

## National POW/MIA Recognition Day - September 20, 2013

National POW/MIA Recognition Day is a day of observance for all Americans to pause in remembrance of the sacrifices and service of those who were prisoners of war (POW) as well as those who are missing in action (MIA), and their families. According to Emma Metcalf, Medical Center Director, National POW/MIA Recognition Day has come to symbolize the steadfast resolve of the American people to not forget the men and women who gave up their freedom to protect ours. “Our history is one of people who put love of country above their own well-being,” says Metcalf. “On September 20, 2013, we will honor the remarkable determination of former prisoners of war, those who remain unaccounted for, and their families in a special recognition program. Our theme, ‘For all time, we will remember,’ pays special tribute to their courage and sacrifice, for which we are forever in their debt.”

### **“For All Time, We Will Remember”**

POW/MIA Recognition Day Program

Friday

September 20, 2013

10:30A

Leestown Division

The true cost of wartime imprisonment is uncertain, but VA studies comparing former POWs with other Veterans confirms that former POWs are more likely to suffer depression, anxiety, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Research also notes a wide range of physical ailments for World War II former POWs caused by diet and infectious disease, including the discovery of links between nutritional deficiency, edema, and heart disease. Veterans compensation laws have kept pace, covering additional conditions linked to wartime incarceration. “The more we work with and study our former POWs, the more we learn,” says Metcalf.

According to Metcalf, VA applies that knowledge through a special medical protocol used to treat former POWs. When examining survivors of the Bataan Death March, for example, VA doctors know to look for lingering, long-term effects of tropical disease, malnutrition, and vitamin deficiency. They also know that many Veterans are only beginning to discuss their POW experiences openly, revealing powerful memories and emotions. “That is why our medical center and clinics offer counseling and support groups to former POWs,” informs Metcalf. “We want to make sure that all former POWs are receiving their deserved VA benefits and will gladly assist any POW with their questions and in initiating or reopening a claim.” *For more information, please contact:*

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*Written by Public Affairs*