam in 1967 and, while seriously injured and suffering from shock, he evaded capture for more than six weeks. After spending some time in a holding point for subsequent transfer to a Prisoner of War camp, he overpowered one of his guards and escaped only to be caught again and placed in solitary confinement. He resisted disclosing information despite torture. He died while still a prisoner as a result of his condition and treatment.



Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, USN - During 1969 while Senior Naval Officer in the Prisoner of War Camps of North Vietnam, he led the prisoners' resistance to interrogation and refused propaganda exploitation. He refused to cooperate despite torture. His indomitable spirit helped to persuade the North Vietnamese that torture and harassment were unproductive techniques to be used against our prisoners.

Col. George E. Day, USAF - In 1967, Col. Day ejected from his aircraft over North Vietnam after it was hit by ground fire. After capture and despite broken bones and injuries, he escaped into the jungle and attempted to trek to South Vietnam. He was recaptured and taken to Hanoi where he continued to offer maximum resistance.

Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris, USNR - While serving as a SEAL advisor in 1972, Lt. Norris completed an unprecedented ground rescue of two downed pilots deep within heavily controlled enemy territory.

After greeting the families, you will be announced into the East Room with honors, and proceed directly to the podium where you will deliver remarks. After the reading of the first citation by Secretary Reed, you will present the Award, then move to the next recipient and await the reading of the next citation. This procedure repeats itself until all four Medals are presented. Following the Awards presentation, the National Anthem will be played and you and Mrs. Ford will escort the Medal recipients to be followed by their families and guests to the State Dining Room for refreshments.

SEQUENCE

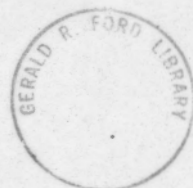
1:48 p.m.

Depart Oval Office, join Mrs. Ford, and proceed to the Library where you will meet the family of Captain Lance P. Sijan. NOTE: His father, mother, brother, sister, and brother-in-law will be present.

1:54 p.m.

Depart Library and proceed to the Map Room where you will meet Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale and family. NOTE: His wife, Sybil (founder of the National League of Families and its first National Coordinator), his four sons, and four other relatives will be present.

AT THE ELEVATOR



- 1:58 p. m. Depart Map Room and Proceed to the State Dining Room where you will meet Col. George E. Day, USAF, and family. NOTE: His wife, two sons and two daughters will be present.
- 2:02 p. m. Depart State Dining Room and proceed to Red Room where you will meet Lt. Thomas R. Norris, USN, and his family. NOTE: His father, mother, two brothers and three other relatives will be present.
- 2:06 p. m. Depart Red Room and proceed to State Dining Room with Mrs. Ford while the other family members and recipients are escorted to their places.
- 2:09 p. m. Mrs. Ford is escorted to her seat.
- 2:10 p. m. You are announced into the East Room with Honors and proceed directly to the podium to deliver your remarks.

NOTE: On the platform to your right will be Mr. and Mrs. Sijan and to your left will be Admiral Stockdale, Col. Day and Lt. Norris.

- 2:15 p. m. Your remarks conclude. Your move to your right and stand adjacent to Mr. Sijan while the citation is read.

At the conclusion of the citation, Major Barrett will give you the posthumous Award (a medal enclosed in an encasement) and you will present (hand) the Award to Mr. Sijan.

- 2:18 p. m. After shaking hands with Mr. and Mrs. Sijan, you will proceed to your left and stand adjacent to Admiral Stockdale while the citation is read.

Major Barrett will give you the Medal on the ribbon at the conclusion of the citation and you will place it over Admiral Stockdale's head around his neck.



- 2:21 p. m. After shaking hands with Admiral Stockdale, you move to your left and stand adjacent to Col. Day for the reading of the citation followed by the presentation of the Award as above.
- 2:24 p. m. You will then move to Col. Day's left and stand adjacent to Lt. Norris for the reading of the citation and the presentation of the Award as above.
- 2:27 p. m. After congratulating Lt. Norris, you will return to your original position at the podium and pause for the National Anthem.
- 2:32 p. m. Immediately following the National Anthem, you will escort the platform guests along with Mrs. Ford to the State Dining Room for refreshments. The remainder of the guests will follow you.
- 2:45 p. m. Depart State Dining Room and return to the Oval Office. Mrs. Ford will return to the Residence.



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

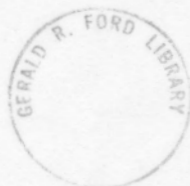
March 3, 1976

FOR: MRS. FORD
FROM: MARIA DOWNS

Attached are the guest list, reading citation, program and background information for the Medal of Honor Ceremony on March 4, 1976 at 2:00 p. m.

We will be sending you the scenario in the morning.

Thank you.



FAMILY GUEST LISTS

REAR ADMIRAL JAMES B. STOCKDALE, U. S. Navy

Sybil B. Stockdale *	Wife	Coronado, California
Taylor B. Stockdale	Son	
Sidney B. Stockdale	Son	
Stanford B. Stockdale	Son	
James B. Stockdale, II	Son	
Mariana C. Stockdale	Daughter-in-Law	
Mr. George C. Bond, Jr.	Cousin	Pasadena, California
Mr. Merwin F. Bailey	Brother-in-Law	East Haven, Connecticut
Mrs. Merwin F. Bailey	Sister-in-Law	

*Founder of the National League of Families (May 1970) and its first National Coordinator.

COLONEL GEORGE E. DAY, U. S. Air Force

Doris M. Day	Wife	Fort Walton Beach, Florida
Steven M. Day	Son	
George E. Day, Jr.	Son	
Sandra M. Day	Daughter	
Sonja M. Day	Daughter	

CAPTAIN LANCE P. SIJAN, U. S. Air Force (Posthumous Award)

Sylvester Sijan	Father	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Jane A. Sijan	Mother	
Marc F. Sijan	Brother	
Janine Rozina	Sister	
Thomas C. Rozina	Brother-in-Law	

LIEUTENANT THOMAS R. NORRIS, U. S. Navy (Retired)

Rolland W. Norris	Father	Silver Spring, Maryland
Irene H. Norris	Mother	
James H. Norris	Brother	
Mr. Kenneth W. Norris	Brother	
Mrs. Kenneth W. Norris	Sister-in-Law	
Christina Norris	Niece	
Thomas Norris	Nephew	

CONGRESSIONAL INVITEES

REAR ADMIRAL STOCKDALE

Representative Lionel Van Deerlin
Representative Bob Wilson

California
California

COLONEL DAY

Senator Paul J. Fannin
Representative Sam Steiger

Arizona
Arizona

CAPTAIN SIJAN

Senator Gaylord Nelson
Representative Clement J. Zablocki

Wisconsin
Wisconsin

LIEUTENANT NORRIS

Senator Charles M. Mathias, Jr.
Senator J. Glenn Beall, Jr.
Representative Gladys N. Spellman

Maryland
Maryland
Maryland

Other Congressional Invitees:

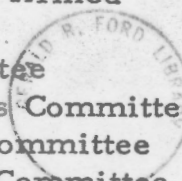
Senator Strom Thurmond, Ranking Minority Member, Senate Armed
Services Committee

Senator Richard B. Stone, Agriculture and Forestry Committee

Representative William L. Dickinson, House Armed Services Committee

Representative Samuel S. Stratton, House Armed Services Committee

Representative G. V. Montgomery, House Armed Services Committee



OFFICIAL GUEST LIST

Secretary of Defense and Mrs. Donald Rumsfeld

Secretary of the Navy J. William Middendorf

Secretary of the Air Force and Mrs. Thomas C. Reed

Chief of Naval Operations and Mrs. James L. Holloway, III

Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and Mrs. David C. Jones

Vice Chief of Staff of the United States Army and Mrs. Walter T. Kerwin, Jr.

Commandant of the United States Coast Guard and Mrs. Owen W. Siler

Assistant Commandant of the United States Marine Corps and Mrs. Samuel Jaskilka

Rear Admiral Staser Holcomb, Aide to Secretary of Defense

Colonel and Mrs. Leo Thorsness, President Ford Committee, (Medal of Honor Winner and former POW)

Mr. Richard S. Capen, Jr., Senior Vice President, Copley Newspapers, La Jolla, California

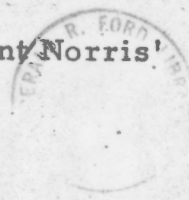
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and Mrs. Thomas N. Barnes

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy and Mrs. Robert J. Walker

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Coast Guard and Mrs. Phillip F. Smith

EN1 Michael E. Thornton, USN, San Diego, California (Medal of Honor Winner; saved Lieutenant Norris' life)

Mr. and Mrs. Steve Keibler, Carpentersville, Illinois (Lieutenant Norris' guests)



READING CITATION

Reader:

Major David Van Poznak
White House Social Aide


THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA, AUTHORIZED BY ACT OF CONGRESS,
HAS AWARDED IN THE NAME OF THE CONGRESS
THE MEDAL OF HONOR TO THE FOLLOWING
INDIVIDUALS FOR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY
AND INTREPIDITY IN ACTION AT THE RISK
OF THEIR LIVES ABOVE AND BEYOND THE
CALL OF DUTY:

Hon. Thomas C. Reed
Secretary of the Air Force

(Announce the name and
wait until the President
walks to place in front of
Mr. and Mrs. Sijan)

CAPTAIN LANCE P. SIJAN, UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE

IS AWARDED THE MEDAL OF HONOR
POSTHUMOUSLY FOR EXTRAORDINARY
HEROISM AND GREAT COURAGE, AT THE COST
OF HIS LIFE. WHILE ON A FLIGHT OVER
NORTH VIETNAM ON 9 NOVEMBER 1967,
CAPTAIN SIJAN EJECTED FROM HIS DISABLED
AIRCRAFT AND SUCCESSFULLY EVADED
CAPTURE FOR MORE THAN SIX WEEKS.
DURING THIS TIME, HE WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED
AND SUFFERED FROM SHOCK. HE WAS
CAPTURED BY NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIERS



BUT DESPITE HIS PHYSICALLY WEAK AND CRIPPLED CONDITION, HE COURAGEOUSLY OVERPOWERED ONE OF HIS GUARDS AND ESCAPED INTO THE JUNGLE, ONLY TO BE RECAPTURED AFTER SEVERAL HOURS. CAPTAIN SIJAN WAS KEPT IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT AND SEVERELY TORTURED. HIS SPIRIT WAS NEVER BROKEN. HE DID NOT COMPLAIN OF HIS PHYSICAL CONDITION, AND, UNTIL HIS DEATH, SPOKE OF FUTURE ESCAPE ATTEMPTS.

Hon. J. William Middendorf
Secretary of the Navy

(Announce the name and wait until the President walks to place in front of Admiral Stockdale)

REAR ADMIRAL JAMES B. STOCKDALE, UNITED STATES NAVY

WHILE SENIOR NAVAL OFFICER IN THE PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS OF NORTH VIETNAM ON 4 SEPTEMBER 1969, DISTINGUISHED HIMSELF THROUGH HIS RESOLVE TO MAKE HIMSELF A SYMBOL OF RESISTANCE REGARDLESS OF THE PERSONAL SACRIFICE INVOLVED. REAR ADMIRAL STOCKDALE WAS SINGLED OUT FOR INTERROGATION AND TORTURE AFTER BEING



DISCOVERED IN A COVERT COMMUNICATIONS ATTEMPT. EARLIER ATTEMPTS AT SELF-DISFIGURATION TO DISSUADE HIS CAPTORS FROM EXPLOITING HIM FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES HAD RESULTED IN AGONIZING PUNISHMENT. DESPITE THIS, HE DELIBERATELY INFLICTED A NEAR-FATAL WOUND TO CONVINCHE HIS CAPTORS HE WOULD GIVE UP HIS LIFE RATHER THAN CAPITULATE. THE CAPTORS, CONVINCED OF HIS INDOMITABLE SPIRIT, LESSENEO THE USE OF EXCESSIVE TORTURE AND HARASSMENT OF ALL THE PRISONERS OF WAR.

COLONEL GEORGE E. DAY, UNITED STATES
AIR FORCE

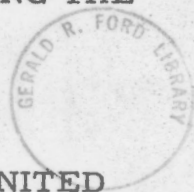
ON 26 AUGUST 1967, COLONEL DAY WAS FORCED TO EJECT FROM HIS AIRCRAFT OVER NORTH VIETNAM WHEN IT WAS HIT BY GROUND FIRE. HIS RIGHT ARM WAS BROKEN IN THREE PLACES. HE WAS IMMEDIATELY CAPTURED BY HOSTILE FORCES, INTERROGATED AND

Hon. Thomas C. Reed
Secretary of the Air Force

(Announce the name and wait until the President walks to place in front of Colonel Day)



SEVERELY TORTURED. COLONEL DAY ESCAPED INTO THE JUNGLE AND BEGAN THE TREK TOWARD SOUTH VIETNAM. DESPITE HIS INJURIES, HE SUCCESSFULLY EVADED ENEMY PATROLS AND REACHED THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE. THERE HE WAS AMBUSHED AND RECAPTURED BY THE VIET CONG, SUSTAINING GUNSHOT WOUNDS TO HIS LEFT HAND AND THIGH, AND WAS RETURNED TO THE SAME PRISON FROM WHICH HE HAD ESCAPED. DESPITE BEING IN A TOTALLY DEBILITATED PHYSICAL CONDITION, COLONEL DAY CONTINUED TO OFFER MAXIMUM RESISTANCE. HIS PERSONAL BRAVERY IN THE FACE OF DEADLY ENEMY PRESSURE WAS SIGNIFICANT IN SAVING THE LIVES OF FELLOW AVIATORS.



Hon. J. William Middendorf
Secretary of the Navy

(Announce the name and
wait until the President
walks to place in front of
Lieutenant Norris)

LIEUTENANT THOMAS R. NORRIS, UNITED
STATES NAVY

WHILE SERVING WITH THE UNITED STATES
MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, REPUBLIC
OF VIETNAM, FROM 10 TO 13 APRIL 1972,

COMPLETED AN UNPRECEDENTED GROUND RESCUE OF TWO UNITED STATES PILOTS DEEP WITHIN HEAVILY PATROLLED ENEMY TERRITORY. ONE PILOT WAS LOCATED AND SUCCESSFULLY RETURNED TO THE FORWARD OPERATING BASE ON 11 APRIL. THE FOLLOWING DAY, LIEUTENANT NORRIS AND A VIETNAMESE SOLDIER, DISGUISED AS FISHERMEN, TRAVELLED ALL NIGHT IN A SAMPAN TO PICK UP THE SECOND INJURED PILOT. WITH THE INJURED PILOT HIDDEN IN THE BOTTOM OF THE SAMPAN THEY BEGAN THE RETURN TRIP. HAVING AVOIDED SEVERAL ENEMY EMPLACEMENTS AND GUARD POSTS, THEY WERE DETECTED AS THEY NEARED THE FORWARD OPERATING BASE. UNDER HEAVY ENEMY FIRE, LIEUTENANT NORRIS CALLED IN AN AIR STRIKE WHICH PROVIDED SUPPRESSION FIRE, ALLOWING LIEUTENANT NORRIS TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE MISSION.



Major David Van Poznak:

(Wait until the President makes the final presentation, shakes hands, and then read the closing portion)

THEIR CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY AND
INTREPIDITY IN ACTION AT THE RISK OF
LIVES, ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF
DUTY, ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE HIGHEST
TRADITIONS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES
AND REFLECT GREAT CREDIT UPON
THEMSELVES AND THE ARMED FORCES
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

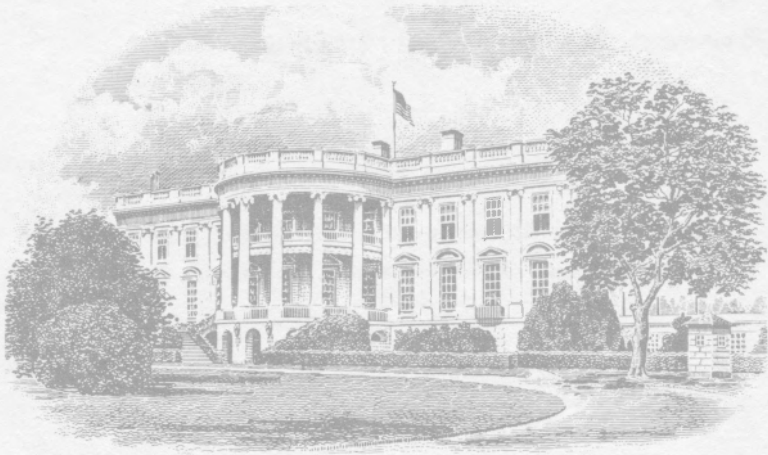


Medal of Honor Presentation

by

Gerald R. Ford

President of the United States of America



The White House

4 MARCH 1976

Program

Musical Prelude by the United States Marine Corps Orchestra

Remarks by the President of the United States

Presentation of Awards

Captain Lance P. Sijan, USAF*
Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, USN
Colonel George E. Day, USAF
Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris, USN Reserve

*Posthumous Award to be received by Mr. Sylvester Sijan,
his father

National Anthem

After playing of the National Anthem, guests are invited for refreshments with the President, Medal of Honor recipients and their families in the State Dining Room.



Citation

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of The Congress, the Medal of Honor posthumously to

Captain Lance H. Sijan
United States Air Force

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

While on a flight over North Vietnam on 9 November 1967, Captain Sijan ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture for more than six weeks. During this time, he was seriously injured and suffered from shock and extreme weight loss due to lack of food. After being captured by North Vietnamese soldiers, Captain Sijan was taken to a holding point for subsequent transfer to a Prisoner of War camp. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was then transferred to another prison camp where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length. During interrogation, he was severely tortured; however, he did not divulge any information to his captors. Captain Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner. During his intermittent periods of consciousness until his death, he never complained of his physical condition and, on several occasions, spoke of future escape attempts. Captain Sijan's extraordinary heroism and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty at the cost of his life are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

Citation

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale
United States Navy

for service as set forth in the following:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 4 September 1969 while senior naval officer in the Prisoner of War camps of North Vietnam. Recognized by his captors as the leader in the Prisoners' of War resistance to interrogation and in their refusal to participate in propaganda exploitation, Rear Admiral (then Captain) Stockdale was singled out for interrogation and attendant torture after he was detected in a covert communications attempt. Sensing the start of another purge, and aware that his earlier efforts at self-disfigurement to dissuade his captors from exploiting him for propaganda purposes had resulted in cruel and agonizing punishment, Rear Admiral Stockdale resolved to make himself a symbol of resistance regardless of personal sacrifice. He deliberately inflicted a near-mortal wound to his person in order to convince his captors of his willingness to give up his life rather than capitulate. He was subsequently discovered and revived by the North Vietnamese who, convinced of his indomitable spirit, abated in their employment of excessive harassment and torture toward all of the Prisoners of War. By his heroic action, at great peril to himself, he earned the everlasting gratitude of his fellow prisoners and of his country. Rear Admiral Stockdale's valiant leadership and extraordinary courage in a hostile environment sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Citation

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of The Congress, the Medal of Honor to

Colonel George E. Day
United States Air Force

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

On 26 August 1967, Colonel (then Major) Day was forced to eject from his aircraft over North Vietnam when it was hit by ground fire. His right arm was broken in three places, and his left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured by hostile forces and taken to a prison camp where he was interrogated and severely tortured. After causing the guards to relax their vigilance, Colonel Day escaped into the jungle and began the trek toward South Vietnam. Despite injuries inflicted by fragments of a bomb or rocket, he continued southward surviving only on a few berries and uncooked frogs. He successfully evaded enemy patrols and reached the Ben Hai River, where he encountered United States artillery barrages. With the aid of a bamboo log float, Colonel Day swam across the river and entered the demilitarized zone. Due to delirium, he lost his sense of direction and wandered aimlessly for several days. After several unsuccessful attempts to signal United States aircraft, he was ambushed and recaptured by the Viet Cong, sustaining gunshot wounds to his left hand and thigh. He was returned to the prison from which he had escaped and later was moved to Hanoi after giving his captors false information to questions put before him. Physically, Colonel Day was totally debilitated and unable to perform even the simplest task for himself. Despite his many injuries, he continued to offer maximum resistance. His personal bravery in the face of deadly enemy pressure was significant in saving the lives of fellow aviators who were still flying against the enemy. Colonel Day's conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

Citation

The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris
United States Naval Reserve

for service as set forth in the following:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a SEAL Advisor with the Strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team, Headquarters, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. During the period 10 to 13 April 1972, Lieutenant Norris completed an unprecedented ground rescue of two downed pilots deep within heavily controlled enemy territory in Quang Tri Province. Lieutenant Norris, on the night of 10 April, led a five-man patrol through 2,000 meters of heavily controlled enemy territory, located one of the downed pilots at daybreak, and returned to the Forward Operating Base (FOB). On 11 April, after a devastating mortar and rocket attack on the small FOB, Lieutenant Norris led a three-man team on two unsuccessful rescue attempts for the second pilot. On the afternoon of the 12th, a Forward Air Controller located the pilot and notified Lieutenant Norris. Dressed in fishermen disguises and using a sampan, Lieutenant Norris and one Vietnamese traveled throughout that night and found the injured pilot at dawn. Covering the pilot with bamboo and vegetation, they began the return journey, successfully evading a North Vietnamese patrol. Approaching the FOB, they came under heavy machine gun fire. Lieutenant Norris called in an air strike which provided suppression fire and a smoke screen, allowing the rescue party to reach the FOB. By his outstanding display of decisive leadership, undaunted courage, and selfless dedication in the face of extreme danger, Lieutenant Norris enhanced the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service.



Navy Medal of Honor



Army Medal of Honor

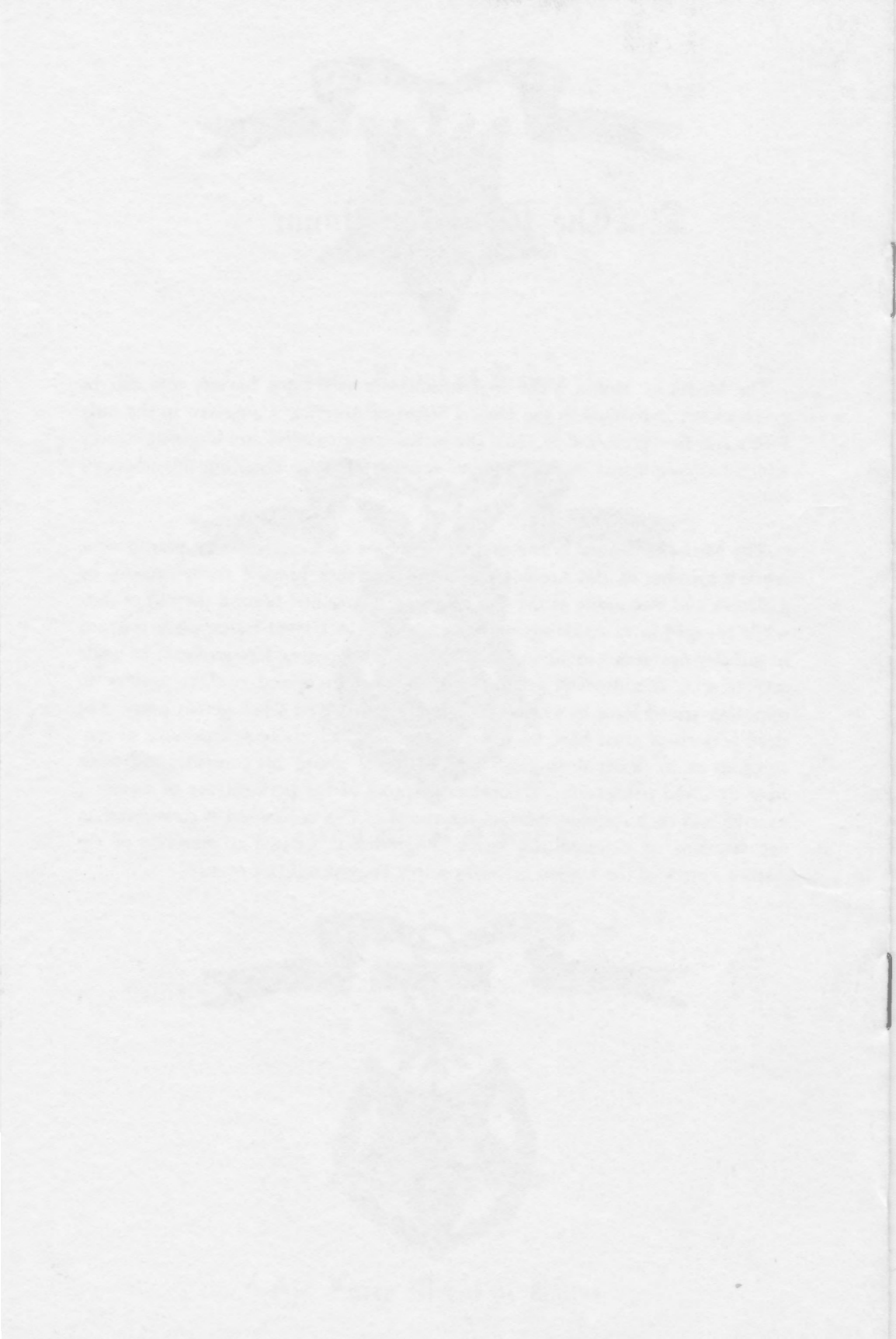


Air Force Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor is the highest military award for bravery that can be given to any individual in the United States of America. Conceived in the early 1860's and first presented in 1863, the medal has a colorful and inspiring history which has culminated in the standards applied today for awarding this respected honor.

The Medal of Honor is awarded in the name of Congress to a person who, while a member of the Armed Forces, distinguishes himself conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against any enemy of the United States, while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The deed performed must have been one of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual above his comrades and must have involved risk of life. Incontestable proof of the performance of service is exacted and each recommendation for award of this decoration is considered on the standard of extraordinary merit. Eligibility is limited to members of the Armed Forces of the United States in active Federal military service.



ITEM TRANSFER REFERENCE FORM

The item described below has been removed.

New File Location:

A-V collection

Document Description:

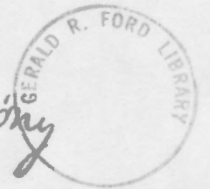
8x10's of Captain Lance P. Sijan,
Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale, Colonel
George E. Day, and Lt. Thomas R. Norris

2-8x10's of Medal of Honor

[total 6 pictures]

Old File Location:

Betty Ford's Files - Box 6
3-4-76 Medal of Honor Ceremony



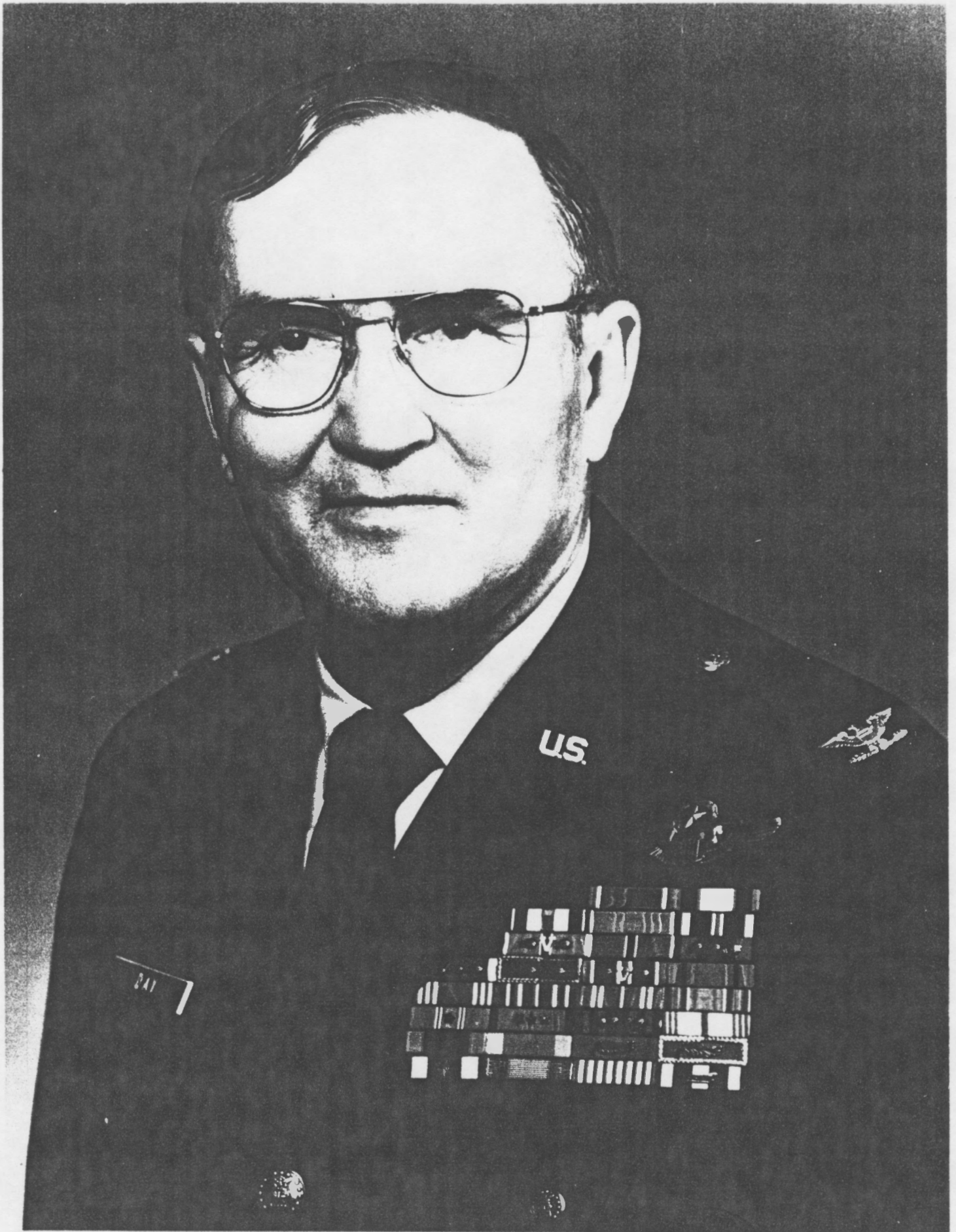
By K. Kennelly Date 5/16/83



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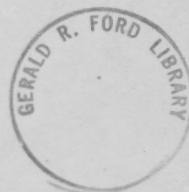
USAF

**United
States
Air
Force**

INFORMATION
KIT



Captain Lance P. Sijan



AFVA 190-10



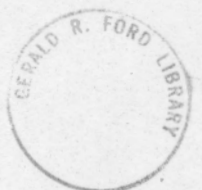
The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of The Congress, the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to

CAPTAIN LANCE P. SIJAN
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

While on a flight over North Vietnam on 9 November 1967, Captain Sijan ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture for more than six weeks. During this time, he was seriously injured and suffered from shock and extreme weight loss due to lack of food. After being captured by North Vietnamese soldiers, Captain Sijan was taken to a holding point for subsequent transfer to a Prisoner of War camp. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was then transferred to another prison camp where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length. During interrogation, he was severely tortured; however, he did not divulge any information to his captors. Captain Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner. During his intermittent periods of consciousness until his death, he never complained of his physical condition and, on several occasions, spoke of future escape attempts. Captain Sijan's extraordinary heroism and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty at the cost of his life are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

Gerald R. Ford





NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE OFFICE OF INFORMATION, WASHINGTON, DC 202-697-5147

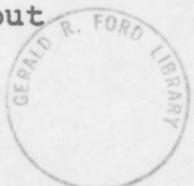
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AIR FORCE CAPTAIN RECEIVES MEDAL OF HONOR

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 4, 1976--The nation's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, was presented posthumously to Captain Lance P. Sijan in a White House ceremony today. Captain Sijan's parents, Mr. & Mrs. Sylvester Sijan, accepted his medal from President Ford.

Captain Sijan was cited for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. While on a flight over North Vietnam on November 9, 1967, Captain Sijan ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture for more than six weeks. During this time, he was seriously injured and suffered from shock and extreme weight loss due to lack of food.

According to the medal citation, Captain Sijan, after being captured by North Vietnamese soldiers, was taken to a holding point for subsequent transfer to a Prisoner of War camp. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was transferred to another prison camp where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length. During interrogation, he was severely tortured, but



did not divulge any information to his captors. Captain Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner. During his intermittent periods of consciousness until his death, he never complained of his physical conditions and on several occasions, spoke of future escape attempts.

Captain Sijan contracted pneumonia January 18, 1968. He was removed from his cell on the night of January 21, 1968 and died the next day at Hoa Lo, as reported by his Vietnamese captors.

Captain Sijan's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Sijan, reside in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

-30-

Narrative, citation and biography are attached.

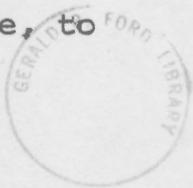


SUMMARY OF GALLANT CONDUCT

On 9 November 1967, Captain Sijan was flying an F-4C aircraft on a mission near Vinh, North Vietnam. During this mission, Captain Sijan's aircraft was hit by enemy ground fire. After ejecting from his disabled aircraft, Captain Sijan was successful in evading capture by the enemy for more than six weeks. During this time, he suffered multiple and serious injuries of the left leg, a mangled right hand, a brain concussion, and severe lacerations; he was without food, suffering from shock and a weight loss to a point where every bone in his body showed through his skin.

Captain Sijan was captured approximately 25 December 1967 by North Vietnamese soldiers and taken to a holding point. At a time when only one soldier was guarding him, Captain Sijan, in his emaciated and crippled condition, overpowered the soldier, knocked him unconscious, and escaped into the jungle for a distance of about two kilometers where he was recaptured after several hours. Captain Sijan was then taken to another en-route camp near Vinh where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length on two different occasions. Captain Sijan successfully distracted and misled the interrogator--sticking to name, rank and serial number--despite the torture inflicted by the captors.

On 6 January 1968, the Vietnamese commander detailed Lieutenant Colonel Robert Craner, another American captive, to



care for Captain Sijan. At no time was Captain Sijan able to stand or even sit erectly without assistance. The next day, 7 January 1968, they embarked on the punishing truck ride to Hanoi, during which Colonel Craner believed that Captain Sijan was about to die or already had; however, each time Captain Sijan regained consciousness and said he was doing all right. He never complained about the unmerciful battering he was taking from the truck ride. During the ride, Captain Sijan mentioned the subject of escape several times, stating he was ready to give it another try.

In the Vegas section of Hoa Lo, his weakness continued as his wounds were unattended; he was able to partake of a few spoons of food each day with assistance. Captain Sijan requested help only to put his body in a sitting position in order to exercise his muscles to recondition himself for another escape attempt which he was eagerly anticipating. This act was particularly painful as both hipbones protruded through his skin; he had dragged himself through the jungle backwards on his hips because his broken left leg could not support him. Due to his extreme weakness, the adverse living conditions, the inadequate diet and insufficient clothing, Captain Sijan contracted pneumonia on 18 January 1968. He was unable to lie down as he was continually strangled by the fluids in his air passages. Captain Sijan was removed from his cell on the night of 21 January 1968 and died at Hoa Lo, as reported by his Vietnamese captors.



Although suffering from extreme shock, starvation, and grievous injury, Captain Sijan escaped from his captors without aid, steadfastly resisted his interrogators, never complained about his physical condition, and thought only of his next opportunity to escape. The dedication to duty and country exemplified by this gallant young officer represents conspicuous heroism and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty and merits recognition through award of the Medal of Honor.



BIOGRAPHY

LANCE P. SIJAN

Captain Lance P. Sijan was born on 13 April 1942 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He received a Bachelor of Science degree from the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado, in June 1965. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the United States Air Force upon graduation from the Academy. He served on active duty with the Air Force from 9 June 1965 until his death on 22 January 1968.

He attended the Undergraduate Pilot Training Course at Laredo AFB, Texas, and was awarded the aeronautical rating of pilot in November, 1966.

He was then assigned to the 431st Tactical Fighter Squadron at George AFB, California until July 1967, at which time he was reassigned to the 480th Tactical Fighter Squadron, DaNang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, as an F-4C pilot.

He was listed as missing in action on 9 November 1967. On 23 April 1974 the Air Force officially changed his status to killed in action.

Captain Sijan has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with 5 Oak Leaf Clusters and Purple Heart with one Oak Leaf Cluster.

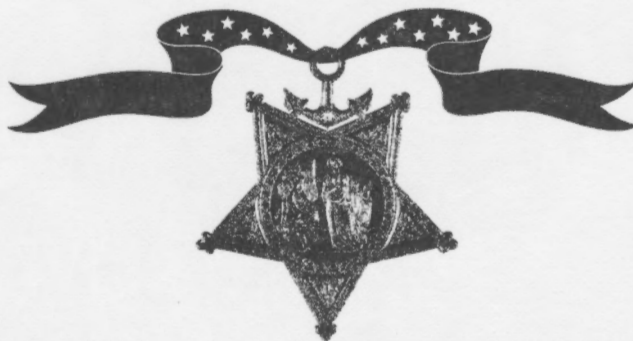
He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Sijan, 2751 S. Shore Dr., Milwaukee, Wisconsin.





MEDAL OF HONOR





The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

REAR ADMIRAL JAMES B. STOCKDALE
UNITED STATES NAVY

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 4 September 1969 while senior naval officer in the Prisoner of War camps of North Vietnam. Recognized by his captors as the leader in the Prisoners' of War resistance to interrogation and in their refusal to participate in propaganda exploitation, Rear Admiral (then Captain) Stockdale was singled out for interrogation and attendant torture after he was detected in a covert communications attempt. Sensing the start of another purge, and aware that his earlier efforts at self-disfiguration to dissuade his captors from exploiting him for propaganda purposes had resulted in cruel and agonizing punishment, Rear Admiral Stockdale resolved to make himself a symbol of resistance regardless of personal sacrifice. He deliberately inflicted a near-mortal wound to his person in order to convince his captors of his willingness to give up his life rather than capitulate. He was subsequently discovered and revived by the North Vietnamese who, convinced of his indomitable spirit, abated in their employment of excessive harassment and torture toward all of the Prisoners of War. By his heroic action, at great peril to himself, he earned the everlasting gratitude of his fellow prisoners and of his country. Rear Admiral Stockdale's valiant leadership and extraordinary courage in a hostile environment sustain and enhance the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Gerald R. Ford



11 February 1976

REAR ADMIRAL JAMES BOND STOCKDALE, U.S. NAVY
TRANSCRIPT OF NAVAL SERVICE

23 DEC 1923 Born in Abingdon, Illinois
 23 JUN 1943 Midshipman, U.S. Naval Academy
 5 JUN 1946 Ensign
 5 JUN 1949 Lieutenant (junior grade)
 1 JUN 1952 Lieutenant
 1 JAN 1958 Lieutenant Commander
 1 JUL 1962 Commander
 1 JUL 1967 Captain
 15 FEB 1973 Designated Rear Admiral while serving in billets commensurate with that grade
 1 MAY 1974 Rear Admiral
 Service continuous to date

<u>SHIPS AND STATIONS</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
NAS, Jacksonville, Fla. (Instrn)	JUN 1946	JUL 1946
USS CARMICK (DMS -33) (Ass't Gunnery Off.)	JUL 1946	AUG 1946
USS THOMPSON (DMS-38) (Ass't Eng. Off and Electrical Off)	AUG 1946	JAN 1947
USS CHARLES H. ROAN (DD-353) (Communication Off.)	JAN 1947	JUL 1948
USS PCS 1392 (Exec. Off.)	JUL 1948	JUN 1949
Naval Air Basic Training Command, NAS, Pensacola, Fla. (Instrn)	JUN 1949	JUN 1950
NAS, Corpus Christi, Tx. (Instrn)	JUN 1950	OCT 1950
Fleet Airborne Electronics Training Unit, Atlantic, NAS, Norfolk, Va. (Instrn)	OCT 1950	JAN 1951
Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 27 (Line Maintenance Off)	JAN 1951	SEP 1951
Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Corry Field, Pensacola, Fla. (Instrn)	SEP 1951	JAN 1952
Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 27 (Flight Off)	JAN 1952	JAN 1954
Naval Air Test Center, Test Pilot Training Division, Patuxent River, Md. (Student/Flight Instructor/Academic Instructor)	JAN 1954	JAN 1957
Fighter Squadron 211 (Ops. Off.)	JAN 1957	MAR 1959
Fighter Squadron 24 (Exec. Off./Ops. Off.)	MAR 1959	AUG 1960
NROTC Unit, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif. (Student)	SEP 1960	SEP 1962
Fighter Squadron 124 (Fleet Replacement Pilot)	SEP 1962	FEB 1963
Fighter Squadron 51 (Exec. Off.)	FEB 1963	SEP 1963
CO, Fighter Squadron 51	SEP 1963	OCT 1964
Readiness Attack Carrier Air Wing TWELVE (PCO, Attack Carrier Air Wing SIXTEEN)	OCT 1964	FEB 1965
Commander, Attack Carrier Air Wing SIXTEEN	FEB 1965	SEP 1965
Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. (Prisoner of War)	SEP 1965	FEB 1973
Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D.C. (For Administrative Purposes, Naval Hospital, San Diego, Ca. under treatment)	FEB 1973	JAN 1974
Commander, Anti-Submarine Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet	JAN 1974	To Date



MEDALS AND AWARDS

Two Distinguished Service Medals
Four Silver Stars
Legion of Merit with Combat "V"
Distinguished Flying Cross with one Gold Star in lieu of second award
Two Bronze Stars with Combat "V"
Air Medal with one Silver Star and four Gold Stars in lieu of subsequent awards
Purple Heart Medal with one Gold Star in lieu of second award
Combat Action Ribbon
Navy Unit Commendation awarded USS TICONDEROGA (CVA-14)
Navy Unit Commendation awarded USS ORISKANY (CVA-34)
American Campaign Medal
World War II Victory Medal
Navy Occupation Service Medal with Europe Clasp
National Defense Service Medal with one bronze star in lieu of second award
Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Taiwan)
Vietnam Service Medal with three Silver Stars
Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device (1960-)

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Designated Naval Aviator (HTA): 24 September 1950
Awarded Master of Arts Degree in International Relations by Stanford University (1962)
Language Qualifications: None of record

PERSONAL DATA

Wife: Sybil Bailey of East Haven, Connecticut
Children: James B. Stockdale (Son)
Born: 11 December 1950
Sidney B. Stockdale (Son)
Born: 3 August 1954
Stanford B. Stockdale (Son)
Born: 6 December 1959
Taylor B. Stockdale (Son)
Born: 3 April 1962
Address: 547 "A" Avenue
Coronado, California 92118

RELIGION

Protestant





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF INFORMATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

IN REPLY REFER TO

NAVY REAR ADMIRAL RECEIVES MEDAL OF HONOR

The nation's highest military decoration was awarded to Navy Rear Admiral James B. Stockdale by President Ford in ceremonies at the White House today.

RADM Stockdale was awarded the Medal of Honor "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 4 September 1969 while senior naval officer in the Prisoner of War camps of North Vietnam." Through his actions, RADM Stockdale was responsible for a lessening of the torture inflicted on American Prisoners of War throughout North Vietnam.

His citation reads, in part:

He deliberately inflicted a near-mortal wound to his person in order to convince his captors of his willingness to give up his life rather than capitulate. He was subsequently discovered and revived by the North Vietnamese who, convinced of his indomitable spirit, abated in their employment of excessive harassment and torture toward all of the Prisoners of War. By his heroic action, at great peril to himself, he earned the everlasting gratitude of his fellow prisoners and of his country.

The admiral is currently Commander, Anti-Submarine Warfare Wing, U.S. Pacific Fleet. He returned to the United States from North Vietnam in February 1973. The Abingdon, Il. native now resides in Coronado, Ca. with his wife, the former Sybil Bailey of Easthaven, Ct.



HISTORY OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for bravery that can be given to any individual in the United States. In judging men for receipt of the medal, each service has established its own regulations. The deed must be proved by incontestable evidence of at least two eyewitnesses; it must be so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes the recipient's gallantry beyond the call of duty from lesser forms of bravery; it must involve the risk of his life; and it must be the type of deed which, if he had not done it, would not subject him to any justified criticism.

The idea for the Medal of Honor was born during the Civil War as men fought gallantly and oftentimes displayed great heroism. George Washington originated the Purple Heart in 1782 to honor brave soldiers, sailors and marines. From that time until the Civil War, Certificates of Merit and a "brevet" system of promotions were used as military awards. The first military decoration formally authorized by the American Government as a badge of valor was the Medal of Honor for enlisted men of the Navy and Marine Corps. It was authorized by Congress, and approved by President Abraham Lincoln on December 21, 1861. The medal for the Army and Voluntary Forces was authorized on July 12, 1862.

The medal is awarded "in the name of the Congress of the United States" and for this reason, it is often called the Congressional Medal of Honor. It is only on rare occasions, however, that Congress awards special Medals of Honor.



An Executive Order, signed by President Theodore Roosevelt on September 20, 1905, directed that ceremonies of award "will always be made with formal and impressive ceremonial" and that the recipient "will, when practicable, be ordered to Washington, D.C. and the presentation will be made by the President, as Commander in Chief, or by such representative as the President may designate."

The Navy Medal of Honor is made of bronze, suspended by an anchor from a bright blue ribbon, and is worn about the neck. The ribbon is spangled with a cluster of 13 white stars representing the original States. Each ray of the five pointed star contains sprays of laurel and oak and is tipped with a trefoil. Standing in bas-relief, circled by 34 stars representing the 34 states in 1861, is Minerva, who personifies the Union. She holds in her left hand the fasces, an ax bound in staves of wood, which is the ancient Roman symbol of authority. With the shield in her right hand, she repulses the serpents held by the crouching figure of Discord. The reverse of the medal is left blank, allowing for the engraving of the recipient's name and the date and place of his deed.





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF INFORMATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

IN REPLY REFER TO

26 FEB 1976

ABINGDON NATIVE RECEIVES MEDAL OF HONOR

President Ford today awarded the Medal of Honor to an Abingdon, Ill. native who spent more than seven years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam.

Rear Admiral James Bond Stockdale, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Vernon B. Stockdale of Abingdon, received the nation's highest military decoration for risking his life above and beyond the call of duty as the senior naval officer in captivity in North Vietnam.

Presently serving as Commander, Anti-Submarine Warfare Wing, Pacific Fleet, RAdm Stockdale commented, "I am humbled to receive the award. It's the highest honor an American could get, and you just can't imagine the impact it had on me."

The admiral, 52, said the award was especially gratifying because one of his idols is his cousin, former Marine Corps Major Robert H. Dunlap, of Monmouth, Ill., who won the Medal of Honor for service as a Company Commander during the initial landings in Iwo Jima during World War II.

"I grew up with total admiration for my cousin Bobby, and I never dreamed I'd achieve the same honor," RAdm Stockdale said.

As a P.O.W.

RAdm Stockdale (then Commander) was serving as Commander, Carrier Air Wing SIXTEEN aboard the USS Oriskany, when he was shot down during a combat mission over North Vietnam on Sept. 9, 1965.

-more-



"As I ejected from the plane I broke a bone in my back, but that was only the beginning. I landed in the streets of a small village where mobs attacked me, tore off all my clothes and rolled me up and down the streets," the admiral said.

The attack by the villagers left the admiral with a broken left leg--in addition to a paralyzed left arm as a result of his back injury. He went almost a month without any hospital care.

For almost two months after his capture, RAdm Stockdale was moved constantly from place to place before finally arriving at the infamous "Heartbreak Hotel", an area within the "Hanoi Hilton."

Soon recognized as a senior naval officer and a leader in the prisoners' resistance to North Vietnamese interrogation, RAdm Stockdale was singled out and subjected to extreme mental and physical cruelties by his captors.

During one 15-month period in solitary confinement, the admiral spent 15 hours a day in leg irons. His cell was kept in total darkness during the day and lighted by a single bare bulb at night. RAdm Stockdale spent a total of four years in solitary confinement.

Despite almost constant enemy harassment and threats of more torture, RAdm Stockdale was still able to perform his duties as a senior officer, maintaining organization and discipline among the prisoners. "It was difficult to keep order and morale, which were essential to survival," the admiral said, "because the North Vietnamese were constantly shifting prisoners to different cells, often placing them in solitary confinement."

To sustain organization, it was vital to have good communication among the prisoners. "With an elaborate tap code that was developed in the camp, I could communicate with my men, as well as set resistance posture," the admiral said



In one incident, to prevent giving the enemy details of prison organization, RAdm Stockdale resisted interrogation to the point of almost losing his life to protect his shipmates. His Medal of Honor citation reads, in part: "...Aware that his earlier efforts at self-disfiguration to dissuade his captors from exploiting him for propaganda purposes had resulted in cruel and agonizing punishment, RAdm Stockdale deliberately inflicted a near-mortal wound to his person in order to convince his captors of his willingness to give up his life rather than capitulate..."

As a result of this action, the North Vietnamese were convinced of RAdm Stockdale's determination and eased up on harassment and torture of prisoners.

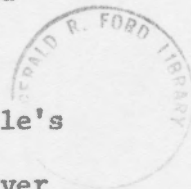
Naval Career

RAdm Stockdale was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1946 and fulfilled a childhood dream by becoming a naval officer. After three years' service in destroyers, he entered flight training and was designated a Naval Aviator in 1950.

For the next 15 years he was a pilot and landing signal officer in aviation units aboard aircraft carriers, except for two periods spent at shore activities.

Much of his flying career was spent in carrier-based operations of the F-8 Crusader, and in early 1960 he became the first man to log over 1,000 hours in the F-8. In 1964, while assigned to the USS Ticonderoga, he led the initial American air strikes in North Vietnam. One year later he was shot down and captured by the Vietcong, and remained a P.O.W. until Feb. 1973.

In addition to numerous campaign medals and unit awards, RAdm Stockdale's personal decorations include the Legion of Merit with Combat "V", four Silver Stars, two Bronze Stars with Combat "V", two Distinguished Flying Crosses, ten Air Medals and two Purple Hearts.



RAdm STOCKDALE 4-4-4

RAdm Stockdale is married to the former Sybil E. Bailey of East Haven, Conn., and they have four sons: Jim, 25, a school teacher in Delaware, Ohio; Sidney, 21, a junior at Colorado College, Colorado Springs; Stanford, 16, in the third form of South Kent School in Connecticut; and Taylor, 13, who resides with his parents at 547 "A" Ave., Coronado, Calif.

The admiral's family greeted him upon his arrival from Vietnam--after seven and one-half years of captivity--and heard his first words to the American people: "...as a Greek dramatist Sophocles once wrote," he said, "'Nothing is so sweet as to return from the sea and listen to the raindrops on the roof tops of home.' We are home at last. America, America, God shed His Grace on thee."





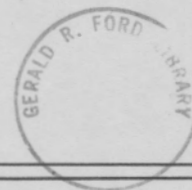
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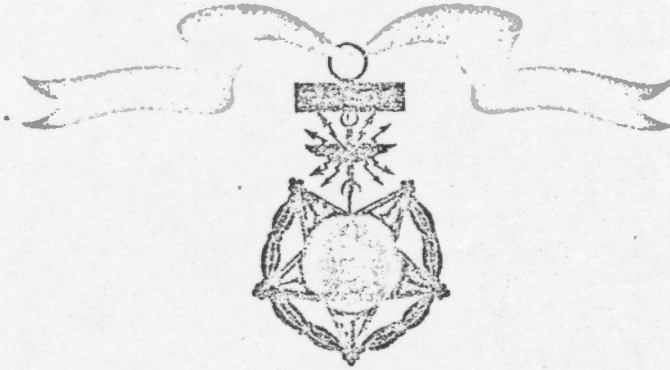
**United
States
Air
Force**

INFORMATION
KIT



Colonel George E. Day





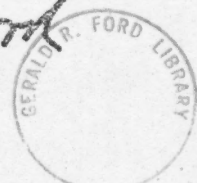
The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, March 3, 1863, has awarded in the name of The Congress, the MEDAL OF HONOR to

COLONEL GEORGE E. DAY
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty:

On 26 August 1967, Colonel (then Major) Day was forced to eject from his aircraft over North Vietnam when it was hit by ground fire. His right arm was broken in three places, and his left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured by hostile forces and taken to a prison camp where he was interrogated and severely tortured. After causing the guards to relax their vigilance, Colonel Day escaped into the jungle and began the trek toward South Vietnam. Despite injuries inflicted by fragments of a bomb or rocket, he continued southward surviving only on a few berries and uncooked frogs. He successfully evaded enemy patrols and reached the Ben Hai River, where he encountered United States artillery barrages. With the aid of a bamboo log float, Colonel Day swam across the river and entered the demilitarized zone. Due to delirium, he lost his sense of direction and wandered aimlessly for several days. After several unsuccessful attempts to signal United States aircraft, he was ambushed and recaptured by the Viet Cong, sustaining gunshot wounds to his left hand and thigh. He was returned to the prison from which he had escaped and later was moved to Hanoi after giving his captors false information to questions put before him. Physically, Colonel Day was totally debilitated and unable to perform even the simplest task for himself. Despite his many injuries, he continued to offer maximum resistance. His personal bravery in the face of deadly enemy pressure was significant in saving the lives of fellow aviators who were still flying against the enemy. Colonel Day's conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States.

Gerald R. Ford





NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE OFFICE OF INFORMATION, WASHINGTON, DC 202-697-5175

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AIR FORCE COLONEL RECEIVES MEDAL OF HONOR

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 4, 1976--The nation's highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, was presented today to Air Force Colonel George E. Day, a former prisoner of war. Colonel Day accepted the honor from President Ford in White House ceremonies.

Colonel Day, released by the North Vietnamese after more than five and one half years of captivity, was awarded the medal for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while a prisoner of war in North Vietnam.

On August 26, 1967, Colonel (then Major) Day was forced to eject from his aircraft over North Vietnam when it was hit by ground fire. His right arm was broken in three places, and his left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured by hostile forces and taken to a prison camp where he was interrogated and severely tortured. After causing the guards to relax their vigilance, Colonel Day escaped into the jungle and began the trek toward South Vietnam. Despite injuries inflicted by fragments of a bomb or rocket, he continued southward surviving on only a few berries and uncooked frogs. He successfully evaded enemy patrols and reached the Ben Hai River where he



encountered United States artillery barrages. With the aid of a bamboo log float, Colonel Day swam across the river and entered the demilitarized zone. Due to delirium, he lost his sense of direction and wandered aimlessly for several days. After several unsuccessful attempts to signal United States aircraft, he was ambushed and recaptured by the Viet Cong, sustaining gunshot wounds to his left hand and thigh. He was returned to the prison from which he had escaped and later was moved to Hanoi after giving his captors false information to questions put before him. Physically, Colonel Day was totally debilitated and unable to perform even the simplest task for himself. Despite his many injuries, he continued to offer maximum resistance. His personal bravery in the face of deadly enemy pressure was significant in saving the lives of fellow aviators who were still flying against the enemy.

Colonel Day continued in internment by the North Vietnamese until his release on March 14, 1973.

Colonel Day has been the vice commander of the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing, Eglin AFB, Florida, since September 1974.

Colonel Day and his wife, the former Doris Merlene Sorensen of Sioux City, Iowa, have four children, Steven, 20; George, 13; Sandra, 11; and Sonja, 11.

-END-

Narrative, citation and biography are attached.



SUMMARY OF GALLANT CONDUCT

On 26 August 1967, Colonel Day (then Major) was flying a forward air control mission over North Vietnam when his F-100 aircraft was hit by ground fire, forcing him to eject from his battle-damaged aircraft. Colonel Day's right arm was broken in three places, and his left knee was badly sprained. He was immediately captured by the North Vietnamese, and two days later his arm was crudely set by a North Vietnamese medic. While waiting to be transferred to a main prison camp, he was interrogated and tortured; however, he steadfastly refused to reveal any information. During this period, Colonel Day gave the impression of a back injury, causing the Vietnamese guards to relax their vigilance.

On the night of 1 September 1967, he slipped out of his captive ropes, escaped into the jungle, and immediately began the trek southward toward the Ben Hai River separating North and South Vietnam. On the second night he was hit in the right leg by fragments from a bomb or rocket; the concussion of the explosion caused bleeding from his nose and ears. Because of this incident, Colonel Day had to "hole up" and rest for two days. After sufficiently recovering from his most recent wounds, he continued southward, evading enemy patrols and surviving on only a few berries and uncooked frogs.

Upon reaching the river, he swam across with the assistance of a bamboo log float. After several days in the jungle, his

injuries caused him to become delirious and lose his sense of direction. While wandering aimlessly through the demilitarized zone, he saw two US forward air controllers fly directly over him, but attempts at signalling were in vain. He later spotted two US Marine Corps helicopters that landed nearby, but arrived at the landing site too late for a rescue.

Finally, after 12 days, suffering from wounds, exposure, and hunger, he ran into a Viet Cong ambush. While trying to escape, he was shot in the left hand and left thigh. He was recaptured and returned to the same camp in Vin Hinh where he was badly beaten and tortured as punishment for his escape attempt.

Colonel Day was starved--weighing only 110 pounds compared to his normal 170 pounds--and refused medical treatment for his bone breaks, gunshot wounds, and infections. He was again beaten and tortured with ropes for two days in an attempt to obtain military information. Colonel Day was tied with a rope under his armpits and hung from a ceiling beam for more than two hours, at which time an officer ordered a guard to twist his broken arm, breaking the right wrist. At this point, Colonel Day appeared to cooperate and started giving false information about his mission, aircraft, and all other questions put before him.



When he was moved to Hanoi on 23 October 1967, he was a complete physical wreck. Although suffering from infected leg and arm wounds, twisted and immovable hands, and unable to complete even the smallest task for himself, he was again tortured but offered maximum resistance.

The unswerving gallantry and personal bravery of Colonel Day are examples of the highest ideals of US military conduct in the face of deadly enemy pressure. The heroic actions of Colonel Day, at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty, merit recognition through award of the Medal of Honor.



BIOGRAPHY

COLONEL GEORGE E. DAY

Colonel George E. Day is the Vice Commander of the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW), Eglin AFB, Florida. He has held that position since September 1974.

Colonel Day was born in Sioux City, Iowa, on February 24, 1925. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree and a Doctor of Humane Letters (Honorary) from Morningside College in Sioux City. He has also been awarded a Master of Arts degree from St. Louis University and a Juris Doctor from the University of South Dakota. He is a member of the South Dakota bar.

Colonel Day joined the Marine Corps in 1942 and served 30 months in the South Pacific as a noncommissioned officer. He received an appointment as a second lieutenant in the National Guard in 1950 after completing requirements for a Juris Doctorate.

Colonel Day was called to active duty in the Air Force in 1951 and entered jet pilot training. He has served two tours in the Far East as a fighter-bomber pilot during the Korean War. He has flown worldwide with the 12th Fighter Wing, 20th Fighter Wing, 4th Tactical Fighter Wing, 107th Tactical Fighter Group, 31st Fighter Wing, and 37th Fighter Wing. He has been credited with surviving the first "no chute" bailout from a burning jet fighter in England.



In April 1964, Colonel Day was assigned as an F-100 assistant operations officer at Tuy Hoa Air Base, Republic of Vietnam. He later moved to Phu Cat Air Base, where he organized and became the first commander of the "Misty Super FAC's F-100 Squadron."

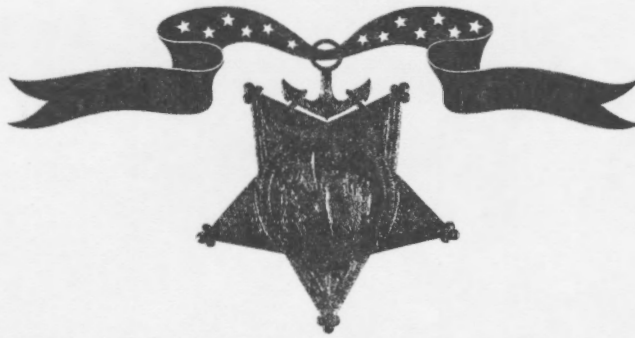
Shot down over North Vietnam on August 26, 1967, he spend 67 months as a prisoner of war. Colonel Day was the only POW to escape from prison in North Vietnam and then be recaptured by the Viet Cong in the South.

At the time of his shootdown, Colonel Day was one of the nation's most experienced jet fighter pilots with 4,500 hours of single engine jet time and more than 5,000 hours of flying time. He has flown most U.S. fighters from the F-80 through the F-4.

Colonel Day holds nearly 60 military decorations and awards of which more than 40 are for combat. Most notable are the Air Force Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with nine Oak Leaf Clusters, the Bronze Star for valor with two Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Purple Heart with three clusters. He was presented Vietnam's highest medal for valor the National Order of Vietnam, two Vietnamese Gallantry Crosses, and Vietnamese wings. He wears 11 Campaign Battle Stars.

Colonel Day is married to the former Doris Merlene Sorensen of Sioux City. They have four children: Steven, 20; George, 13; Sandra, 11; and Sonja, 11.





The President of the United States in the name of The Congress takes pleasure in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR to

LIEUTENANT THOMAS R. NORRIS
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a SEAL Advisor with the Strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team, Headquarters, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. During the period 10 to 13 April 1972, Lieutenant Norris completed an unprecedented ground rescue of two downed pilots deep within heavily controlled enemy territory in Quang Tri Province. Lieutenant Norris, on the night of 10 April, led a five-man patrol through 2,000 meters of heavily controlled enemy territory, located one of the downed pilots at daybreak, and returned to the Forward Operating Base (FOB). On 11 April, after a devastating mortar and rocket attack on the small FOB, Lieutenant Norris led a three-man team on two unsuccessful rescue attempts for the second pilot. On the afternoon of the 12th, a Forward Air Controller located the pilot and notified Lieutenant Norris. Dressed in fishermen disguises and using a sampan, Lieutenant Norris and one Vietnamese traveled throughout that night and found the injured pilot at dawn. Covering the pilot with bamboo and vegetation, they began the return journey, successfully evading a North Vietnamese patrol. Approaching the FOB, they came under heavy machine gun fire. Lieutenant Norris called in an air strike which provided suppression fire and a smoke screen, allowing the rescue party to reach the FOB. By his outstanding display of decisive leadership, undaunted courage, and selfless dedication in the face of extreme danger, Lieutenant Norris enhanced the finest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Gerald R. Ford



February 1976

LIEUTENANT THOMAS ROLLAND NORRIS, U.S. NAVAL RESERVE, RETIRED
TRANSCRIPT OF NAVAL SERVICE

14 JAN 1944 Born in Jacksonville, Florida
27 SEP 1967 Enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve
3 JAN 1968 Reported for active duty
21 MAR 1968 Honorably discharged
22 MAR 1968 Ensign, U.S. Naval Reserve
22 MAR 1969 Lieutenant (junior grade)
1 APR 1971 Lieutenant
30 APR 1975 Honorably released from active duty
1 MAY 1975 Transferred to the Permanent Disability
Retired List

<u>SHIPS AND STATIONS</u>	<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>
Naval Air Basic Training Command, NAS, Pensacola, Florida (Instruction)	MAR 1968	DEC 1968
Naval Amphibious School Little Creek, Norfolk, Virginia (Instruction)	DEC 1968	May 1969
Seal Team TWO (Ass't Platoon Commander/ Ass't Air Operations Off./Plans Off.)	MAY 1969	SEP 1971
U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Operation Officer Maritime Studies Branch, HQ, MACV Studies and Observations Group)	SEP 1971	APR 1972
U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Officer in Charge, Personnel Recovery Force, HQ, STDAT 158)	APR 1972	JUN 1972
Naval Advisory Unit, Cat Lai, Republic of Vietnam (OIC LDNN (SEAL) Advisory Group (ALFA)	JUL 1972	NOV 1972
U.S. Air Force Hospital, Clark Air Force Base, Philippines (Treatment)	NOV 1972	NOV 1972
Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland (Treatment)	NOV 1972	APR 1973
Office of Chief of Naval Operations	APR 1973	APR 1975



LIEUTENANT NORRIS 2-2-2

MEDALS AND AWARDS

Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V" and two Gold Stars with two Combat "V"s
in lieu of subsequent awards
Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V"
Purple Heart
Combat Action Medal
Presidential Unit Citation awarded Seal Team TWO, Detachment ALFA,
FIFTH Platoon
Navy Unit Commendation awarded U.S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon
National Defense Service Medal
Vietnam Service Medal with one silver star and one bronze star
Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation Gallantry Cross Color
Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation Civil Actions Color
Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal

FOREIGN DECORATIONS

Gallantry Cross with Gold Star by the Republic of Vietnam
Staff Service Medal First Class by the Republic of Vietnam

SPECIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Awarded Bachelor of Arts Degree by University of Maryland (1967)

PERSONAL DATA

Mother: Irene Harriet Norris
Father: Rolland Webb Norris
Address: 8910 Walden Road
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

RELIGION

Protestant



HISTORY OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

The Medal of Honor is the highest award for bravery that can be given to any individual in the United States. In judging men for receipt of the medal, each service has established its own regulations. The deed must be proved by incontestable evidence of at least two eyewitnesses; it must be so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes the recipient's gallantry beyond the call of duty from lesser forms of bravery; it must involve the risk of his life; and it must be the type of deed which, if he had not done it, would not subject him to any justified criticism.

The idea for the Medal of Honor was born during the Civil War as men fought gallantly and oftentimes displayed great heroism. George Washington originated the Purple Heart in 1782 to honor brave soldiers, sailors and marines. From that time until the Civil War, Certificates of Merit and a "brevet" system of promotions were used as military awards. The first military decoration formally authorized by the American Government as a badge of valor was the Medal of Honor for enlisted men of the Navy and Marine Corps. It was authorized by Congress, and approved by President Abraham Lincoln on December 21, 1861. The medal for the Army and Voluntary Forces was authorized on July 12, 1862.

The medal is awarded "in the name of the Congress of the United States" and for this reason, it is often called the Congressional Medal of Honor. It is only on rare occasions, however, that Congress awards special Medals of Honor.



An Executive Order, signed by President Theodore Roosevelt on September 20, 1905, directed that ceremonies of award "will always be made with formal and impressive ceremonial" and that the recipient "will, when practicable, be ordered to Washington, D.C. and the presentation will be made by the President, as Commander in Chief, or by such representative as the President may designate."

The Navy Medal of Honor is made of bronze, suspended by an anchor from a bright blue ribbon, and is worn about the neck. The ribbon is spangled with a cluster of 13 white stars representing the original States. Each ray of the five pointed star contains sprays of laurel and oak and is tipped with a trefoil. Standing in bas-relief, circled by 34 stars representing the 34 states in 1861, is Minerva, who personifies the Union. She holds in her left hand the fasces, an ax bound in staves of wood, which is the ancient Roman symbol of authority. With the shield in her right hand, she repulses the serpents held by the crouching figure of Discord. The reverse of the medal is left blank, allowing for the engraving of the recipient's name and the date and place of his deed.





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF INFORMATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350

IN REPLY REFER TO

NAVYMAN RECEIVES MEDAL OF HONOR

The nation's highest military decoration was awarded to Lieutenant Thomas R. Norris, U.S. Naval Reserve-Retired, by President Ford in ceremonies at the White House today.

Lieutenant Norris received the Medal of Honor for "Conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a SEAL (Sea, Air, Land) Advisor with the strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team, Headquarters, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, during the period 10 to 13 April 1972..."

Lt. Norris made repeated attempts to rescue two pilots downed inside heavily controlled enemy territory and eventually returned them to safety. His citation reads , in part:

Lieutenant Norris completed an unprecedented ground rescue of two downed pilots deep within heavily controlled enemy territory in Quang Tri Province. Lieutenant Norris, on the night of 10 April, led a five-man patrol through 2,000 meters of heavily controlled enemy territory, located one of the downed pilots at daybreak, and returned to the Forward Operating Base (FOB)...Lieutenant Norris led a three-man team on two unsuccessful rescue attempts for the second pilot. On the afternoon of the 12th, a Forward Air Controller located the pilot and notified Lieutenant Norris. Dressed in fisherman disguises and using a sampan, Lieutenant Norris and one Vietnamese traveled throughout the night and found the injured pilot at dawn. Covering the pilot with bamboo and vegetation, they began the return journey, successfully evading a North Vietnamese patrol. Approaching the FOB, they came under heavy machine gun fire. Lieutenant Norris called in an air strike which provided suppression fire and a smoke screen, allowing the rescue party to reach the FOB.

Lieutenant Norris was released from active duty in April 1975. The Maryland native now resides in Silver Spring, Md., with his parents.

