Forgotten War honorees gather at the Korean War Memorial on the Capitol Campus in the summer of 2017. *Ben Helle*

"Imagine your present world suddenly drained of all color. Only black, white and brown remain. Take away laughter, music, casual conversations and all the comforting, soft, familiar sounds of your present world. Now set all that remains into motion until familiar objects disintegrate. Take away the sweet perfume of flowers and replace it with the stench of broken infrastructure, open sewers and decay. Overwhelm this scene with military troops and traffic indifferent to anything but their own frantic missions, while thousands of refugee people dart between this traffic in desperate flight, or plod step by step toward hopeful refuge, or simply fall in exhaustion and die."

— Pat Martin, Korean War correspondent

Office of the Secretary of State
Legacy Washington

Legacy Washington
PO Box 40222
Olympia, WA 98504
www.sos.wa.gov/legacy

$20.00
ISBN 978-1-889320-38-0
52000>

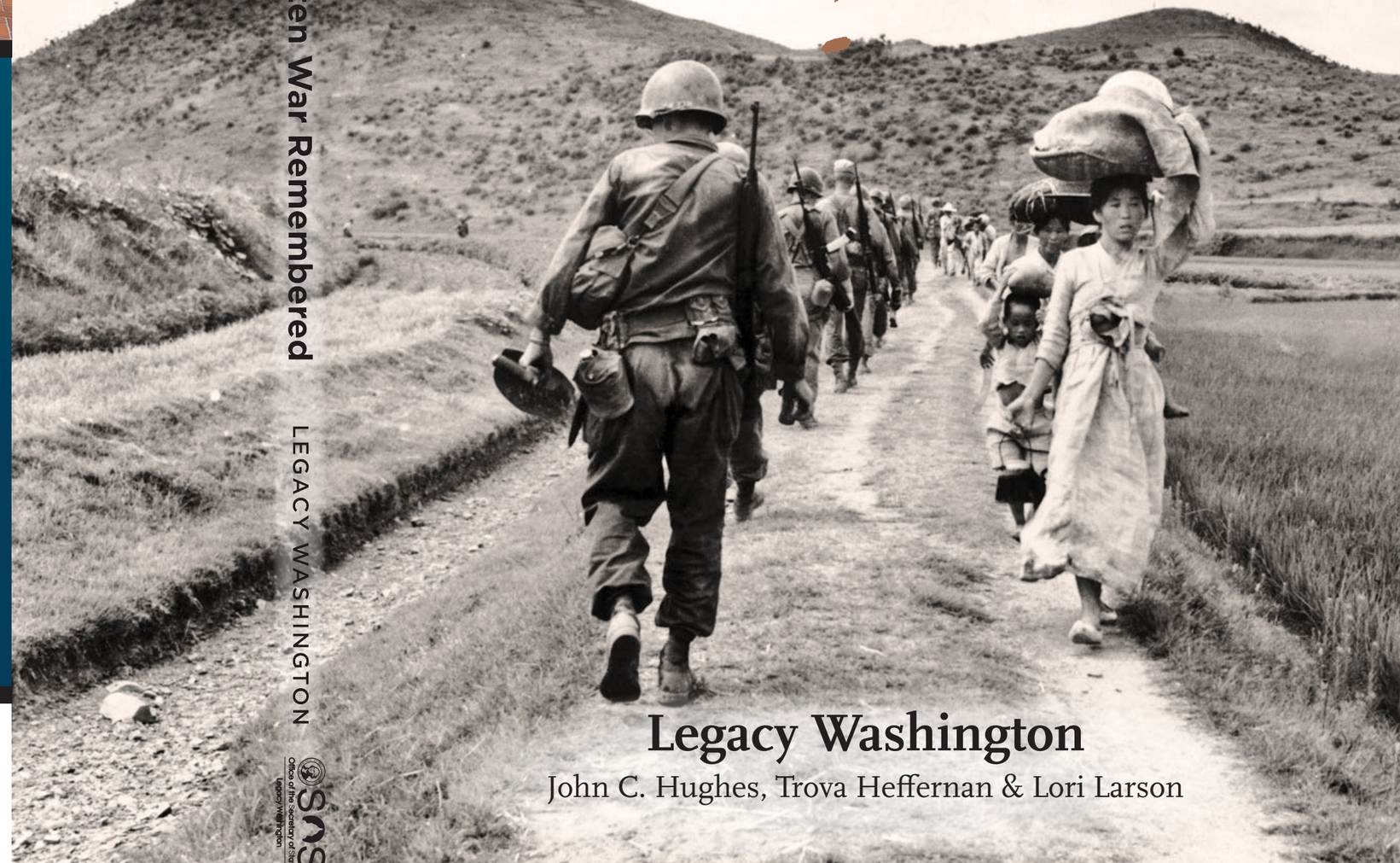
KOREA 65: The Forgotten War Remembered

LEGACY WASHINGTON

Office of the Secretary of State
Legacy Washington

KOREA 65

The forgotten war remembered



Legacy Washington

John C. Hughes, Trova Heffernan & Lori Larson

KOREA 65

The Forgotten War Remembered

Written by:
John C. Hughes
Trova Heffernan
Lori Larson

Office of the Secretary of State
Legacy Washington

First Edition

ISBN 978-1-889320-38-0

Front cover photo:
GI's and refugees near the 38th Parallel
in August 1950. *Library of Congress*
Back cover photo: *Ben Helle photo*

Book Design by Lori Larson
Cover Design by Laura Mott

Printed in the United States of America
by Gorham Printing, Centralia, Washington

Cpl. Charles Price bugles "Taps" over the graves of fallen Marines on December 13, 1950, at the 1st Marine Division cemetery at Hungnam, following the division's heroic break-out from the Chosin Reservoir. *Marine Corps photo*

To the men and women who answered the call to defend democracy on the Korean peninsula. We will never forget your valor.

Legacy Washington is dedicated to preserving the history of Washington and its continuing story.
www.sos.wa.gov/legacy

Where the Salmon Run: The Life and Legacy of Billy Frank Jr.
Nancy Evans, *First-Rate First Lady*
The Inimitable Adele Ferguson
Lillian Walker, *Washington State Civil Rights Pioneer*
Booth Who? A Biography of Booth Gardner
Slade Gorton, *a Half Century in Politics*
John Spellman: *Politics Never Broke His Heart*
A Woman First: The Impact of Jennifer Dunn
Across the Aisles: Sid Snyder's *Remarkable Life in Groceries & Government*
Pressing On: Two Family-Owned Newspapers *in the 21st Century*
An Election for the Ages: Rossi vs. Gregoire, *2004*
Krist Novoselic: *Of Grunge and Government*
Bonnie J. Dunbar, *PhD: An Adventurous Mind*
Charles Z. Smith: *Trailblazer*
Robert F. Utter: *Justice's Sailor*
Carolyn Dimmick: *A Judge for all Seasons*
The Rev. Dr. Samuel B. McKinney, *"We're not in Heaven yet"*
Duane French, *"Pity is just another form of abuse"*
Amy Alvarez-Wampfler and Victor Palencia, *new-generation winemakers*
JoAnn Kauffman, *Roots & Resilience*
Jolene Unsoeld, *"Un-sold"*
Rudy Lopez, *The Honor of a Lifetime*
Erik Larson, *our youngest-ever mayor*
Bill Ruckelshaus, *The Conscience of "Mr. Clean"*
Hank Adams, *An Uncommon Life*
Washington Remembers World War II

Secretary of State
Tom Wyman

Introduction: Not Forgotten

Sixty-five years ago on a peninsula the size of Utah, nearly 37,000 Americans gave their lives to defend democracy—including 532 Washingtonians. All told, millions of lives were lost in the Korean War, yet the conflict remains a little-known chapter in our nation's history.

The Korean War and its aftermath impacted the Pacific Northwest in so many ways: military installations, defense industries, Pacific Rim commerce, immigration and culture. Washington is now home to 100,000 people of Korean ancestry.

South Korea emerged as a global manufacturing power and one of our state's leading partners in international trade. The north, in stark contrast, became a shadowy hereditary fiefdom, isolated from world commerce. North Korea's willful young dictator boasts he now has long-range missiles with nuclear warheads.

Despite its impact, our intervention in Korea came to be called "the forgotten war." The remarkable people in this book help us remember its importance: soldiers, sailors and airmen who saw savage combat; brave nurses who cared for the wounded; refugees who fled for their lives; orphans who found new families, and the men and women who helped save the lives of more than 10,000 Korean children.

The people of South Korea have never forgotten America's commitment to preserving their freedom. As we approach the 65th anniversary of an uneasy armistice, it's important to remember why the Korean War still matters.

Kim Wyman
Secretary of State

U.S. Army photo

Contents

"How does one commemorate a war that technically is not over? While the Korean War, at least for Americans, 'ended' in 1953, the meaning and memories of the war have not been brought to closure in Korean society because of the permanent division of the peninsula."

—Sheila Miyoshi Jager, author of *Brothers at War, The Unending Conflict in Korea*

In square miles, the Korean Peninsula is an area the size of Utah. The 38th Parallel divides the two Koreas. Key wartime places are highlighted, including Seoul, the South Korean capital; Pyongyang, the North Korean capital; Pusan, a strategic port; Inchon where General MacArthur staged his bold amphibious landing, and the Chosin Reservoir, site of a legendary battle. Koreans chafe at "Chosin" because it is a reminder of the Japanese occupation of their country from 1910 to 1945. The Korean name for the reservoir is Changjin Lake. In 2000 the English spellings of some Korean cities were changed to more closely reflect their pronunciation in Korean. Notably, Pusan became Busan and Inchon Incheon. The Korean name for the Yalu River is Amnok.

WASHINGTON & THE KOREAN WAR

Washington State supplied manpower and all manner of materiel in the Korean War. The first stateside troops, from Fort Lewis, arrived at the Pusan Perimeter in late July 1950 as communist forces advanced. In a "stand or die" posture, the Second Infantry Division helped reverse the course of the war.

President Truman called up Marine Corps Reserves from Aberdeen to Atlanta. At Bremerton, the Naval Shipyard doubled its workforce and reactivated aircraft carriers. U.S. Air Force and Canadian units based at McChord Air Force Base airlifted supplies and troops. B-29 bomber crews based at Spokane deployed for combat.

Soldiers of the 2nd Infantry Division, from Fort Lewis, in action in Korea. *U.S. Army photo*

Madigan Army Hospital sent some of the first nurses. It became a major stateside treatment center for badly wounded soldiers.

An estimated 122,000 Washingtonians fought in Korea; 532 never returned. In all, some 7,800 American soldiers remain MIA.

After the conflict, North Korea became an isolated dictatorship. South Korea emerged as a global manufacturing power and one of our state's leading partners in international trade.

More than 100,000 people of Korean ancestry eventually settled in Washington. For many of them and thousands of other families here, "the forgotten war" will be long remembered.

A 92nd Bombardment Wing B-29 from Fairchild Air Force Base at Spokane drops its bombs on enemy troop concentrations in 1950. *U.S. Air Force photo*

Army Calls 9,565 More Reserve Captains, Lieutenants

40,000 U. N. TROOPS MOVE ON SEOUL

Woman Reporter Goes Ashore With 5th Wave In Inchon Landing

By MARGUERITE HIGGINS
New York Herald Tribune News Service

WITH THE UNITED STATES MARINES AT RED BEACH, Sept. 15.—(Delayed)—Heavily laden Marines, in one of the most technically difficult amphibious landings in history, stormed at sunset over a ten-foot-high sea wall at the heart of Inchon port and within an hour had taken three commanding hills in the city.

I was in the fifth wave that hit the so-called "Red Beach," which was a rough vertical pile of stones over which the first assault troops had to scramble with landing ladders topped with steel hooks.

Despite the deadly and steady pounding from heavy naval guns and planes, enough North Koreans remained alive close to the beach to harass us with small arms and mortar fire. They even hurled hand grenades down at us as we crouched in the trenches that fortunately threaded behind the sea wall on the inland side.

It was far from the "virtually unopposed" landing for which the troops had hoped after hearing of the quick capture early this morning of Wolmi Island by an earlier Marine assault. Wolmi stands inside Inchon's harbor. Just off "Red Beach."

MARGUERITE HIGGINS

Oceanside, N. Y., a veteran of five amphibious assaults, including Guadalcanal, hailed me with the comment: "This has a good chance of being a bushover."

Because of tricky tides our transport had to stand down the channel and it was more than nine miles to the rendezvous point where our assault waves formed up.

Guns and Rockets Boom

The channel reverberated with the ear-splitting boom of warship guns and rockets. Blue, black and orange flame spurted from the "Red Beach" area and a huge oil tank belched great black rings over the shore.

Then the fire from the big guns lifted and the planes that had been circling overhead swooped low to rake their fire along the sea wall.

The first wave of our assault troops was speeding toward the shore by now. It would be H-Hour — 5:30 p. m. — in two minutes. Suddenly bright orange tracer bullets spun out from the hill in our direction.

"My God, there are still some left," Lieutenant Schening said. "Everybody get down. Here we go."

It was H-Hour plus 15 minutes as we sped the last 7,000 yards

At H-Hour minus 10, confident

The Seattle Daily Times

Published Daily and Sunday and Entered as Second Class Matter at Seattle, Washington. Vol. 52, No. 261

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1950. 3 SECTIONS, 34 PAGES Price 5c

FAIR

Seattle and Vicinity: Fair tonight and tomorrow except for morning fog and low cloudiness. High temperature tomorrow 70 degrees; low tonight, 45. Light variable winds. (Complete weather report, Page 21.)

Active Duty Will Begin In November

By Associated Press.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 18. —The Army today more than doubled its call-up of Reserve officers by adding 9,565 captains and lieutenants to the total summoning for 7,562 company grade officers.

In addition the Army ordered up 205 chaplain captains and 360 Army aviation officers.

The ground-troop officers called up today will go on active duty during November for at least 21 months.

The aviation officers, who will fly the Army's own observation and artillery spotting planes, will be called up over a four-month period ending in December.

The ground-forces officers involved in today's announcement include 2,561 captains and 7,004 first and second lieutenants in 16 branches of the service.

In the Sixth Army area, 394 captains and 1,074 lieutenants will be called as well as 31 chaplains and 36 aviation officers.

COMPANIONS IN MISERY: Near Taegu, Korea—Two wounded soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division clasped hands as they comforted one another in pain aboard a litter jeep that carried them from the front north of Taegu. Lieut. Sa ntiago, the driver, looked back at Pfc. Thomas Metcalf of the Hospital Corps attended the wounded men.—A. P. photo.

Allies Use Kimpo Airfield; Yanks Recross Naktong River, Set Up Bridgehead

BULLETINS

By Associated Press.

WITH U. S. 1st CORPS IN KOREA, Sept. 19 (Tuesday). —American forces forged a second bridgehead on the west bank of the Naktong River today at a point ten miles due west of Taegu.

By Associated Press.

SAN FRANCISCO, Sept. 18.—The Navy, in a summary from Korea, said today that carrier-based pilots reported United States Marines had entered the Seoul suburb of Yongdungpo.

The Navy also said the battleship Missouri, firing its powerful 16-inch guns point blank at North Korean concentrations, had broken up a Communist attack at Pohang Sunday.

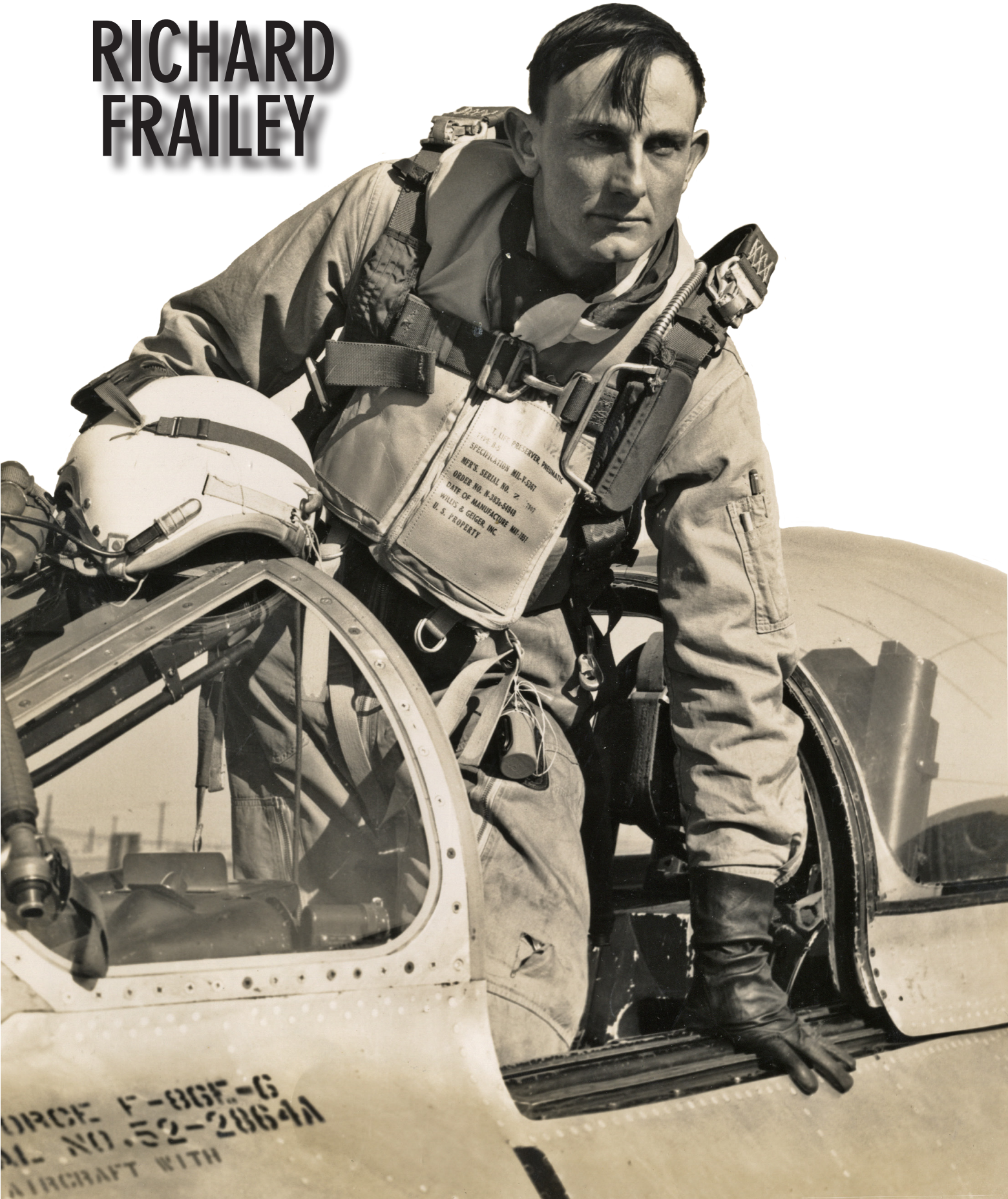
By MILTON MARMOR
Associated Press Foreign Staff

TOKYO, Sept. 19 (Tuesday).—United States Marines, spearheading a powerfully armed force of 40,000 United Nations troops, drove within three miles or less of Seoul Monday, while another Marine column probed for crossings of the Han River near Allied-captured Kimpo Airfield.

Han River near Allied-captured Kimpo Airfield.

The *U.S.S Missouri*, once moored at the Bremerton Naval Shipyard, opens fire off the coast of Korea. *U.S. Navy photo*

RICHARD FRAILEY



The Air War Over Korea

High above the Yalu River at 500 mph, four U.S. Air Force F-86F Sabre jets were heading home from a hunting expedition. It was June 15, 1953, the thirty-sixth month of the Korean War.

The American pilots had hoped to ambush a cluster of MiG-15s, the Soviet-built jets flown by the Chinese and North Koreans. When First Lieutenant Richard L. Frailey spotted a jet some 3,000 feet behind, he figured it was another southbound friend, not foe.

A burst of machine-gun fire riddled his left wing; another slammed .50-caliber shells into the engine. The slug that shattered the canopy also took out the instrument panel. Frailey struggled to maintain altitude as his crippled plane began streaming smoke. It didn't enter his mind that his sixty-fourth mission over North Korea might be his last.

Frailey, right, with fellow pilots outside group headquarters at Kimpo. *Frailey collection*

When it was clear he had to eject, what rankled was that he was going to lose the new Canon camera he had acquired on leave in Japan a few months earlier. Just then, a voice in his headset shouted: "Screw the camera! I'll buy you a new one."

It was not for nothing that they called him "Fearless Frailey." Surrounded by swashbuckling aces and West Pointers like future astronaut Buzz Aldrin, the ROTC graduate from Tooele, Utah, seemed unperturbable in combat. He was everything you could hope for in a wingman, the cool hand who has your back in a high-speed dogfight.

"The F-86 was a piece of cake—a great airplane," Frailey remembers, his good eye brightening at the memories. The swept-wing fighter was the embodiment of jet-age aviation. Back home, a

F-86's at Kimpo Air Base in 1951. *U.S. Air Force photo*

lot of 10-year-olds were busy building balsa-wood Sabre jets to swoop around their bedrooms.

Only 26, Frailey was already in his second war. He'd been a teenage sailor as World War II wound down. A flight jacket suited him better than bell bottoms. Tall and slim, Frailey had an eagle's beak—a permanent souvenir from getting kicked by a horse—a chiseled chin, exceptional eye-hand coordination and a droll sense of humor. The pilots of the 4th Fighter-Interceptor Wing toasted their victories with boozy choruses of "Save a Fighter Pilot's Ass!," a ditty Frailey can still recite by heart.

Frailey's squadron, the 334th, was based at K-14, an air base at Kimpo near beleaguered Seoul. Between December of 1952 and the summer of '53, Frailey prowled "MiG Alley" along the Yalu, 225 miles north, often crossing into China. There was a MiG base at Antung, just across the river. If you could "bounce" a flight of MiGs just as they were taking off, so much the better.

On many missions Frailey flew wing to a legendary fighter pilot. Jim Jabara didn't look like a Central Casting top gun. He was short and swarthy, the cigar-chomping son of Lebanese immigrants. Dueling with the Luftwaffe during World War II, "Jabby" was a tiger in the cockpit of the P-51 Mustang, the last great propeller warbird. When Jabara shot down his fifth MiG over North Korea in the spring of 1951 with an F-86 he became the first American ace of the jet age. Before it was over, thanks in no small part to squadron mates like Frailey, Jabara had 10 more victories, a chest full of medals and a song celebrating his exploits as "The Ceegar Kid," a triple ace. Few, however, have ever heard the whole story of the day Jabara and Frailey had a rendezvous with ignominy. The Air Force certainly tried to cover it up.

Happily, 2017 finds Frailey alive and well at 90 in Tumwater—still fearless after all these years. And he knows the whole truth about war: It's madness.

RICHARD LEROY FRAILEY'S American ancestors, mostly Germanic Pennsylvanians, served under General Washington in the Continental Army. In Philadelphia, they became carpenters, butchers and shopkeepers. Frailey's father, born in 1900, moved to Kansas to take up farming and married a school teacher whose Swedish parents were Wyoming

homesteaders. Bill and Josephine Frailey had second thoughts about agriculture even before the Dust Bowl wiped out practically everyone on a hundred-million acres from Cheyenne to Amarillo. Meanwhile, to the Frailey clan's everlasting chagrin, oil was discovered back East on land once owned by the family.

Richard, the second of the Traileys' two sons, was born in the spring of 1927 in the Tooele Valley, 35 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. Richard's father had landed a decent job as a miner, then ascended to foreman at a smelter. World War II brought a military ordnance depot and even more jobs to the area.

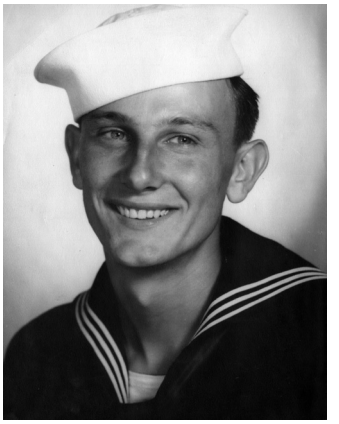
Richard and his brother, Bill III, two years older, rode to and from school on a sometimes obstinate horse called Old Paint. The Frailey place featured a windmill Richard liked to climb, all the better to survey the snow-capped Rockies in the distance. "Sometimes airplanes would come over, and I imagined it was Lindbergh up there—'The Lone Eagle.' I'd shout, 'Lindy! Lindy!' When my dad caught me doing that one day it was the first time he ever struck me. He kicked me in the butt and said there'd be no more of that because it could suddenly swing with the wind and knock me right off." Frailey confesses to doing "a lot of silly things" growing up, notably concocting a quart of nitroglycerin in the basement. He found the formula in a book at the public library and acquired the ingredients at the drugstore. "It was important to keep it cold, so I had it sitting in a bucket of ice and kept stirring it. It finally dawned on me this might be mega-something, even for me. So I took it up a canyon and detonated it with a .22. There was a big boom! That's the stupidest thing I ever did." A mischievous smile betrays that it was also terrific fun. Frailey's adventures in chemistry included the darkroom. He became editor of the high school yearbook and took many of its snapshots, also working part-time at the Army depot.


UTAH SAILOR LIKES HOLLYWOOD

As a swabbie during World War II, Frailey visited the Hollywood canteen and won a $25 war bond, presented by starlet Shirley Hunter. This photo appeared in his hometown paper, *The Salt Lake Tribune*.

Faced with the draft right out of high school, Frailey heeded his brother's warning that Army food was "terrible" and joined the Navy. After boot camp,

he shipped out for Pearl Harbor, spent some uneventful time on Midway, and at war's end visited the Hollywood Canteen, a famous club for servicemen. Fireman Second Class Frailey got his photo on the front page of *The Salt Lake Tribune* when he won a $25 war bond and a hug from a starlet volunteering as a canteen hostess.



As a sailor during World War II. *Frailey collection*

Discharged in 1946, Frailey enrolled at Utah State University on the GI Bill.

Midway through college, a young woman who was as smart as she was pretty entered his life. Jacqueline "Jackie" Lamoreux, whose father was the mayor of Elma, Washington, had a degree in sociology from Whitman College. She was visiting a college chum from Utah when she met Richard on a blind date and accepted his fraternity pin a week later. He made her laugh, and radiated confidence. Richard knew within an hour that he'd met the love of his life. They were married in Elma on December 21, 1949. Now it's 67 years and counting.

FRAILEY COMPLETED the coursework for an engineering degree in three years. In June of 1951 he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force through the ROTC program. He soon qualified for basic flight training, soloing over Florida orange groves in the classic single-engine AT-6 trainer, first produced in the 1930s. "It was a ground-looping S.O.B.!" Frailey remembers with a laugh. "Then I was selected for advanced flight school at Williams Air Force Base in Arizona and went from a puddle-jumper to the F-80, the Lockheed 'Shooting Star.' It was the first jet fighter that had its engine right in the fuselage." The pilot now really was a jet jockey. "I was too green to realize I was in something really hot, but it didn't bother me a bit. I really enjoyed flying that thing."

Next stop was Nellis AFB on the outskirts of Las Vegas—and the promise of something even hotter, a state-of-the-art, $220,000 airplane.* The F-86 Sabre was North American Aviation's answer to the Soviet Union's own formidable swept-wing fighter jet, the Mikoyan-Gurevich MiG-15.

Frailey's instructor at Nellis was Captain Robert T. Latshaw, just back from Korea, where he had become the war's fourteenth F-86 ace. Latshaw, a handsome 27-year-old with a dashing mustache, offered his students a memorably succinct first lecture: "The thing I got out of Korea was my ass, and I hope you do the same!"

Frailey vividly remembers the day of his final flight test, the instrument check, when "who shows up but Latshaw." They taxied out in a tandem-seat T-33 jet trainer. Frai-

* Roughly $3 million in 2016 dollars. The Air Force version of the latest Lockheed Martin F-35A "Lightning II" fighter jet is estimated at $85 million per unit.

ley went "under the hood" in the back seat. He was expected to fly the plane on instruments alone beneath the blacked-out rear canopy.

Latshaw parked at the end of the runway. "You've got it!" he said.

"So there I was, just flying on the bubble. But I could feel his feet on the controls, keeping it straight."

Twenty minutes passed. "Now pop the hood," Latshaw said.

Frailey looked around and did a double take. "We were at the bottom of the Grand Canyon, flying along at low altitude at about 250. I looked up and saw the tops of the canyon peaks. And I'm down here buzzing along in the back seat doing pretty good—amazed but not flustered even though I'm thinking, 'Holy shit.' "

"You can't make this next turn. It's too steep," Latshaw said. "I'll take it now." The ace pulled up the nose, deftly executed a rollover and ordered, "Take me home."

"What about the instrument check?"

"You had it."

If Latshaw got a guy who panicked—and several did when they looked up and saw the tops of those mountains—he flunked.

As they climbed out of the trainer, Latshaw shook Frailey's hand. He had passed. "So now I'm on my way to F-86s and 'glory.' " He had no idea what he was getting into.

Frailey arrived in Korea just before Christmas, 1952.

Frailey, center, the barracks' handyman, wields a hammer at Kimpo. *Frailey collection*

THE 334th FIGHTER-INTERCEPTOR Squadron operated out of a former World War II Japanese Air Base with rudimentary barracks from the same era. The dirt runway at Kimpo was covered with planked perforated steel.

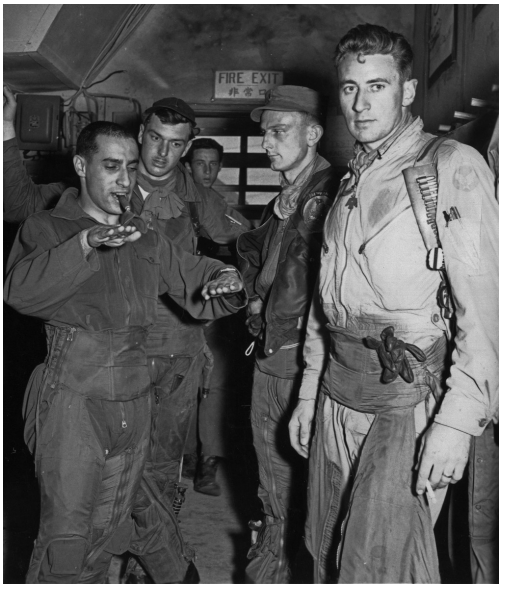
Frailey was handy with a hammer. He set about building compartments so he and his hooch-mates would have a place to stow their belongings. When he heard where the others had gone to college, he felt like the hick from the sticks. "Here's the competition," Frailey says, producing a photo from a shelf. "This guy, Niemann, was West Point. This guy, Mulroney, went to MIT. He was the joy of the bunch. And here's old ROTC-sie Dick!" Bob Niemann became his closest friend. "In the spring of '53, he was shot down," Frailey remembers too clearly. "We thought he was dead. Bad news. Then we heard he'd been

wounded and captured. Another friend spent years trying to find out where he went. We think Niemann was taken into Manchuria. They figure he disappeared into Russia. The word was that he refused to talk about our missions, so they must have tortured him to death.

"I didn't fully realize at first the type of people I was associated with. Not every fighter guy in the Air Force got to go to Korea. I didn't grasp what a privilege that was—what an experience it was. There weren't all that many of us there." But after the exaltation and adrenalin of a victory, the "glory" part was short-lived, especially when someone never made it back. Losing a great guy like Niemann cast a pall. Stress is different from fear. "You know what gets me?" Frailey says. "On all these pictures—and I can show you a whole bunch more—everybody's grinnin'. Well, I've also got some showing where I'm sweating. And I'm not smiling! I'd land and be soaked in sweat. That's an hour and 45 minutes, often in life-or-death aerial combat. The speeds you go; the evasive maneuvers; the G's you pull—six or seven G's in a turn. We're talking about the force of gravity on the human body under high acceleration. The G-suits we wore to keep you from blacking out squeezed the hell out of you."

When Frailey talks about flying, he often says "aeroplane" instead of "airplane." Maybe it's his way of saying that in his day the machines were different—jets, to be sure, but still only 35 years removed from the day the Red Baron lost a duel with a Sopwith Camel.

The greenhorns got one welcome-to-Korea flight before they went to war for real. "We flew up north about 40 miles, and the experienced guy would do a lot of wild maneuvers, like flying upside down. He'd say you'd better stay on his wing in the pattern. Or else it was goodbye. That was your introduction," Frailey says. "After that, we went north. You were always in a group. Guys who were your friends. Guys you trusted. And with guys like Jim Jabara, if you screwed it up you'd be there one day and gone the next."



F-86 ace "Jabby" Jabara, cigar in mouth, demonstrates a combat maneuver as Frailey, center, and others look on. *Frailey collection*

Jabara, who stood out from the other pilots "almost as much as if he really had been a knight of yore on a quest for the Grail," quickly saw that he could trust Frailey. The witty beanpole from Utah was an instinctive, first-rate pilot with steady nerves. "My eyesight was also exceptional," Frailey remembers. "Now I can't hardly see you. Back then, Jabara and other staff guys wanted

to fly with me because I could see so far and wide. And, remember, the war we were fighting was the last one ever fought with conventional weapons. Everything after that was rockets." In Korea there were no heat-seeking missiles, just machine-guns and cannons aimed by human beings. In many ways it was like a cowboy movie shootout, in this case an "Eastern." Get the drop on the other guy and aim for his heart.

"Jabara was the ultimate warrior when it came to going to the sound of the guns without orders," retired Lieutenant General William E. Brown Jr., who flew 125 combat missions in Korea, remembered at a forum in 2006. "If you're with him in a bar fight, he's looking for a guy to punch—but if you're not careful, he might, in his excitement, punch you."

FRANCIS "GABBY" GABRESKI, the top propeller-plane ace in the European Theater during World War II, was thrilled when he got his chance to fly the Sabre jet in combat as deputy wing commander at Kimpo. "The F-86 was a fighter pilot's airplane in every way," he recalled.

It was fast, climbed well, and was very responsive to the controls. The cockpit was placed out in front of the leading edge of the wings, so the pilot had to swivel his head way around even to see the wings. It made you feel as if you were flying a rocket with no wings at all.

Early in the war, the F-86 and MiG-15 were closely matched. But the latest model Sabre jet Frailey flew was more maneuverable and faster. That was especially so in a

Frailey, third from left, front row, and fellow pilots pose with one of their Sabre jets. *Frailey collection*

full-throttle dive, when an F-86F could bang through the sound barrier. While the lighter MiG-15 could out-climb and out-turn the F-86 above 25,000 feet, the high-altitude performance gap was closing. Moreover, the MiG was flimsier and harder to fly, with a high-speed shimmy. Equipped with three cannons, the MiG ostensibly had greater firepower. But if you nailed one in the rear fuselage with your six rapid-fire .50-caliber machine-guns "that guy was going down," Frailey says. The Americans were also confident they were the better pilots, especially in comparison to the North Koreans and Chinese. The F-86 vs. MiG-15 "kill ratio" is hotly debated to this day. Both sides over-claimed victories. Estimates of the U.S. Air Force's superiority range from a highly suspect 14 to 1 to 1.4 to 1 when the adversaries were the Soviet Union's top pilots. Against inexperienced foes it was strictly no contest. All things considered, the Sabre jet jockeys convincingly won their war.

If Frailey always seemed to fly faster, it was partly because he had a friend on the ground and a "rat" in his tail. "I really had a bubble on everybody else in that squadron," the old fighter pilot says, smiling at the memory. The maintenance officer was one of his high school pals from Utah. "To make an aeroplane go faster you install a 'rat'—a device that changes the temperature of the gas coming out. If you don't do it right it will burn the engine up. If I had a rat in the tail I had an edge on everybody else. Every F-86 I flew was the best one available that day. Nobody could get away from me. I flew with a lot of big wheels who were full-throttle all the time. But I always kept up with them."

As for the glory, the rules of engagement were clear: the leader of the formation—old-hands like Jabara—called the shots. Warrior to the core, guns blazing, "he'd grind 'em right down to the ground with me whistling along behind him," Frailey remembers.

Frailey's turn finally came on May 26, 1953. Jabara, Frailey and two squadron mates were sweeping MiG Alley when 16 MiG-15s zoomed across the Yalu. Jabara jettisoned his 200-gallon drop tanks and led the way as the outmanned F-86s plunged into the enemy hive. The surprised MiG pilots "scattered and hurried back across the river."

"We spotted two more MiGs, and Jabara shot 'em down. Bam! Bam!" Frailey caught his breath and glanced to his right. He was stunned to discover "a damn MiG right there—25 feet away! His cockpit was fogged up. I watched the pilot move his hand back and forth, trying to wipe a place to see out. Finally he got a spot open in the windscreen and looked over at me. He was wearing a leather helmet. Probably couldn't believe his eyes, having mistaken me for his flight leader. Jabara had just finished shooting down this guy's partner.

"I got a guy who thinks I'm his mother," Frailey radioed Jabara. "What do I do?"

"Shoot the sonofabitch!"

Frailey was taken aback. "Jabara had never said that to anybody. But that one was mine. We got tremendous publicity on that incident. It was 'Four MiGs in four minutes.' Jabara got two, which brought his total to nine; I got one and the other guy in the flight got one." Frailey can't say for sure, but he suspects the pilot of the MiG he shot down was a

America's first jet ace, James "Jabby" Jabara, left, briefs squadron mates at Kimpo Air Base before a mission. Frailey, his wingman, is at his side. *Frailey collection*

Russian, not Chinese or Korean.*

Frailey can't remember what he paid for the spiffy new 35mm Canon camera he acquired in Japan on leave. Probably something like 40 bucks, which qualified as expensive. There was plenty of gun-camera footage of MiG-15s in flight, but Frailey hoped to become the first American pilot to get a still photo of the Soviet-built fighter in flight. And if it showed a Russian at the controls so much the better.

FRAILEY AND JABARA were back at it, on separate missions into Manchuria three weeks after their victories, even though the U.N. Command—anxious to avoid World War III—had standing orders that F-86 pilots were not to cross the Chinese border. Armistice talks were under way at Panmunjom, including tentative agreements on the repatriation of prisoners of

* Besides supplying the North Koreans and Chinese with the formidable MiG-15, the Soviet Union sent expert pilots to help train the Chinese Air Force, which was short on capable pilots. In 1951, as the war escalated, Stalin authorized Soviet pilots to fly missions in MiGs with Chinese and North Korean markings. Fifty-two Soviet MiG-15 pilots became aces in Korea, although a lot of "over-claiming" was suspected. Jabara's victories included at least one MiG flown by a Soviet pilot.

war. Stalin had died in March. Dwight D. Eisenhower, America's new president, wanted the war over. So did Moscow.

"It was a court martial offense to cross the border, even though that's where our adversaries were based," Frailey remembers. "The MiGs would swarm across the Yalu after us, yet we weren't supposed to chase them back across. But we did it every day. Jabara sure didn't care. One guy—who shall go nameless—had his wing man fly over the MiG base at Antung. He would come roaring down from Mach 1, pull it out in the nick of time and fly right down their runway. That would get their attention! Meantime, his leader's up there waitin'. Pretty quick there's all these ants running out for the planes. The drill was you don't shoot 'em with their gear down. Wait until they get in the air. … I think one guy who crossed the border got court martialed and sent home when a new commander wanted to make some noise."

What happened to Frailey and Jabara on June 15, 1953, made some noise inside the F-86 squadrons. It's one of the quirkiest, near-tragic stories of the Korean War—one the general public never heard, for reasons you'll soon understand. In fact, few military aviation aficionados have heard Frailey's first-hand account. He believes "somebody was looking out" for him that day:

"We were heading home from China when I saw aeroplanes behind me. I knew they were F-86s—certainly not MiGs. Suddenly, wham, that sucker opened fire! Some say it was eight bursts, others nine. At least three hit me."

The .50-caliber bullet that shattered the canopy whizzed between Frailey's right arm and chest before smashing the instrument panel.

That sucker was Jabara. He had mistaken Frailey for a MiG.

"Jabara's formation had made a wider swing and came out behind us. So when he looked ahead and saw all those contrails from planes that had just left China he figured it was MiGs." At first, Frailey didn't realize who was trying to kill him.

"Cease fire! Cease fire!" came the frantic cries over the radio from the other pilots in Frailey's flight. "We've got friendlies firing at Sabres!"*

Ironically, Frailey was flying Jabara's airplane. A brand new F-86 had arrived and Jabara took it.

"Now things are really getting hot," Frailey remembers, shaking his head. "No instruments, so I'm flying the thing with the trim tabs. Another guy in my formation says, 'You'd better go now, Dick. Looks like you're going to blow up.' "

Frailey groused that he was going to lose his new camera, which was strapped across his chest.

"Screw the camera!" Jabara, beside himself, shouted over the radio. "I'll buy you a new one."

---

* One account claims Frailey screamed, "Jabara, you're shooting at me!" Frailey says he had no idea at the moment it was Jabara shooting at him.

As the cockpit filled with smoke, "I was losing altitude. It wouldn't fly. It was pretty toasty in there, and I couldn't see a damn thing. To get out of that thing was no easy matter. You're supposed to have all your belts tightened first. Then your shoulder straps. Then you turn a lever that blows the canopy. Then you have to blow the seat. I'm doing all that by feel."

Jolted by the ejection, Frailey struggled free of the seat and found himself in a sickening free fall. "I finally found the D-Ring for the parachute and popped it. I hardly swang by the straps before I hit the water. The chute came down over my head and I couldn't find my one-man dinghy. When I untangled myself, my life vest wasn't working because it had a bullet hole through it. Chinese guys on the shore were popping away at me at the mouth of the Yalu River.

"But I'll be damned, as soon as I got myself straightened out and looked up, there's an Air Force SA-16 Albatross amphibious aircraft coming at me. I can't believe it. It plops down on the Yalu and taxies up beside me. A big guy from the rescue squadron gave me a smile, stuck his hand down, grabbed mine and just jerked my ass right out of the river! They had 'jet bottles' on that thing to make quick takeoffs. The Albatross pilot punched the number and that thing took off like a goosed goose. Boy, up and away to home!"

The crew stripped off his clothes and wrapped him in a blanket. The pilot came back and asked for his sidearm, a .45. "They must have thought 'Fearless Frailey' might hit the ground shootin' at the bastard who shot him down," Frailey muses.

When the rescue plane touched down at Kimpo, Frailey was unloaded on a stretcher. The guy carrying one end stumbled. Frailey slid out from under the blanket and "landed, buck naked, on the tarmac with about 50 people looking on." He picked himself up, and with as much dignity as he could muster pulled the blanket around him. "F*** it," he muttered, "I'll walk!"

Jabara, hugely relieved and contrite, all but weeping, rushed up and gave Frailey a hug.

The next day, they watched the gun-camera film of the incident and commiserated. "Obviously, I looked like a MiG to him," Frailey says. "In a war, things like that happen. It was a natural error. We shouldn't have been where we were. There were several other friendly-fire incidents over MiG Alley, some documented by gun-camera footage, but the brass kept them quiet. And in my case they certainly weren't going to embarrass a celebrated war hero like Jabara or the Air Force, or reveal we'd been flying inside China." But there was no keeping the lid on the news among the F-86 pilots in Korea. The story "spread like wildfire," Frailey says. "Everyone knew who the hell I was and what had happened."*

---

* The story took on a new twist decades later when Soviet documents revealed that a Russian ace flying a MiG-15 had seen the incident unfold. Dimitrii Vasilyevich Yermakov claimed *he* shot down Frailey—allegedly killing him in the process—and went on to collect a $1,500 bonus from the Soviet government. Frailey got a bang out that one, but told friends, "Give me a break! Is that all I'm worth?"

You're probably wondering about the camera. Frailey salvaged it from a cold dip in the Yalu. The aerial reconnaissance guys back at the base took it apart and dried it out. "But they left tool marks all over it. I never used it again. That camera flew one mission."

JABARA SCORED two more victories, the last—No. 15—on July 15. Frailey had contributed to at least three more kills, while someone took credit for one that was rightfully his.

Jabara took Frailey aside. "This war's about over," he said. "You want to go home? We'll go home together."

Absolutely.

"The wing commander gave me two letters," Frailey remembers. "One said, 'You're not to discuss this shootdown with anybody.' The second was addressed to a colonel at the Pentagon. After I took some leave in Elma with Jackie and her folks, I reported to the Pentagon and presented my letter. The colonel read it carefully, shook his head and said, 'What the hell did you do, Frailey?' Basically the letter said, 'Give this guy anything he wants.' "

Jabara went on to command several squadrons stateside. He helped shake out the new F-104 and the Air Force's first supersonic bomber, rising to full colonel.

Frailey didn't get anything he wanted, but "good things" kept happening because he was a superb, analytical pilot. The younger guys looked up to him; the old-hands knew he'd paid his dues. The ROTC graduate received a regular Air Force commission. One day, when he flew into a base commanded by Jabara, he was met by a staff car. "Jabara took me home. His wife fixed us a nice meal. Then she left the room and we got drunk. That was the last time we ever talked about what had happened in Korea."

Frailey, sixth from right, back row, with the 83rd Fighter Interceptor Squadron at Hamilton AFB, California, in 1958. *Frailey collection*

Frailey receives the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1959. *Frailey collection*

RICHARD FRAILEY FLEW with the Air Defense Command, the Tactical Air Command and the Strategic Air Command, a feat few Air Force pilots have achieved. He won a spot promotion to major as a member of a select crew flying the B-47 bomber, graduated from the Air Command and Staff College and, in his spare time, nearly completed coursework for an MBA.

He flew 24-hour missions with SAC on Cold-War airborne alert out of Offutt, Nebraska. "The most apprehension I ever had in a plane was flying a B-52 with four atomic bombs on board, refueling the damn thing in mid-air and trying to keep the speed constant," Richard remembers. That tour of duty was "murder" for the family, Jackie says. "He'd come dragging home and immediately go to bed. I had to keep the cat quiet because it was Siamese and it had a loud meow."

By Vietnam, Frailey was a lieutenant colonel, flying hairy, low-altitude B-52 missions into the heart of darkness, the jungles aflame from napalm. He helped develop strategic bombing plans, wrote manuals and worked with the CIA on target information relayed to the Pentagon. "My morale was going downhill fast because a lot of my friends had been shot down and sent to the 'Hanoi Hilton,' (the infamous POW compound). They lost 15 of my B-52s during that period."

Frailey's performance evaluation for 1968-69 recommended his immediate promotion to colonel. The lieutenant general who headed SAC's 3rd Air Division, added his endorsement, writing, "I'm thoroughly familiar with Frailey's performance. … As a matter of fact, in this day of everybody 'outstanding,' I suspect he's probably been under-rated; he's one of the really good ones. Very definitely should make full colonel and he can handle it now."

Frailey squints at the document. The fine print lists a slew of decorations, including the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Force Commendation Medal. "I had a hell of a career," he says, a bit wistfully at what might have been had he stayed in the service. He hadn't lost his nerve. It was just time to go. "I didn't like telling other people how to go kill more people when they didn't let you win. It ruined my day."

The loss of Jim Jabara, the youngest colonel in the Air Force, ruined a lot of days. Jabara commanded a Tactical Fighter Wing in Florida and volunteered for combat missions in Vietnam. In the fall of 1966, he was heading to South Carolina with his family, riding in

a Volkswagen with his teenage daughter, when she lost control in a construction zone. Following in another car, Jabara's wife and two more children watched, horrified, as the VW barrel-rolled several times. Jabby was DOA at the nearest hospital. Carol Anne Jabara, 16, succumbed two days later. They were buried together at Arlington National Cemetery near the grave of John F. Kennedy.

"Terrible," is all Frailey can say, though a half-century has passed. The triple ace who flew hundreds of combat missions in three wars died at 43 on the Florida Turnpike. "Heroes die young," a university professor in Wichita, Jabara's home town, observed. "We do not remember him as an old man telling of distant exploits, but as a young man in the midst of them."

Now that he's an old man, some distant exploits seem clearer to Frailey, others unfathomable. He laments that in Korea the politicians and generals handcuffed the Air Force from taking the war to China, despite the fact that 200,000 Communist Chinese troops swarmed across the border and nearly annihilated our GI's and Marines at the Chosin Reservoir. Douglas MacArthur's brilliance at Inchon was offset by his hubris, which got him fired by Harry Truman. Otherwise, Frailey says, we might have unified the Korean peninsula. "Now look at what we got: We've got that idiot kid ruling North Korea, starving his people and threatening to launch missiles. Before long he'll have nuclear warheads!"

Richard and Jackie at a formal event on Guam in 1965. *Frailey collection*

THE FRAILEYS retired to Thurston County in 1970. Richard and Jackie checked off more ski slopes from their bucket list. They boated in Alaska, owned a share in a gold mine at Dawson and started a candle-making business in their kitchen and garage. Before long, Evergreen Candles had seven employees, a factory in Lacey and orders from J.C. Penney, Hallmark and Harrods, the famous department store in London. Making candles might seem like an unlikely retirement occupation for an old fighter pilot, but there's an artistic side to Fearless Frailey. His most popular candles featured daisies and butterflies that glow from within when illuminated. Frailey likes that, and when he's in the middle of a great story, he's like that. Old ROTC-sie Dick's good eye—a pastel blue-gray—brightened and he broke into a boyish grin the day we handed him a stunning scale model of his old plane.

There's a cutout of a big butterfly above the Fraileys' garage door; the Stars and Stripes fly from

a pole. Richard and Jackie live in a spotless house along a quiet street in the hills above Tumwater. A visitor admires an oil painting of a wintry mountain scene and remarks that it must be the Cascades. "It's North Korea," says Frailey. "That's what the hills and peaks along the mouth of the Yalu look like when they're covered with snow." Around the bend of the river the Koreans call "Amnok" is the place where he could have died at 26. When you say "Korean War" most people think of stark, black-and-white newsreel footage, but in the winter the north is ruggedly beautiful—at least from the air. Told that an old Marine in Hoquiam—one of the "Chosin Few"—remembers how they cheered every time an F-86 flew over, Frailey says he can't fathom how those guys survived 35-below zero temperatures.

The VA granted Frailey a 100 percent disability for his exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam. ("Agent Orange is kinda like a bullet," he says. "It may be gone but the hole is still there.") Then, to his befuddled anger, they scaled it back to 70 percent. A stroke a few years ago left him with a mostly useless left eye, but spared his facile mind. The rest of his lean, 90-year-old frame is also pretty much intact, albeit creaky. He still has his sense of humor—and the mayor's daughter. "What I've learned from life is that you need to keep a positive attitude, and your partner is king. Jackie was always there, never complaining. I've had a fascinating life: Three wars, four kids and an original wife."

John C. Hughes

Frailey with a scale model of the very plane he flew on the day he was shot down. *John Hughes photo*


BARBARA
NICHOLS

Three Wars, One Eventful Life

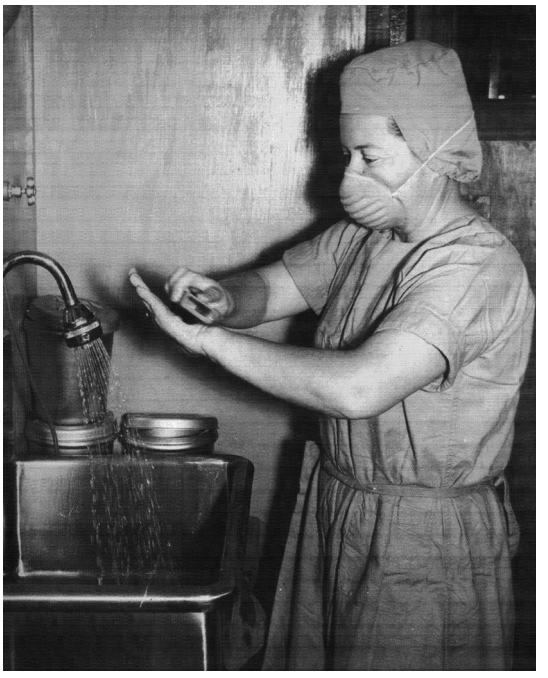
The Mobile Army Surgical Hospital was the last to evacuate the North Korean port of Hungnam just before Christmas 1950. American troops, bone tired and bloodied, were heading south to regroup after their epic battle with the Chinese at the Chosin Reservoir. The casualties were as staggering as the subzero cold. Still, "everything seemed all right," a young soldier said, "as long as the nurses were here."

This is a story about one of those nurses—one whose ancestors had fought for the United States in every war since 1775. During World War II, Barbara Jean Nichols helped build Boeing bombers. In 1950, she volunteered to go to Korea. And in Vietnam she won the Bronze Star for her extraordinary service.

It's also a story about the servicewomen of all stripes and the riveting "Rosies" who changed society's attitudes about the role of women. In her 95 years, Barbara Jean Nichols has seen it all. She was born just two years after the 19th Amendment was ratified, granting women the right to vote.

AT THE APEX of World War II, the Army Nurse Corps was 59,000 strong. Many of those intrepid young women were closer to the front lines than at any time since the Civil War. But as the Cold War began to boil in the summer of 1950, experienced nurses and combat-ready soldiers were in short supply. The former commander of the women's branch of the U.S. Naval Reserve argued for a draft that didn't exempt young women. "Protecting" service women from being sent overseas during World War II shortchanged the 300,000 who served their country with skill and valor, Mildred McAfee Horton wrote in *Ladies' Home Journal*. That sense of "pseudo gallantry" led recruiters "across the length and breadth of the land to think they had to 'glamorize' the services as playgrounds for 'cute' girls."

Barbara Jean Nichols, with her apple cheeks and tomboy grin, would be the first to admit she wasn't the cheerleader type. Though barely 5 feet tall, she was a sturdy, self-sufficient young woman who loved her country. When the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps was created by Congress in 1943, Nichols seized the opportunity. She left the Boeing assembly line and found her life's work.



Nichols scrubs up before entering the operating room in Korea. *Nichols collection*

First Lieutenant Nichols turned 28 in the summer of 1950 as North Korean communist troops swarmed across the 38th Parallel dividing north from south. They seized Seoul and pushed U.N. troops to the outskirts of Pusan at the bottom of the peninsula. Nichols was one of the first Army nurses to arrive. The horrific wounds and suffering she saw haunt her still.

In Korea, some combat-area hospital units anesthetized their stress with alcohol-laced shenanigans. Nichols was no goody-goody, though she rarely drank anything stronger than ginger ale, didn't smoke and never hijacked a jeep. What defined "Barb" was that she was a great nurse—knowledgeable, calm and efficient, with a reassuring smile and infectious laugh. Whenever she had a spare moment she worked with missionaries to help the children orphaned by the war. Their searching eyes went right to her heart. When she arrived in Vietnam in 1965, Nichols saw the same little faces; children thrilled to have a hug, a teddy bear or, better yet, shoes.

Nichols poses with three burly veterans at the Vietnam War Memorial in Olympia. *Nichols collection*

It's hard to believe she's now 95. Nichols exudes a spry self-confidence. Her memory for details is impressive, despite her claims to the contrary. She walks a mile with chums every

day at Panorama City, the sprawling retirement community in Lacey. One day not long ago she visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the Capitol Campus at Olympia. Three burly guys wearing POW/MIA biker vests spotted the service ribbons on her cap. When they learned she was a retired lieutenant colonel in the Army Nurse Corps, it was selfie time. Nichols was one of the "angels" who'd held the hands of gravely wounded GI's in the 8th Field Hospital at Nha Trang. In Korea, she had cared for the Baby Boomers' dads and uncles.

NICHOLS IS A SKILLED genealogist and the author of articles and a book about her fascinating family tree. Its roots are in England (traceable to the Scribners of Shropshire in the 1300s), Germany and Norway. In America, the branches reach from Massachusetts to Mukilteo, starting with a young Puritan who "but for providence" could have been lost at sea in 1620. John Howland was swept overboard as the hundred-foot *Mayflower* and its retching passengers plowed storm-tossed seas. According to one of the most reliable accounts, "Howland managed to grab hold of the topsail halyards, giving the crew enough time to rescue him with a boat-hook." Howland became an influential citizen of the Plymouth Colony, begat 11 children and lived until the age of 80. Our decorated U.S. Army nurse and a remarkable array of other Americans are Howland descendants, including Mormon patriarch Joseph Smith, Humphrey Bogart, Alec Baldwin, both George Bushes, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Sarah Palin and Benjamin Spock. Or as Barb puts it, "Isn't that something? And that's just on my mother's line."

Nichols' seventh great-grandfather on her father's line also arrived in Plymouth in the 1600s. She is a proud member of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

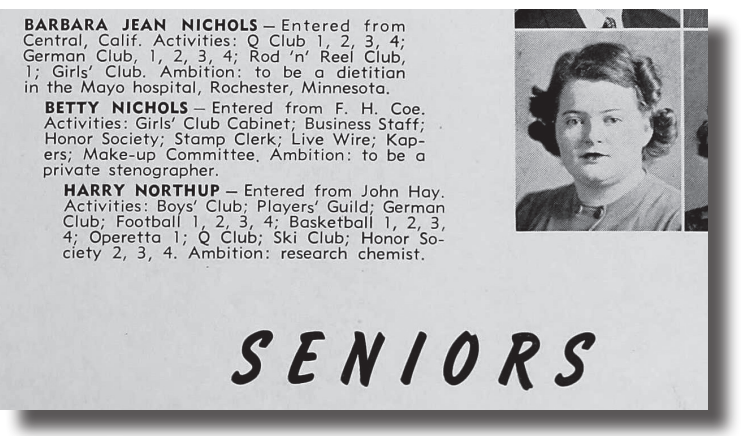
Fast forward to the 1850s and you'll discover the Nichols clan as prosperous, pine-tree lumbermen in Onalaska, Wisconsin. They built a sawmill, acquired more and managed to survive ruinous fires and market downturns. By the 1890s, however, overcutting had depleted Wisconsin's forests. The family branched out to Washington State and began manufacturing cedar shingles.

Bernard Nichols, Barb's father, stayed behind. He was good with machinery. America was acquiring wheels, so he became an auto mechanic. Twenty-one in 1917 when the U.S. declared war on Germany, Bernard

Nichols with her parents when she returned from Korea. *Nichols collection*

Nichols signed up for the U.S. Army's fledgling Air Service and became a bombardier on the western front. The aviators in those plodding biplane bombers, top speed 104 mph, had no parachutes. Nor had the controls advanced much since Kitty Hawk. "The bombs were at his feet," Nichols remembers her father saying. "He'd just pick one up and drop it over the side. One day he was thrown out of the plane when the landing gear hit a hole along the dirt runway. At the hospital, they slapped a plaster cast on his broken leg. Pretty soon it began to itch terribly. There was a tremendous problem with cooties—body lice—on the front lines during World War I. When they cut off the cast that's what they found. We'd always say, 'Tell us about the cooties, Daddy!' " That might have been the first clue Barb was nurse material.

After the war, her father married Esther Amick, an Iowa girl, and became a contractor. Barbara Jean was born on August 19, 1922, at Riverside, Calif. Her brother Robert arrived 18 months later. When the Depression hit, their father managed to hold onto a job selling Chevrolets. General Motors was especially resilient in promoting its lowest-priced models. Still, Bernard Nichols must have been a go-getter. Barb has the buttons he received for selling more than a hundred cars a year. "He always had his demonstrator, the latest model," she remembers. "We'd go somewhere practically every weekend. Daddy bought a winged trailer with sides that unfolded. He was a very ingenious guy. He rigged up auxiliary power, so we had lights and a stove. Off we'd go, on a camping trip." She loved hiking, all the more so when the family moved to Seattle after she completed grade school. At Queen Anne High School, she joined Rod 'n' Reel and the German Club. She loved history and science. Her stated ambition in her Class of 1940 yearbook entry was "to be a dietitian in the Mayo Hospital, Rochester, Minnesota."



Her senior photo in the 1940 Queen Anne High School yearbook. *Nichols collection*

World War II changed all that.

AFTER SHE GRADUATED, the Nichols moved to Anchorage. Barb's father had landed a job with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, building military installations. On December 7, 1941, she was starting out on a cross-country ski when she heard sirens wailing

Nichols worked on the B-17 assembly line at Boeing's main factory in Seattle during World War II.
Boeing Company photo

incessantly in the distance. She rushed home. "It was hard to believe: Most of our fleet had been sunk at Pearl Harbor. Everyone said the Aleutian Islands were next, so all of the dependents had to leave Alaska. Our ship ran aground on the way back to Seattle and we ran out of food. When we finally arrived, everyone said the Japanese were going to invade along the Washington coast. Everyone installed 'blackout' shades on their windows. There were air-raid drills in all the schools. When I got to Boeing, security was tight and the roof of the factory was camouflaged to look like a normal neighborhood from the air."

At 19, Barb Nichols donned coveralls, wrapped her short brown hair in a bandana and went to work for 72 cents an hour at Boeing's mammoth factory along the east bank of the Duwamish Waterway. A year earlier, Boeing had 8,400 workers. Now there were 29,000 as the company accelerated production of the B-17 Flying Fortress, a sleek bomber bristling with machine-guns. "Boeing managers had long resisted the idea of hiring women for the production lines," historian Polly Reed Myers wrote. All that changed "when it became clear that the number of men leaving jobs for the military was outweighing the number of women entering the work force."

Nichols soon graduated from cabin upholsterer to nose installer. If the guys resented her, she says it never showed. Some became good friends. She was a quick learner, dexterous and a good sport—a "girl" to be sure but no pushover. Her job was to install the B-17's Plexiglas nose. Chromate corrosion inhibitor was carefully applied glue-like

Congresswoman Frances Payne Bolton, who sponsored the legislation creating the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps. *Library of Congress photo*

all along its edges. Using a dolly, she'd push the nose piece into place, making sure the seal was tight. "Then I had to get inside and put the bolts through and tighten them all up." It was harder than it looked if you did it right. In the spring of 1944, Nichols added her name to the fuselage of "Five Grand," the 5,000th Boeing-built B-17. She was transferred to the production line for the new B-29 Superfortress, but that October she turned in her tools. She was going to be a nurse.

A strong-willed woman made it possible.

FRANCES PAYNE BOLTON, 55, was a staunch Republican isolationist when she succeeded her late husband as a member of Congress from Ohio's 22nd District in 1940. She would serve fourteen more terms. While Franklin D. Roosevelt vowed to make America "the great arsenal of democracy," Bolton opposed instituting a military draft and rejected the president's Lend-Lease program to assist the beleaguered British. When Pearl Harbor plunged America into World War II, however, Bolton was all in.

Born into a wealthy Cleveland family, Bolton was a feminist who practiced yoga. She became interested in health care as a young woman. In the 1920s, her financial contributions funded one of the first university nursing schools in America at what is now Case Western Reserve University. To meet the need for wartime nurses, Bolton wrote and shepherded to unanimous passage the Bolton Act of 1943, which created the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps. The legislation also reflected her strong civil-rights sensibilities, mandating that the corps be funded "without regard to race or ethnicity." Earlier she had called for desegregation and gender equity in military nursing units, which were all all-white and all-female. The Bolton Act appropriated $160 million in federal funds to 1,125 nursing schools across the nation. "At the time, it was considered the largest experiment in federally subsidized education in the history of the United States," historians at Case Western wrote. Over the next five years the Cadet Nurse Corps produced 124,065 graduates who would make an indelible mark on society:

> The Corps united American nurses from diverse backgrounds to work for a common purpose. By 1945, 85 percent of all nursing students

in the country were Cadet Nurses, and the Corps' funding represented more than half of the entire U.S. Public Health Service budget.

Nursing, Rep. Bolton declared, was the "number one service for women, not only in a time of war when hundreds of thousands of men's lives depend upon nursing care, but also in peacetime—for the nurse is not only caring for the sick but also teaching health." Introducing an unprecedented non-discriminatory clause, the Bolton Act opened up the nursing profession to all women between the ages of 17 to 35 who had completed high school and were in good health. For minority women in particular, the act was their best opportunity to not only receive a nursing education but also to respond to their country's patriotic call to service at an urgent time in history. … All members of the U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps received tuition scholarships, monthly stipends and payment of all other education fees, including the cost of books and uniforms. The act [stipulated] only that they complete their education within 30 months and pledge themselves to serve in "military or essential civilian nursing throughout the war."

Nichols, barely five feet tall, with other Nurse Corps "probies" in 1947 at Everett General Hospital. *Nichols collection*

To Barb Nichols, the Cadet Nurse Corps was a dream come true. "I would have had to get a loan to pay for college. The Nurse Corps would pay for everything! I liked science. I liked helping people. We were in the middle of a war and they needed nurses. It was an easy decision." She raised her right hand and pledged: "I will keep my body strong, my mind alert, and my heart steadfast; I will be kind, tolerant, and understanding. Above all, I will dedicate myself now and forever to the triumph of life over death; As a Cadet nurse, I pledge to my country my service in essential nursing for the duration of the war."

Besides books and uniforms, "we got $5 a month in spending money," Nichols says, chuckling at the memory of how far $5 would go in 1944.

She took her training at Everett General Hospital and the city's new junior col-

Nichols as a newly pinned nurse. *Nichols collection*

lege in a converted elementary school. "The Cadet Nurse Corps was a three-year program," Barb recalls, "and I think it was much better hands-on training than student nurses get today. Our training was more in depth, in the classroom and on the hospital floor. We did intensive patient care, which they don't do today. In the morning, we brought in toothbrushes, wash cloths, basins of water. The patient didn't get out of bed. If they had to go to the bathroom we'd clean 'em all up. After breakfast we'd change the bedsheets and turn them over. That's when you'd do the back rub. The patient care routine was a morning and night ritual."

Barbara Jean Nichols was the valedictorian of the nursing class of 1947 at Everett General Hospital. She was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps on December 2, 1948, and assigned to Madigan General Hospital at Fort Lewis. Madigan was a maze of corridors and wards, and a mile-and-a-half long. Nichols helped care for soldiers who had suffered terrible deprivations in Japanese POW camps.

At the outset of World War II, nurses who married had been discharged—"sometimes dishonorably, if their commanding officer so decreed." The armed services' attitudes toward females in uniform—spurred by manpower shortages and the exemplary performance of service women—had grown more enlightened by war's end. Pregnancy, however, was still grounds for automatic discharge. While military nurses were not restricted to wartime service, WACS and WAVES were discharged by the thousands at war's end.

The landmark Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948—endorsed by General Eisenhower and leaders of the other armed services—empowered women to serve as permanent, regular members of the armed forces.* Two years later, the wisdom of that decision became clear.

---

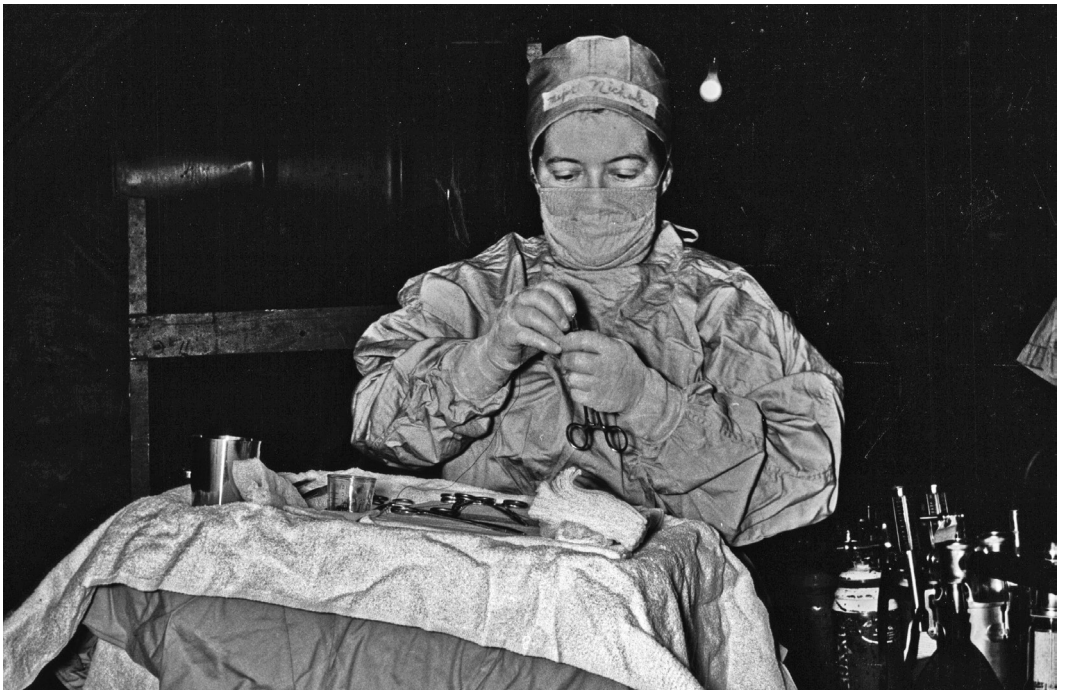
* Mossbacks in Congress had stalled the legislation for three sessions. A Senate Committee grilled Rear Admiral Clifford Swanson on "the biological differences which might incapacitate women sailors." Menstruation was hardly a handicap, the admiral said. As for menopause, "it is well known that men pass through the same physiological change with symptomatology closely resembling that of women."

ON JUNE 28, 1950, Kim Il-sung's North Korean People's Army captured Seoul, steamrolling the outmanned South Koreans with Soviet tanks and lethal artillery. On the 5th of July, hard on the heels of the first U.S. infantry units, 57 nurses arrived in Korea. A dozen advanced to the front lines with the first Mobile Army Surgical Hospital—"MASH" for short.

First Lieutenant Nichols and 500 other nurses volunteered as reinforcements. When Nichols landed at Pusan on October 29, General MacArthur's daring amphibious landing at Inchon had the communists on the run and the capital back in friendly hands. As South Korean forces advanced on the Yalu River along the Chinese border, the U.S. Army's X Corps and 1st Marine Division arrived at the North Korean port of Wonsan along the Sea of Japan. Chairman Mao Zedong, fearful that the Americans had designs on overturning his communist revolution, sent hundreds of thousands of Chinese soldiers into battle.

Nichols was ordered to catch the night train to Seoul, then make her way "by any means possible, given the exigencies of war," to join the 8055th MASH, which had pitched its tents somewhere along the 38th Parallel dividing the two Koreas.

"Supposedly it would be a short trip—only about 200 miles," Nichols remembers, "except that a lot of the railroad bridges had been damaged and whole sections of track blown up. So instead of an overnight trip it took us several days to get to the capital,

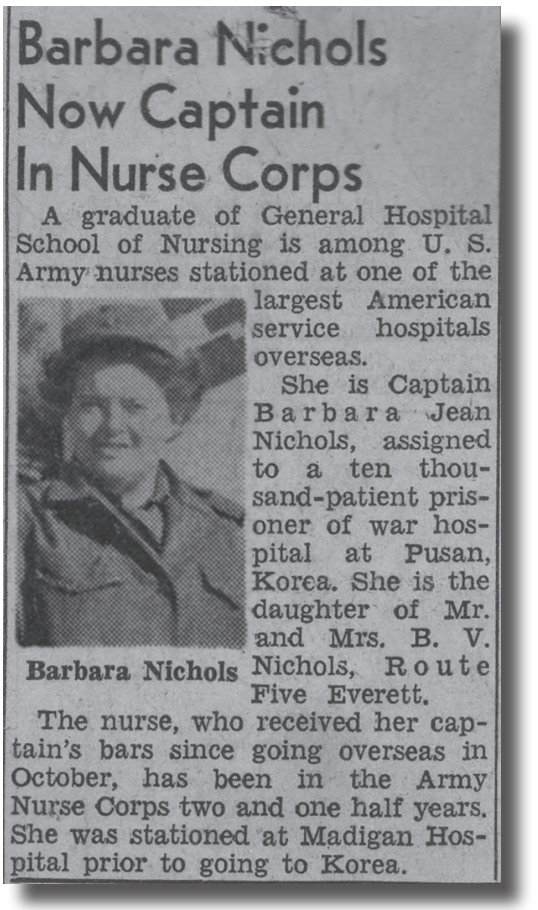


Captain Nichols in the operating room in Korea. *Nichols collection*

which was in rubble." The train chugged north past rivers of refugees, possessions strapped to backs or being pushed on makeshift carts. Seoul would change hands four times in three years of warfare.

"I reported for duty with the 8055th. Before long, however, I was informed they needed me more at Pusan, given my experience as a surgical nurse. So off I went, right back to where I'd landed—except that I got the measles and ended up on a hospital ship." That they put her in isolation on the *USS Consolation* struck her as ironic. It was galling "as all get out" to be a hospitalized Army nurse in the middle of a war.

Before long, however, Nichols ended up at the U.S. Army's 3rd Field Hospital, a collection of tents and Quonset Huts on the outskirts of Pusan. The medical staff consisted of three officers and 16 enlisted men. The 3rd would merge with the 14th Field Hospital and grow from 892 patients in the fly-infested summer of 1950 to 10,548 in the cold, dark first days of 1951—most of them prisoners of war.



Barbara Nichols Now Captain In Nurse Corps

A graduate of General Hospital School of Nursing is among U. S. Army nurses stationed at one of the largest American service hospitals overseas.

She is Captain Barbara Jean Nichols, assigned to a ten thousand-patient prisoner of war hospital at Pusan, Korea. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. V. Nichols, Route Five Everett.

Barbara Nichols

The nurse, who received her captain's bars since going overseas in October, has been in the Army Nurse Corps two and one half years. She was stationed at Madigan Hospital prior to going to Korea.

An *Everett Herald* clipping details Nichols' service in Korea in 1952. *Nichols collection*

After three months of 16-hour days, Nichols was named chief nurse for the 3rd Field Hospital. She also received a battlefield promotion. It had taken her only a little over two years to advance from a second lieutenant with a junior-college nursing degree to seasoned combat-theater captain.

Early in her nurse's training, Nichols was gratified to discover she wasn't squeamish. Compound fractures and bone-deep lacerations were taken in stride. None of that, however, prepared her for the battlefield casualties she saw in Korea: Sucking chest wounds, blackened frostbit toes that snapped right off, multiple traumatic amputations. Another nurse—one who'd seen the worst of World War II—wrote in her diary that "in all my 17 years of experience I've never seen such patients. Blind, or with legs, arms or buttocks blown off." Nichols can't shake the memory of one writhing, hollow-eyed GI who arrived on a litter. "A mortar hit him right here," she remembers, pointing to the middle of her chest. "You could put your hand between the skin and the flesh and muscles, like you

do when you skin a chicken. On another day, they brought us a fella whose head was nearly severed. We practically had to hold it onto his neck. There was only one artery intact. We thought, 'How could he still be alive?' " He was airlifted to Japan. They never heard if he survived. "*Honestly, I hope he didn't,*" she says, voice husky with emotion, the italics hers. "When you're doing your job as a nurse or doctor you have to stay calm. When it bothers you is later. It's the memories that won't go away. It catches up with you."

THE MASH units early on didn't even have X-Ray equipment. "We made do as best we could. We had to take off a patient's dressings, wash them and put them on boards studded with nails to stretch and dry. We'd use them over and over and over. After they were washed and dried, we'd autoclave them to sterilize them. It actually worked."

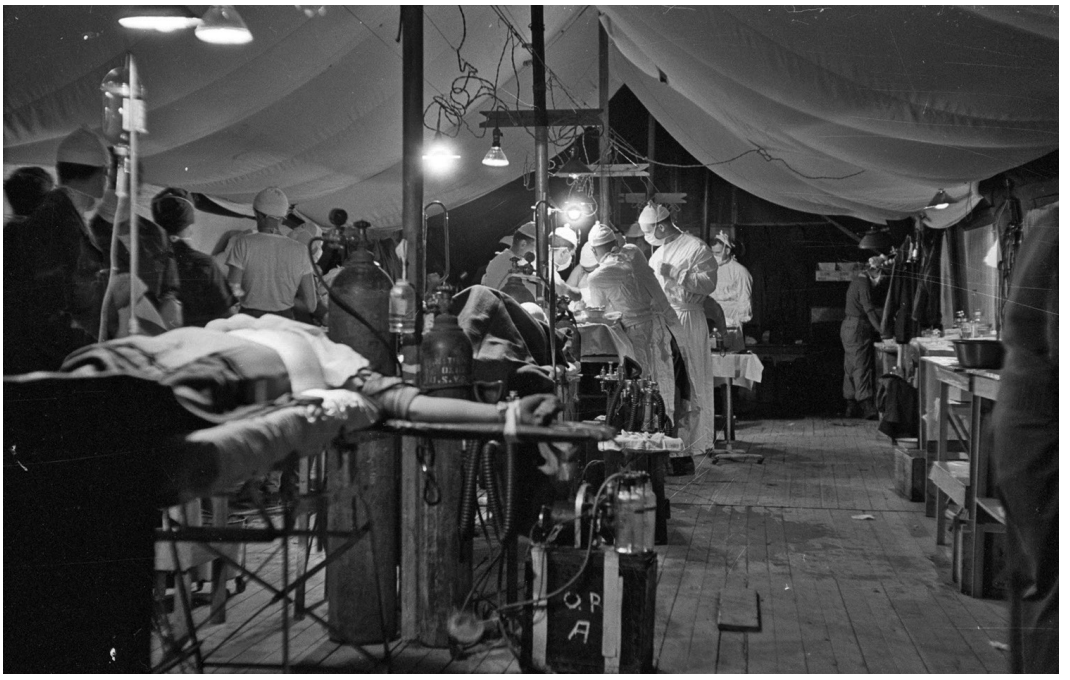
The nurses were well-organized scroungers. Conditions were so primitive that the medical teams developed a "we're-all-in-it-together" esprit de corps. Washing your undies in your helmet became almost fun. When the doctor draft kicked in that first winter, first-rate young physicians from top medical schools (think "Hawkeye" Pierce) arrived to augment the veteran Army doctors, though specialists were still in short supply. Nurses administered anesthesia. Nichols says she rarely encountered a military doctor who didn't respect nurses. "We were all part of a team."

Pushing 30, Nichols was the savvy big sister to younger nurses during her 19 months in Korea. In the war's first months, the front lines were so fluid that nurses in MASH units and evacuation hospitals were "almost constantly under fire and on the move." The rowdy reputation the 8055th accrued was based on events later in the war when the ground fighting was stalemated.* Even then, Nichols says the hijinks were exaggerated by Hollywood script writers. At first she wouldn't watch "M*A*S*H" on TV because it was "so demeaning" to the nurses. "We didn't have enough time for all that partying—we were so pooped from working long hours. Some days we worked all day and all night and all day the next day." Everyone took "pep" pills to stay alert, Nichols says, yet she can't recall anyone becoming addicted or selling drugs on the black market. "In Korea we had all the meds sitting out; big bottles of aspirin with codeine, just sitting there. Morphine syrettes. We all had 'em in our pockets—enlisted and officers alike. That was never the case in Vietnam, and you wouldn't dare do that today. Yet in Korea we had no problem."

Treating the wounded was a relay race. The combat medics were the first responders, quickly doing triage if there were multiple casualties. "When the patients got

---

* One of the great stories about the 8055th—this one apparently true—concerns a young nurse dispatched to Seoul to "bring back as many sanitary napkins as possible" for the nurses in her MASH unit. "The getaway was doubling as a first date of sorts, with a handsome new doctor assigned to the unit." At the check-out counter at the PX, she was surrounded by male soldiers. "And instead of sanitary napkins, stacked high in front of her were boxes and boxes of condoms—the result of an embarrassing translation error. … 'Where are *you* stationed?' one GI quipped.' Another said, 'Are there more back there like you?' "



An operating room at a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. *U.S. Army photo*

to us, usually by medevac since the roads were so primitive, we'd give them the best care we could and airlift them to a bigger facility if they needed more attention," Nichols says. Antibiotics, anticoagulants and blood transfusions saved countless lives. The helicopters were a godsend.

Battlefield medicine had advanced dramatically in the five years since World War II, to say nothing of World War I, "when the journey from the trenches to the field hospital could take between 12 and 48 hours" and 8.1 percent of the wounded died. The World War II fatality rate for seriously wounded soldiers was 4.4 percent. In Korea "that number was cut almost in half, to 2.5 percent," military historians note, thanks to the MASH units and airlifts. "The 8th Army surgeon estimated that of the 750 critically wounded soldiers evacuated on Feb. 20, 1951, half would have died if only ground transportation had been used."

WITH THE 65th anniversary of the Korean Armistice looming in 2018, Nichols points to her experiences in the POW hospital as one of the seldom told stories of the war.

North Korean POWs were "often hysterical, defiant or rigid with fear because of propaganda that portrayed Americans as cruel and sadistic," a history of servicewomen during the Korean War notes. Nurses at one evacuation hospital "placed postoperative patients in with the newly admitted" so they would see the quality of care. The nurses and doctors at the 3rd Field Hospital had to view their patients as patients, not the enemy, Barb

Nichols says, not that it was always easy. "If you've taken an oath to be a healer, you are first and foremost a health-care professional above prejudice. We did have a few enlisted men who were very bitter, and they did some terrible things to the prisoners. They wouldn't do anything to help them. They were angry that we were taking care of our prisoners while the North Koreans and Chinese were not taking care of theirs."

Truth, as the old adage goes, is usually the first casualty in the fog of war. The notion that all of the Geneva Convention violations and atrocities of the Korean War were committed by the North Koreans and Chinese was categorically dispelled in 1999. A Pulitzer Prize-winning investigation by Associated Press reporters documented that U.S. troops machine-gunned 300 Korean refugees at a railway bridge early in the war. Foreign journalists who maintain the U.S. whitewashed its crimes say the American military used biological weapons during the war. Moreover, they assert that stories of American POWs being tortured and brainwashed ("The Manchurian Candidate") have been exaggerated.

Around 7,200 Americans were taken prisoner during the war, according to U.S. reports, and 2,806 died in captivity. Most of the casualties, according to critics of U.S. atrocity tales, occurred "during relocation marches and in the temporary camps run by the North Korean army and … some of this can be attributed to lack of food and medical care, which reflected the overall primitive and poor conditions of a country with little resources."

Hogwash, U.S. veterans' groups say. North Korea, with Stalin's blessings, not to mention Soviet tanks and fighter jets, started the war. China jumped in "when we had their communist pal on the run." Oral histories with American POWs are replete with harrowing accounts of death marches; airmen dying after being tortured with heated, sharpened bamboo sticks; of a mass execution with armor-piercing bullets at point-blank range; of wounded prisoners being denied medical care and "subjected to experimental monkey-gland operations." Dysentery in the communist POW camps "became an ever-present problem, with no medical treatment available. Many of the POWs developed pneumonia." In addition, "the captors took revenge for air raids by Americans during the [relocation] marches," reportedly murdering 100 POWs in a train tunnel.

Thousands of North Korean soldiers taken prisoner claimed they had been conscripted practically on penalty of death. U.N. officials at Pusan tried to isolate them from the hard-core communists among the Chinese POWs, some of whom "would rather die in their tents than submit to western medical care." Most of the POW patients Nichols saw were North Korean. "They'd say, 'We've never had it so good!' We gave them clothes, decent food and first-rate medical care. They were not treated like that in their own Army, that's for sure. In addition to whatever injuries they had, they arrived at our hospital with TB, dysentery and tapeworms! Oh gosh it was terrible! I can still see the nurse anesthetist cringing: The surgeon would make an incision, and all of a sudden there'd be this scream. Tapeworms were coming out. Any time we opened them up, there they were. That's why they had so much pain. It was so gross!"

BEYOND THE HOSPITAL compound was a world in heartbreaking chaos. Hundreds of thousands of the 5.8 million Korea civilians displaced by the war had taken refuge inside the Pusan Perimeter where U.N. forces were holding the line. Enterprising scavengers—young, old and in-between—the refugees fashioned lean-to's from worn-out tarps, flattened cans and corrugated tin. One desolate hill was home to a colony of 2,000 half-starved children. A Marine wrote home that their "radiatorlike ribs" sapped his soul. A volunteer with the Christian Children's Fund remembered:

> These tiny innocents had their own special benefactors—grimy, dog-tired American soldiers. Using their entrenching tools, the GIs had dug foxholes on the mountainside for these homeless Korean kids. At night the little ones would slide into foxholes—each big enough for just one child—and cover themselves with a piece of cardboard made from a U.S. Army C-ration carton.

Whenever possible, the Army nurses and doctors provided medical care to the refugees and visited the rudimentary new orphanages. There were simply too many hun-

Nichols and another officer distribute gifts at an orphanage in Vietnam. *Nichols collection*

gry, homeless people with a multitude of ailments. "The hardest part was the children," Nichols remembers. By some estimates, a hundred-thousand were orphaned during the war. "You wanted to help them all. Their eyes melted your heart." She scrounged medical supplies and began working with the missionaries. Nichols' Christian faith is her lodestar.

When she wrote her parents in Everett, care packages began arriving. Barb's niece, a youngster on San Juan Island, told the other kids about the orphans. Pretty soon packages were arriving from the Friday Harbor School. Another nurse wrote to Sears, Roebuck & Co., which responded with a load of children's clothes. GI's all over Korea were making appeals of their own and donating millions of dollars from their own puny pay.

By the end of her tour in Korea, Nichols was seeing the birth, literally, of a problem that would collide with Korea's pride in racial purity and calcified aversion to illegitimacy: mixed-race children. There were perhaps 1,500 "GI babies." Facilitating adoptions of those children would prove "a lot more challenging," Nichols says. In Vietnam 14 years later she watched the problem grow exponentially. It was a lot longer war, with more opportunity for fraternization. "By some estimates, tens of thousands of American servicemen fathered children with Vietnamese women," *The New York Times* reported in 2013.

THE PUSAN PERIMETER was no longer a virtual redoubt when Captain Nichols rotated back to the States in May of 1952. U.N. troops, with multi-pronged offensives by the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines, were on the move. Dwight D. Eisenhower, now the Republican candidate for president, had vowed to go to Korea and bring the war "to an early an honorable end." Nichols was back at Fort Lewis when the armistice took effect on July 27, 1953.

North of the demilitarized zone at the 38th Parallel, the misnamed Democratic People's Republic of Korea would become Kim Il-sung's fiefdom. The "Great Leader" and his subjects were doing pretty well until the struggling Soviet Union cut back its support in the Gorbachev era. South Korea, its infrastructure devastated, and with more than 2.5 million civilians dead or injured, struggled as a market-economy state with a succession of authoritarian governments. In the 1970s, however, it emerged as one of the Pacific Rim's economic juggernauts.

The contrast today between north and south could be hardly more dramatic. Whenever Seoul, an ultra-modern metropolis of 10 million, appears on her Samsung TV, Nichols can hardly believe her eyes. And Pusan—Koreanized to "Busan"—is now the world's fifth busiest seaport, with a population of 3.6 million. The Pusan she knew, with honey-bucket stench and kimchee fumes wafting through the air and refugees everywhere, was "pure culture shock" for a Seattle girl who'd never been overseas.

Looking back, Nichols says she never gave much thought to the politics of the Cold War before, during or after her 19 months in Korea—or the "Domino theory" that got us into the mess in Vietnam. "I was an Army nurse. I was there to patch people up."

One thing Nichols knew for sure was that she wanted to stay in the Army. Thirty-one years old and single when she returned to Madigan General Hospital ("I never met Mr. Right, or at least he never met me"), she applied for and promptly received a regular Army commission at a time when thousands of reserve officers were being riffed. "Now I knew I was safe."

When she was transferred to Fort Lawton at Seattle, Nichols enrolled in night-school at the University of Washington to work toward a four-year nursing degree. Bouncing around in the service, she eventually received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Minnesota. "I'm proud of that," she says. "I didn't have to do it, but it was important to me."

She spent two wonderful years in Germany, exploring the country by car most every weekend, before returning to Fort Lewis. She headed an emergency team of nurses sent to Anchorage in 1964 after a massive earthquake killed 139.

MAJOR NICHOLS REPORTED for duty in her third war on January 10, 1965.

The 8th Field Hospital at Nha Trang, part of the 43rd Medical Group stationed at Fort Lewis, was the military's first major medical center in Vietnam. When Nichols arrived at the teeming base 250 miles north of Saigon the first thing she noted was that the facilities were dramatically better.

"In our MASH units and field hospitals in Korea we had just a few leftovers from World War II," Nichols remembers. "We had to improvise everything. It was very primitive. In Vietnam, we had new equipment and plenty of it from the states. Everything we needed. State-of-the-art operating rooms. We even had a Wangensteen suction device (for gastrointestinal surgery). In Korea, we had to use bottles to create a gastric siphon—Rube Goldberg stuff."

Unfortunately, many of the wounds were worse. Vietnam amounted to a jungle war. Booby traps and mines were major components of the North Vietnamese arsenal. Thanks to medevacs and operating rooms overseen by the likes of Major Nichols, a GI's chances of surviving a major injury, including multiple traumatic amputations, were much better than in Korea—though some who survived, armless and legless, told their nurses they wished they

Lt. Col. Nichols today in her uniform.
Nichols collection

had died. Most nurses internalized that stress, though some ducked into vacant rooms to cry their eyes out. It was hard to know the right thing to say. In the 1980s, long after she had retired, Nichols began hearing on TV about veterans with PTSD. "Hey," she said to herself, "I have those symptoms too."

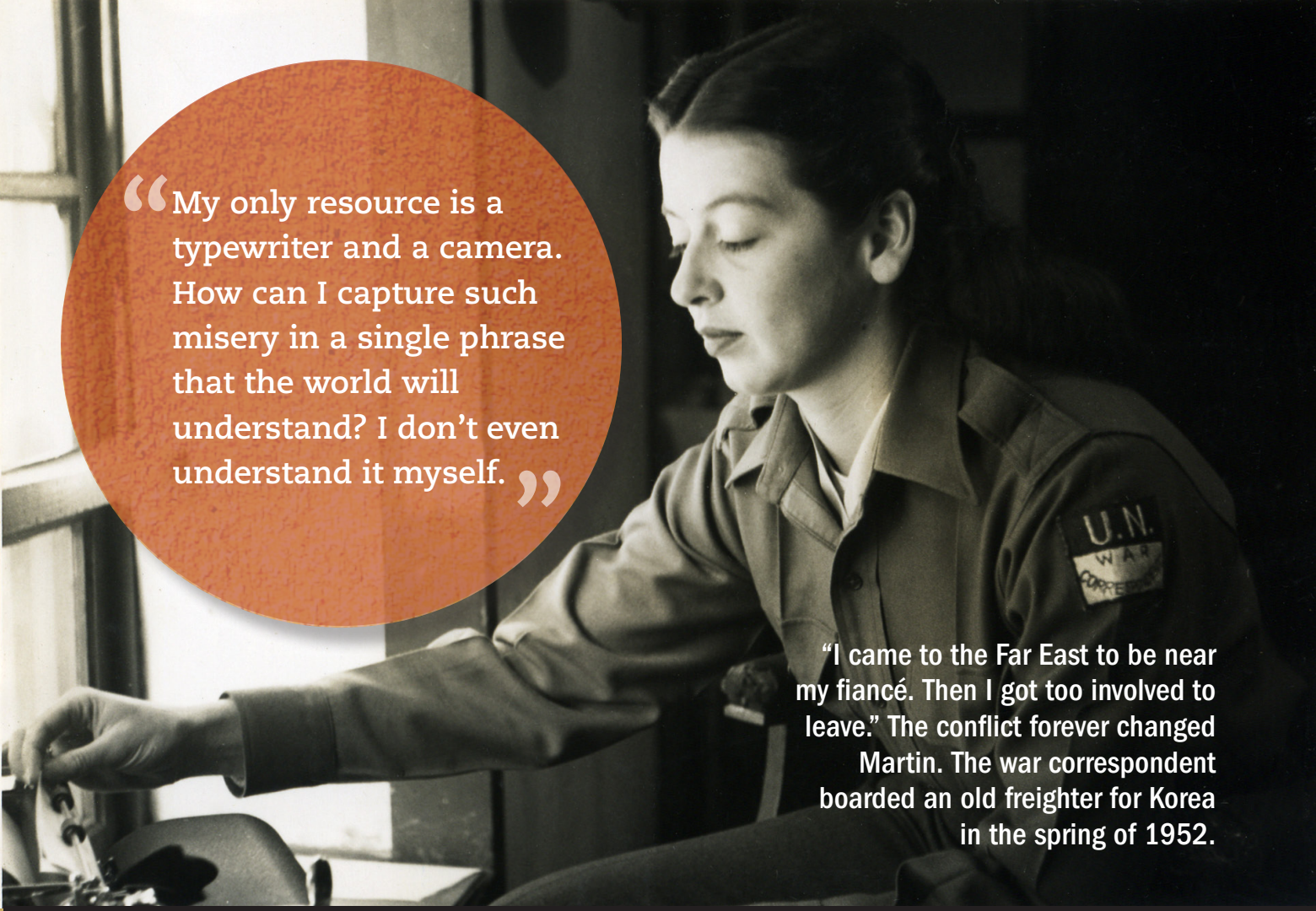
The U.S. dumped more than 19 million gallons of herbicides on 4.5 million acres of Vietnam. The fallout is pernicious. Nichols has peripheral neuropathy, a nervous system malady related to Agent Orange exposure. At first, your fingers and toes tingle. Next your feet or hands feel like they're on fire, especially at night. Thousands of other Vietnam veterans share her pain. They know a central truth about military nurses: They're soldiers, too. Barbara Jean Nichols has a hundred percent combat disability. She's exasperated and angry that the care she receives from the Veterans Administration is "just not very good." She wishes she had a better doctor and wonders why veterans don't deserve the best.

She pauses a moment, thinking of her father's last days at the Veterans' Hospital at American Lake in Pierce County while she was in Vietnam. He was active in the American Legion, proud to boast that his daughter was an Army nurse who'd just won the Bronze Star.

"If I feel as if I'm out here dangling, largely forgotten by the VA, well, I'm also lucky that my Social Security and combat disability pay for everything. Because I was an officer I always had a lot of privileges. I retired as a lieutenant colonel. I have a nice place to live—29 years at Panorama City, with friends and good neighbors. We walk the A Circle four times a day, which makes a mile. I'm OK. Hey, I'm 95!" She worries about the disabled sergeant with a wife and kids—and about the soldiers being sent to the Mideast time and again. "It isn't right. We need the draft again. For women as well as men."

Now and then, for special events, she dusts off her old uniform. "It's a little snug," she says with a proud little smile. "But I can still get into it."

John C. Hughes



"My only resource is a typewriter and a camera. How can I capture such misery in a single phrase that the world will understand? I don't even understand it myself."

"I came to the Far East to be near my fiancé. Then I got too involved to leave." The conflict forever changed Martin. The war correspondent boarded an old freighter for Korea in the spring of 1952.

PAT MARTIN

"I had cut my baby teeth on the front line dispatches of Ernie Pyle and the up front photography of Margaret Bourke-White. You don't get those close-ups sitting in a press billets, nor did I intend to. I listened to the individuals tossed into this bedlam and tried to tell their stories."

"Imagine your present world suddenly drained of all color. Only black, white and brown remain. Take away laughter, music, casual conversations and all the comforting, soft, familiar sounds of your present world. Now set all that remains into motion until familiar objects disintegrate. Take away the sweet perfume of flowers and replace it with the stench of broken infrastructure, open sewers and decay. Overwhelm this scene with military troops and traffic indifferent to anything but their own frantic missions, while thousands of refugee people dart between this traffic in desperate flight, or plod step by step toward hopeful refuge, or simply fall in exhaustion and die.

"This was the tribal song Korea sang to me on that first day! It is part of the tribal song each of us must sing to our children."

Top: Sponsored by *The Nippon Times* in Japan, Martin was one of few female war correspondents who reported from the front lines. "I don't write about battles," said Martin, now retired in Thurston County. "I write about people." *Martin collection*

Middle: Syngman Rhee, the first president of the Republic of Korea, invites journalists to tea at the Presidential Palace. When Rhee learns that Martin, at his left, writes for *The Nippon Times* "the president's face contorts and he drops my hand so suddenly, I wonder if he is having a seizure." During the Japanese occupation of Korea, Rhee was imprisoned and tortured. " *Martin collection*

Bottom: Martin with Gen. James Van Fleet, right, commander, U.S. 8th Army and a onetime classmate of General Dwight D. Eisenhower. "From this man I would learn a whole new definition of leadership and true heroism that was based on results, not charisma." *Martin collection*

SOTERO SOTO

Feb. 1952

His Cap Tells a Story

When Sotero Soto was young he looked like Desi Arnaz and Ritchie Valens rolled into one, except he had a pencil-thin mustache his bride liked because "kissing a man without a mustache is like eating an egg without salt!"

Soto's bright 12-year-old granddaughter, Izavel Ortiz, couldn't contain her laughter when her grandma told that story. She is intensely interested in her family's history.

Sotero Soto's name, which sounds Japanese, confuses people. So does his handsome, brown 89-year-old face. He wears his "Korea Veteran" ballcap practically every day. Otherwise people ask, "What part of Mexico are you from?"

He's a proud, fifth-generation Texan, the great-grandson of an Apache from a band that roamed Oklahoma and Texas for eons. That census records label some of Soto's ancestors "white" when they were also significantly black underscores that race in America has always been more fluid than the bigots will admit. Soto's grandmother, Manuela Tambunga, is listed in the 1910 census as "octoroon," an awful, concocted word that meant one-eighth Negro.

John Hughes photo

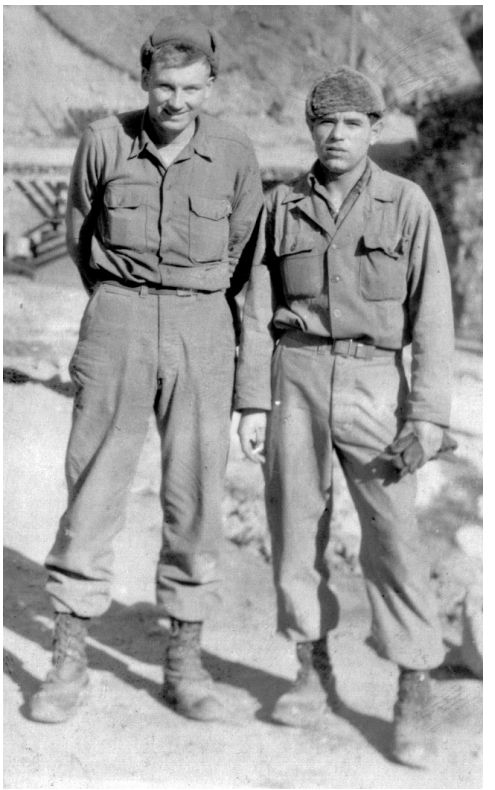
When Soto opened the DNA test-results envelope from Ancestry.com, he was gratified to see that science had confirmed family lore: He is 55.5 percent East Asian/Native American; 31.9 percent European; 6.2 percent sub-Saharan African and 2.4 percent Middle Eastern and North African.

What combat confirmed for him is that "all blood looks the same."

Soto's big brother, Antonio, was badly wounded in the South Pacific during World War II. Two of their cousins died in

Germany. Soto enlisted in the U.S. Army at the outbreak of the Korean War. Though he had only nine years of formal schooling, Soto tested off the charts. As a combat engineer, he advanced from private to sergeant first class in the space of 14 months.

Often forgotten in the history of "the forgotten war" is that an estimated 10,000 Native Americans served in Korea, from the frozen Chosin Reservoir that first terrible winter to the brutal hill fighting in the heat of summer. Twenty died in combat in the opening months of the war. Six years earlier, Navajo code-talkers had befuddled the Japanese in the Pacific. Now the adversaries were once again tenacious Asians. The Indians called them "Short Wolf Men."



Sotero with a fellow combat engineer in Korea. *Soto collection*

Soto isn't offended to be confused for a Mexican. Far from it. His family tree has roots that criss-cross the border. But he's proud to be an Indian: "We were warriors." That said, he can't resist telling a "Mexican" war story:

"A Mexican soldier was having a pretty tough time. The fighting was fierce. So there he was on his knees in his foxhole praying to Our Lady of Guadalupe. A white guy was sitting there watching him. When the Mexican soldier got done he made the sign of the cross. And the white guy goes, 'Me too, Lupe!' "

Izavel loves that one too. Her grandpa smiles mischievously, eyes twinkling, mustache now gray and bushy.

Here's another thing you need to know about Sotero Soto: He is surrounded by adoring women—including Esther, his lively wife, eight daughters and seven granddaughters. He arrived in Olympia from Eagle Pass, Texas, in 1972 with eight females and a cat named Fluffy in a road-weary Oldsmobile sedan. After 2,124 miles, the wonder is they were all still talking. "Sotero is a very calm person," Esther says. *"He is,"* Izavel agrees. In all, there are 14 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

SOTERO SOTO was born in 1928, at Eagle Pass, the first American settlement on the Rio Grande. Bordering the Mexican state of Coahuila, Eagle Pass today is a city of some 28,000, 145 miles southwest of San Antonio. When Soto was born the population was barely

5,500. It was lot less Latino than today's 97 percent. Sotero grew up bilingual. "Everyone got along."

His parents, Benigno and Victoria Gonzalez Soto, had 13 children and meager income. Benigno Soto practically grew up on a horse. He was a cowboy as a youth, working the cattle drives. He took a bad fall the year Sotero turned 5, suffering a head injury that triggered a stroke. "The doctor told him no more horse riding," Soto remembers. "So he began working in farming around Quemado, a little town out of Eagle Pass. As a kid, I worked for 10 cents an hour. I'd ride the horse to and from school, then work in the fields. The whole family worked. Our home consisted of huts that we built ourselves—adobe over timbers, with mud for mortar. They were nice and warm in the winter and cool in the summer. The boys in the family had a separate hut. I used to do my schoolwork by oil lamp."

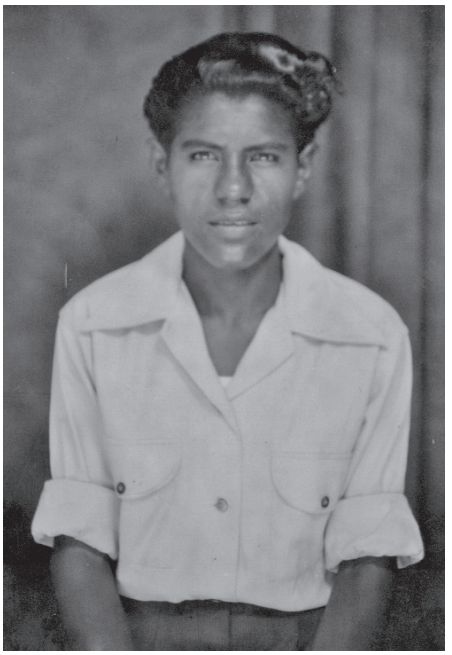
Sotero's great-grandfather, right, was a Texas cowboy. *Soto collection*

Esther Soto chimes in: "I tell my grandkids, 'Hey, you are millionaires compared to the way we were raised!' " Her spouse nods. "We had to work very hard, but family mattered a lot. Church mattered a lot. It was very close-knit. My parents were not educated, but they were smart. They always told us, 'Keep going to school!' My mother was a nice lady, but she was the disciplinarian. My father was one of the best fathers ever. He never belted his children. If you acted up he would say, 'Sit down. We've got to talk.' " Esther affirms this is so: "My father-in law, may God have him in Heaven, was so calm. When my mother-in-law started yelling, he would say, 'I'm going outside.' " Everyone around the Sotos' breakfast nook cracks up. Sotero clearly inherited his calm from his father.

Early on, Sotero also learned how to fish and shoot. "You'd catch catfish anyplace you dropped your line, so that part was easy. And when I could afford the ammunition for my .22, we'd go hunting for rabbits and squirrels."

His father was a good shot. He hunted predators by night and sold the skins. "When you were making $30 a month with 15 mouths to feed you had to do something" to help make ends meet, Sotero says. Come harvest time, everyone worked the fields.

U.S. border restrictions were lenient when Soto was a boy. "People could come and go just about any time they wanted." Together with families from the Mexican side of the Rio Grande, the Sotos traveled widely when crops were ripe, working their way from Texas to the Great Lakes. "When I was 8-9-10 years old, we'd migrate all the way to Ohio and Michigan—Wisconsin, too. When people tell me, 'Oh we had to work really hard in the fields!' I say, 'Don't tell me. *I know.* In Ohio we picked a lot of sugar beets, tomatoes



Sotero around 15 at Eagle Pass, Texas.
Soto collection

and potatoes, just about anything. When we drove to Ohio the first time we traveled there in a '35 Chevy four-door. We were packed in! My brother Jesus had a '31 Chevy with mechanical breaks. So we drove together in two cars, and that's how I learned to drive."

Soto dropped out of high school in the 9th grade to help his father. "I liked school, but I saw my dad struggling. My two older brothers had left home, so he needed me." For a while, Soto flirted with becoming a jockey. "I was tall, about 5-7, maybe even 5-8 by then, but I only weighed about 110 pounds. So I was light enough. I ran one race. Didn't win but it was close. My dad said, 'That's it for you. You're done.' He had told me things I needed to know, and watched me closely during the race, so I couldn't understand why he said I had to quit. 'All of those jockeys have experience over you,' he said. 'You're going to have an accident and get hurt. It can be done with just a stirrup' while the riders are maneuvering for position. It was good advice, Soto says. "He was looking out for me."

With his M1 at Fort Riley, Kansas.
Soto collection

Soto was 13 when America entered World War II. "At first, I couldn't imagine that it was true—that the Japanese really had attacked us. Then we saw the newsreels. That was the way we saw the news throughout the war. The beaches red with blood; those battles in Germany and the South Pacific. My brother and cousins and the majority of Mexicans—*Texans*—around that little farm place went in the service. Anybody who was old enough for miles around."

As a teenager, Soto drove trucks in the farm fields of Wisconsin. Then he landed a job as a school bus driver before graduating to charter buses. "I wanted to continue school, but it didn't seem possible since I had dropped out. If I could have gone to college I would have wanted to study history more than anything else. History teaches us

important things. I wish I'd had enough education to write a story about my brother and all other Hispanics from Texas who went to war."

They're all part of the story he's telling you right now. Soto is too modest. This remarkably self-educated man who devours the newspaper every morning is a natural-born storyteller. It's part of his Native American/Hispanic DNA.

WHEN THE North Koreans stormed across the 38th Parallel on June 25, 1950, it was Soto's turn to go to war. He was 21 years old and headed nowhere in particular in a hurry, other than the long and winding roads between the Midwest and Texas. In Milwaukee, he volunteered for the Air Force and passed all the physical and written tests, unaware that a draft notice had arrived at Eagle Pass. He was in the Army now. After basic training in Kansas, Soto was selected for combat engineers' school at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. It was an intense, 16-week course on all manner of military engineering techniques—"mines, explosives and demolitions, fixed and floating bridges, camouflage and concealment, and map and aerial photo reading." Early on, the training instructor—a tough old platoon sergeant from World War II—spotted Soto's natural leadership skills. Soto tells how it happened:

> One day the sergeant was called to a meeting in the orderly room. "I'll be right back," he said. "Just stand at ease." That got tiresome. Somebody hollered, "Is there anyone who can march us?" I said, "OK, I can do it," because I had paid close attention to the way we drilled. I got us in formation and started giving orders: Hup, hup, back and forth. Unbeknownst to me, our sergeant came up behind me. When I turned

Soto, right, drills the platoon at Combat Engineer School. *Soto collection*

around, I thought, "Uh-oh! I'm gonna get it now!" and jumped back in line. "You come back here!" the sergeant shouted. "From now on every time I leave, you take over the platoon. You march 'em to eat every day."

At the end of eight weeks of combat engineer training, he picked me out as a cadre to train other soldiers. Then we had another eight weeks of engineer training. In the final test, I placed No. 2. There were 26 of us in all. The others all had at least a year of college; most had two or three years. I hadn't seen the door of a college. I hadn't even graduated high school. I felt good at what I'd accomplished.

Private Sotero Soto arrived at Pusan on the heel of the Korean peninsula in June of 1951 and immediately headed north to hook up with the 3rd Battalion of the 35th Infantry Regiment. The "Cacti" regiment—originally formed in Arizona in 1916—had been in savage combat for a year, winning a Presidential Unit Citation early on. In that first brutal winter it was embroiled in "hard, dirty battles to push the Reds northward, only to have gains lost with the Chinese spring offensive."

"To understand the role of the Army engineers in the Korean War is to understand the perverse nature of combat; the engineers built, fought, destroyed and built again," T.A. Kaminski wrote in a history of combat engineers in Korea. "During that spring offensive, the 3rd Engineers adopted the slogan 'Where danger goes dynamite makes the way.' "

In the months to come, Soto would earn his stripes and combat infantryman badge in situations where danger was ever-present. When it came to explosives, he proved to be particularly resourceful at making the way. Soto puts it even better: "Whatever it took." They bulldozed roads; used logs and sandbags to construct bunkers; planted land mines in barbed-wire barriers; blended napalm with gasoline in 55-gallon drums that created curtains of flaming terror when detonated remotely.

One day, Soto saw a scrap heap of the cardboard tubes 60mm mortar rounds arrived in. Imagine a giant Pringles can, with a tin top and bottom. Soto had a bright idea: He recycled the tubes into napalm grenades, with time-delay fuses. The first time his guys rolled one into an enemy bunker, it was instantaneous adiós. He also jury-rigged land mines from the containers for artillery rounds. The

A mortar and its cardboard tube.
U.S. Army photo

higher-ups were impressed. *Stars & Stripes*, the American military newspaper, took note later in the war when the Army produced a batch at a base in Japan. Soto is galled to this day that his inventions were credited to "some officer or enlisted man whose name has been forgotten."

IN THE RUGGED HILLS north of the 38th Parallel, Soto had his first close call in the fall of 1951:

> We were sent to bridge a gully with buried fuel drums so tanks could advance. All of a sudden we started getting mortar fire. They shouted for us to take cover behind a tank. When the driver began trying to move backward or forward I ran out to find a place to hide. I spotted a hole where one of the mortar shells had landed. It was three or four feet deep, and I dove in. When the shelling stopped, I took off my helmet, which was full of mud between the liner and the steel. "Boy, that was close!" I said to myself. Just then a round landed right on the hood of a Jeep. Have you ever run your whole life through your mind in seconds? That's what it's like in combat.

Combat engineers try to dislodge a burned out tank. *Department of Defense photo*

With his First Sergeant in Korea. *Soto collection*

Fighting in towns and villages was especially frightening, Soto remembers, "because you never know who's around the corner." He learned to shoot with either hand to limit his exposure. The enemy had no scruples about using civilians as shields or decoys. They even hid machine-gunners in the columns of refugees, who were mostly young and old, the men under 40 having been conscripted for the army. "They had all their belongings on their backs or in carts," Soto says. "We tried to help them whenever we could. The little kids broke your heart."

The promotions came quickly as Soto showed his mettle. He was a sergeant before the end of summer, a staff sergeant by winter and a sergeant first class by the spring of 1952. At that rate, a battlefield commission to lieutenant seemed likely. "With casualties, promotions and transfers, the company would get orders to fill ranks," Soto explains. "The officers made the decisions on who got promoted. 'Here's your papers,' they'd say. 'You're now a sergeant!' And that was that. By the end, I was functioning as the second lieutenant of my platoon because we didn't have an officer." One day when his platoon was absorbing heavy fire, Soto called the artillery to say he needed some rounds in a hurry:

"Who are you?"

"Sergeant Soto!"

"I'm sorry, sergeant. Can't do it. We need an officer."

"Look, I don't have a platoon lieutenant. I'm the commander. And I need help *now—not tomorrow!"*

He got it.

There's an old saying in the service: "RHIP," which stands for Rank Has Its Privileges. Sergeant Soto soon acquired a Jeep, with a Greek kid from Utah as his driver. When the fighting lulled, they'd make supply runs to the Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals, trading ammo for whatever the doctors and nurses had stockpiled. "I watch M*A*S*H on TV practically every day," Soto says with a grin. "It brings back such memories because I used to deal and wheel with the medical people whenever I could. My colonel would say, 'Sergeant Soto, take whatever we've got to trade and don't forget to get me a fifth of whiskey!' I never forgot."

What Soto missed most was his mother's home cooking:

> One day as we passed a column of refugees I said to my driver, "I wonder what they're carrying in all those baskets? Pull in close." He drove alongside. I stood up and, man, what do I see but a whole mess of hot peppers! I grabbed a handful, gave them something in exchange and took 'em back to where we were camped. I gathered the Mexicans around me. We had peppers that night! I knew they made hot stuff in Korea but I found out for myself what kimchee was all about. I think that's what the North Koreans had as rations. When we were on patrols, going slow through a canyon I'd get a sniff of garlic. I would tell the guys, "Better be careful. Go slow! Always stop every so often and see what you can smell!" We found the enemy every time when they were having their lunch. At first the other guys didn't believe I could detect 'em that way. Then they learned I was right.

Dealing with prisoners was tricky business. Sometimes they were docile, especially when wounded. It was well known that the Americans gave POWs the best medical care possible. Sometimes, however, they were dangerously defiant. "That's where Mexicans had an advantage," Soto says, smiling. "The North Koreans and Chinese knew the Mexicans have a reputation as knifers! We always carry a knife for defending ourselves. One day, as two or us were advancing up a hill where some of our guys were in trouble, an officer says, "Hey you! Take these wounded prisoners down to regional headquarters." It was getting dark, so Soto told the prisoners they had to run. After he granted them a break, they refused to get going again. His buddy suggested shooting at their feet. Soto had another idea:

> There was a big rock there. I sat on it, pulled out my bayonet and started sharpening it. I got a blade of grass, sliced it in half—whish—and kept honing my blade. Those prisoners were just staring at me. I took my helmet off so they could see I was Hispanic. All of a sudden I stood up and made like I was going to lunge at one of them. Let me tell you, he got right up! I told my friend, "Put your bayonet on your rifle. Let's go!" And off we went. No more trouble.

THE ARMISTICE talks that began in July of 1951 came in the wake of a successful U.N. offensive. The battle for control of Korea became a war of outposts and hilltop by hilltop defensive battles, smaller in scale but no less lethal.

"As early spring temperatures rose and the ground thawed, roads became axle deep," 35th Infantry Regiment historians wrote of the stalemate. "Yet a day did not go by

in which some American soldier did not risk his life for his comrades on some nameless Korean hillside." To Sotero Soto, Korea became "one hill after another" along the U.N.'s front lines. The regiment's historians put it this way: "The typical outpost consisted of a number of bunkers and interconnecting trenches ringed with barbed wire and mines perched precariously on the top of a barren, rocky hill. …With upwards of 6,000 rounds of incoming artillery a day, the Allied troops could not get much rest."

The combat engineers were always in the thick of it. Some of those battles have famous names. Soto has three campaign stars on his Korean Service ribbon. He was at the Punchbowl and the Iron Triangle, though the names invented by the headline writers never registered with him.

> Maybe I was the only one back then who didn't know the names of battles and whether a hill was Number 682 or whatever. I worried about staying alive and keeping my guys alive. That was my main thing. I would ask the members of my platoon when I talked with them to get to know them better, "OK, in your way of thinking who is number one? Your family? Your girlfriend? Your wife?" And they would say, "My wife" or "My mother." Then I would say, "You're wrong. *You're number one!* Because without number one, number two has a problem to survive, especially a wife. Make sense?" And they would say, "You know what, sergeant—you're right."

As 1952 was winding down, Soto received orders to rotate back to the States. It was the night before his outfit was set to take a strategic hill. "I had been taught how to read aerial maps, so I knew exactly what was happening." He said he'd stay another month. A lieutenant who spoke Spanish told him he was nuts in two languages: "¿estás loco?"—"You got orders. You're going home!"

With mixed emotions about who should be number one, Soto went home to teach soldiers how to survive. "And when my replacement went up that hill he got wounded."

Sotero, right, with four pals at combat engineer school. *Soto collection*

The Sotos on their wedding day in 1956.
Sotero collection

AFTER A BRIEF STAY at Fort Lewis, Soto was sent to Fort Worden at Port Townsend, where the Strait of Juan de Fuca flows into Puget Sound. The 2nd Engineer Special Brigade, stationed there when the Korean War erupted, was one of the first Army units mobilized. Soto was now assigned to train replacements.

He was discharged from the Army in September of 1953, a few weeks after the bloody, frustrating war in Korea ended in a stalemate right where it started. Fort Worden's days as a military outpost were over, too.

Soto's mother had prayed ceaselessly that he would not be one of the nearly 37,000 soldiers who never came home from Korea. She begged him to leave the Army. He was reluctant at first. He was up for master sergeant, which paid $206 per month, the equivalent of around $1,900 today. It seemed like even more back then, especially compared to wages in Eagle Pass. There was also the promise of a pension. But riding a desk wasn't his idea of a career advancement. "I later thanked her," Soto says, "because I maybe wouldn't have made it out of Vietnam alive. She lived to be 102."

He went home to Texas, met Esther, fell in love, got married and started having daughters. "For a long time, all the things I saw in Korea were stuck in my mind and I would wake up yelling. A friend of mine right there in Eagle Pass killed himself because he had seen too much. It was stuck in his head and he never tried to work it out. I worked it out. We need to do more for our veterans."

Soto landed a government job during construction of the dams across the Rio Grande at Del Rio about an hour north of Eagle Pass. Laid off, he picked up a job driving truck. He was living payday to payday in 1972 when a friend who owned Moreno's restaurant in Olympia called. "He said he needed help, and sent me a ticket. I flew up here on Labor Day, stayed three days and then flew back to talk it over with my family. I told them we could come up here and maybe work a few months or a year and save some money. 'Then if most of you want to go back to Texas, we'll go back.' At Thanksgiving I looked around the table and said, 'Raise your hand who wants to go back.' *Nobody.* 'And who wants to stay here?' *Everyone raised their hand!* So we had a new home." The Sotos' eighth daughter was born Washington.

Sotero and Esther with their daughter Becky Soto-Ortiz, left, and granddaughters Izavel Ortiz and Ofelia Hernandez, right. *John Hughes photo*

Maria "Becky" Soto-Ortiz, the Sotos' Number Four daughter and Izavel's mom, is the Bilingual Family Liaison at Shelton High School. When the Sotos arrived in Olympia 45 years ago, there were under a thousand people of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity in Thurston County. Today there are 17,787, roughly the same number as in the entire state in 1970. "It was really different from Eagle Pass. The weather, the community, the language. We'd come from a community that was all Spanish—the stores, the music, your neighbors. *Everything*. You knew where the English-speaking people lived and where they hung out; they had their own world and we had ours," Becky remembers. But the Sotos soon settled in, made friends and reveled in the beauty of the Northwest. The racism they encountered was mostly subtle. One vivid exception sticks in Becky's mind. At the supermarket one day she encountered a dolt who declared, "Why don't you go back to where you came from?" She tells what happened next:

> The manager, to his credit, ended up kicking him out. At first I started feeling down. I was upset. I was crying! Then something in me just came out. That man had gone into the men's bathroom. I swung open the door and stood back. I wagged my finger and said, "Let me tell you something: I can't believe that my dad went to war for people like you! He fought in the Korean War and we are more Americans than your granddaddy!" He was so ignorant. "Get out! Get out!" He just kept

jabbering. Luckily, he is in the minority.

Soto went on to work at the landmark Oyster House, a popular lunch spot for administrators from the Olympia School District. Impressed by his efficiency and demeanor, they asked if he'd ever thought about working for the district. "When do I start?" Soto said. Within weeks he had a new job. He loved being a custodian. The best part was being around the kids.

He's retired now, living with Esther in a cozy home along the bucolic Little Rock Road outside Tumwater, with grandchildren nearby. He goes outside to smoke the "Indian-brand" cigarettes Esther buys him at the reservation smoke shop. "It's a bad habit," Soto acknowledges, "but I've been smoking since I was 15, and the doctor said that if they haven't killed me by now quitting won't do much good." He lets out a what-the-hell laugh as a Calico cat, his carport companion, meows.

When Soto goes to town he always wears his Korea Veteran cap. He wants you to remember the forgotten war.

John C. Hughes


NAM
PYO
PARK

Eyewitness to History

Nam Pyo Park's visitor apologized for his ignorance of Korean beyond yes, no, hello, goodbye and thank you. The handsome old general smiled warmly and said it was OK; his English wasn't so hot, either. A few minutes later, however, he politely interrupted a translator to declare, *"I am a live witness of our whole history!"* He enunciated each word.

The moment was so powerful that the visitor remembered the formal way to say thank you—"Kahm-sa-hahm-nida."

Born in 1923, Major General Park witnessed the pivotal events of World War II in Asia—from Manchuria to Tokyo. After graduating from South Korea's military academy, he became a front-line officer during the brutal back-and-forth fighting that punctuated the Korean War. In the two decades that followed the uneasy armistice, he rose steadily to general officer, only to see his career derailed by politics.

The general came to Washington State in the 1970s and quickly emerged as a leader in Pierce County's growing Asian American community. Today, he is the highest-ranking *Korean* Korean War veteran in Washington State—perhaps in the entire U.S.

The general and his wife live modestly but contentedly in a house behind Fort Lewis. "I have lived in all different cultures—six countries!" he says in English, counting them off on his fingers: "Russia, Manchuria, Japan, North Korea, South Ko-

As a young lieutenant. *Park Collection*

General and Mrs. Park at the Korean War Memorial in Olympia with other "Forgotten War Remembered" honorees. At left, Amy Lt. Col. Barbara Jean Nichols. At right, Marine Corps Corporal Jim Evans and his wife Rita. *Ben Helle photo*

rea and America. United States is a very, very nice country. Freedom country!"

For any occasion honoring fellow veterans of "the forgotten war," General Park dons an immaculate dress-white uniform adorned with medals, six rows of service ribbons and the shoulder patches of the ROK's famed White Horse and Tiger divisions. At 94, his military bearing is still evident. Rank was irrelevant one day in the summer of 2017 after the general returned the salute of an 89-year-old U.S. Marine Corps corporal. Jim Evans of Hoquiam revealed he was one of the Americans surrounded by the Chinese in the bitterly cold winter of 1950. When Evans pulled out his harmonica, two old soldiers sang a lilting Korean folk song.

GENERAL PARK'S family roots run deep in the north half of the peninsula, now paradoxically named the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In truth, it is one of the least democratic places on earth. His father was an educator who became a resistance fighter after the Japanese formally annexed Korea in 1910. The general's parents and grandparents evaded the Japanese by moving around Manchuria for the next 30 years. In 1923, when General Park was born, his father was looking for work in China. The general's pregnant

mother had stayed in Vladivostok, the Russian port above North Korea, because she could speak passable Russian.

"My father was a principal of an elementary school in China," the general explains through a translator. "I was raised by grandpa and grandma while my parents were fighting for Korean independence. The Japanese made a new law when they invaded Manchuria in 1931 and established a new country (Manchukuo). If you cooperated you could go back to live in your town or village. But my mom didn't want to go back to the Manchu area. They went to the border in the mountains. My grandma was helping the independence fighters when the Japanese found out and killed her. I saw her killed." The general shakes his head. The horror of that moment is indelible. "The Korean Independence Association was in Shanghai. When the Japanese attacked there in 1937 and went on to massacre people in Nanking, many Koreans were also killed or put in labor camps and forced to work. Later, the Japanese killed my grandpa, too."

As Japan lunged toward World War II, 14-year-old Nam Pyo Park was excelling in the classroom and in all manner of sports. He learned Japanese in Manchuria and was offered a chance to attend school in Tokyo. "I had a teacher who graduated from a Japanese university. He came back to Korea as a teacher and sponsored me." It was a very difficult decision. "I was conflicted," he says. Japan was advancing everywhere in Asia and the Pacific, acquiring rubber, oil and the other raw materials to fuel an empire. Sublimating his resentment, he decided to bide his time. He would go to Japan, study hard and dream that one day he could live in a free and independent Korea. For now, however, he was forced to take a Japanese last name. "Instead of 'Park' I was now 'Arai.' If I didn't change my name they won't even accept my application."

By 1939 there were nearly a million Koreans in Japan. Most did menial work, making up for the labor shortages caused by the conscription of Japanese men for the military. Koreans at first were recruited. Then, as the war accelerated, they were ordered into the defense plants and factories, "often under appalling conditions," one historian notes.

Park graduated from high school in Japan and passed the rigorous entrance exams to attend one of the imperial universities in Tokyo. Promising Korean students were assumed to be destined for leadership roles in the post-war Japanese Empire.

In 1944, with the war going badly, Japan began conscripting Korean men into the armed forces or defense industries. "I was fortunate that my place of residence was Manchuria. They didn't touch Manchurian people" for the military, at least then, the general says. By the winter of 1945, life in Tokyo was a nightmare for civilians. Stringent rationing had given way to a daily struggle "to find enough food for bare subsistence," and the American Air Force was unleashing its big bombers with growing impunity. Still, people didn't know Japan was losing the war, the general remembers. They thought their sacrifices were merely their contribution to ultimate victory. "Tojo, their prime minister, didn't let people know the truth," the general says. "But he told the people and the media that all the Japa-

nese, every person, had to go out and become 'like a bullet whizzing through the wind' if the enemy ever comes." So ingrained was the warrior ethos that death was preferable to the dishonor of surrender.

The enemy arrived overhead with overwhelming fury in the early-morning hours of March 10, 1945. "It was Japanese Army Commemoration Day," a day for speech-making to boost morale, the general remembers vividly. "I was out looking for food. I was poor so I had to be self-sufficient. Nearby there was a POW camp for captured Americans. They were hungry too. I went back to my friend's place and we shared some porridge. Suddenly all the lights went out and the sky was filled with American airplanes attacking Tokyo at that moment. The guns went Brrrrrrrrrr!" he remembers. People screamed in terror as napalm cluster bombs rained down from 279 silver-winged B-29s. Whole blocks burst into flame. When the firebombing ended, central Tokyo was in charred ruins; 100,000 civilians were dead, a million homeless.

Park set out for the house where he had rented a tiny room, only to discover "house is all gone! Everybody was killed. My student uniform was very important to me, and it was gone. I only had my student ID."

AFTER TWO atomic bombs persuaded the emperor to end the war, Park hopped a boat to Pusan, took a battered train to Seoul and from there began the trek north to his old hometown. "I expected that all the family would be back now that we had Korean independence from Japan. But no one showed up. I found that Stalin had taken all my family to Russia." Park would learn he had relatives "scattered from Turkestan in Central Asia to the Soviet Maritimes to northern China and Manchuria" as well as in both halves of a newly divided Korea.

"The communists were already there, in control of North Korea. They told me, 'Your family were independence fighters, so we can recognize you and you can go to Pyongyang and go to higher education.' But I could not do that." It was December of 1945. He fled back south to the U.S. zone below the 38th Parallel. The U.S. Army Military Government in Korea, headquartered in Seoul, established a Korean "constabulary" security force. With his university training, Park was a prime recruit. By 1946 he was in the second class of the Korea Military Academy.

Park was a young officer with the army of the Republic of Korea when the North Koreans, armed with Soviet-built artillery and tanks, surged across the 38th Parallel on June 25, 1950. They seized Seoul and forced the South Koreans into a desperate, fighting retreat. "Our soldiers fought bravely, but they were outnumbered," Park says. The North Korean juggernaut drove the ROK Army and its American allies back to a defensive perimeter at Pusan.

General MacArthur's audacious amphibious landing at Inchon in September turned the tide of war—temporarily at least. The allies liberated Seoul, captured Pyongyang, the

North Korean capital, and were moving north with a full head of steam when the Chinese, 300,000-strong, entered the war and repelled the advance. "We were heading for the Amnok River (the Yalu) when we got orders to withdraw," Park remembers. "That was really, really hard. Everybody cried! We could see a united Korea. Our U.S. Army officer said it was an order we had to obey. General MacArthur wanted to push ahead—go all-out. In Korea he's still our hero."

The war settled into a bloody stalemate. Park became a 28-year-old colonel.

In 1952, he was selected to attend the U.S. Army's Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia. "Many people [from my division] applied. Only three passed the test. I was one of them," the general says proudly. "I trained in Georgia for six months. The United States paid $150, plus $30 from the Korean government. So I have $180," he tells the translator, before guffawing in English, "Big money! I'm rich!" He went to New York City on leave, hoping to see maestro Arturo Toscanini conduct a symphony, only to discover the tickets had sold out months earlier. A *New York Times* reporter overhead the unhappy exchange at the box office. "He said, 'You've fought in the Korean War! Wait a minute.' And they found us tickets!" The general listens to classical music every morning.

Park returned to combat early in 1953. The war had devolved into a hilltop by hilltop defensive struggle. President Eisenhower wanted the U.S. to cut its losses. That July, an armistice was signed. It ended the bloodshed, but left Korea more divided than ever. The Republic of Korea's military casualties were just short of one million, including 227,800 dead. The U.S. recorded nearly 170,000 casualties, 33,642 killed in action. The communist casualties topped 1.5 million, of which a staggering 900,000 were Chinese. And millions of civilians perished in a civil war of epic proportions, fought in an area the size of Utah.

General Park had relatives fighting for North Korea. The fate of some remains unknown. "The war is not over," he says, shaking his head at the dangerous provocations of North Korea's erratic young dictator, Kim Jong-un. "But all the dictatorships in the history of the world eventually failed. Hitler is gone. Stalin too." He last heard from a nephew in North Korea in the 1990s. "In 2000 we sent him a package, but now it's not allowed. We don't know how he's doing."

GENERAL PARK was decorated by President Eisenhower for his work with the American military during the war. He became deputy director of the Graduate School of National Defense. He served as director of the ROK's infantry training center from 1968 to 1970 when he received his second star. He says he was forced into retirement by his old military academy classmate, Park Chung-hee, who had seized power in a 1961 military coup. Park Chung-hee weeded out potential rivals he styled as leftists. "My North Korea home background was a pretext," the general says.

Simultaneously authoritarian and the architect of his country's emergence as a global economic power, Park Chung-hee is a controversial figure in Korean history. By the

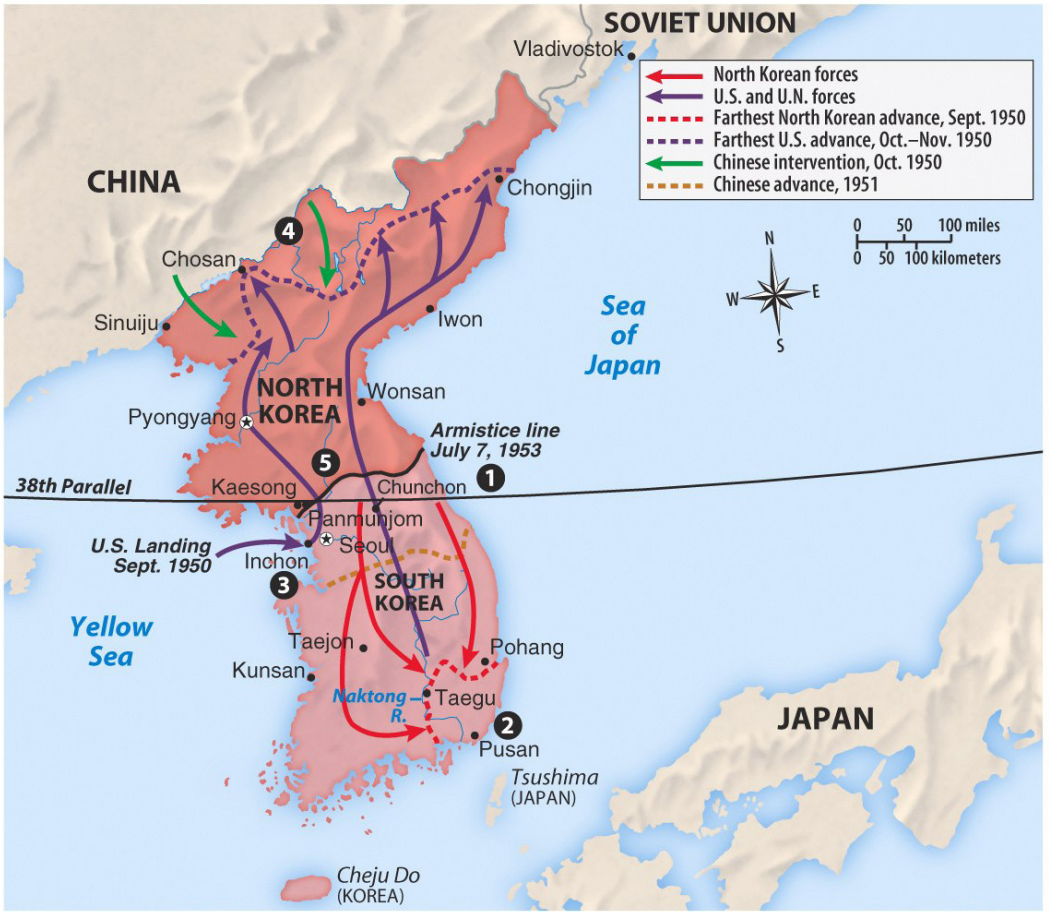
time Park was assassinated in 1979 by another of their classmates, the general had retired to Tacoma, drawn in part by Pierce County's respect for its military population. "America is the best country in respect to human rights," the general says. "I am very grateful to America for coming to help us in the war. When they started work on fundraising for a Korean War memorial in Olympia, I wanted to show our appreciation to the U.S. and the American people. The consul general called and we talked about how we could help. I became a fundraising chairman, and we raised $58,000 for the memorial. Koreans weren't so wealthy then, but I had 48 meetings over three years. We received donations from all over the state—Spokane, Walla Walla, everywhere. Sometimes people could only donate $5; some gave us $500. To each we say, 'Thank you very much!' " The impressive memorial on the Capitol Campus at Olympia was dedicated in 1993.

Park Collection

The general turned 94 in 2017—95, if you count birthdays the traditional Korean way. (In Korea, you are one year old at birth, and a year older on New Year's Day—not on your actual birthday.) He is busy promoting a Korean War memorial at Federal Way. "When I came here, I was poor because I left everything in Korea. But my third son came here and went to engineering school at WSU; he got a student loan and paid on it for 18 years!"

There were 200 in his class at the Korean military academy. "Only five are left," he says wistfully. "I went to Korea three years ago to meet with them. Korea is my home, but I appreciate that I could live my later years in the United States, this great country. The U.S.-Korea alliance will never break. Korean people never break."

John C. Hughes


SOVIET UNION
Vladivostok
North Korean forces
U.S. and U.N. forces
Farthest North Korean advance, Sept. 1950
Farthest U.S. advance, Oct.–Nov. 1950
Chinese intervention, Oct. 1950
Chinese advance, 1951
0 50 100 miles
0 50 100 kilometers
N
W
E
S
CHINA
Chongjin
Chosan
Sinuiju
Iwon
Sea of Japan
NORTH KOREA
Wonsan
Pyongyang
Armistice line July 7, 1953
38th Parallel
Kaesong
Chunchon
Panmunjom
U.S. Landing Sept. 1950
Inchon
Seoul
SOUTH KOREA
Yellow Sea
Taejon
Pohang
Kunsan
Naktong R.
Taegu
Pusan
JAPAN
Tsushima (JAPAN)
Cheju Do (KOREA)
1
2
3
4
5

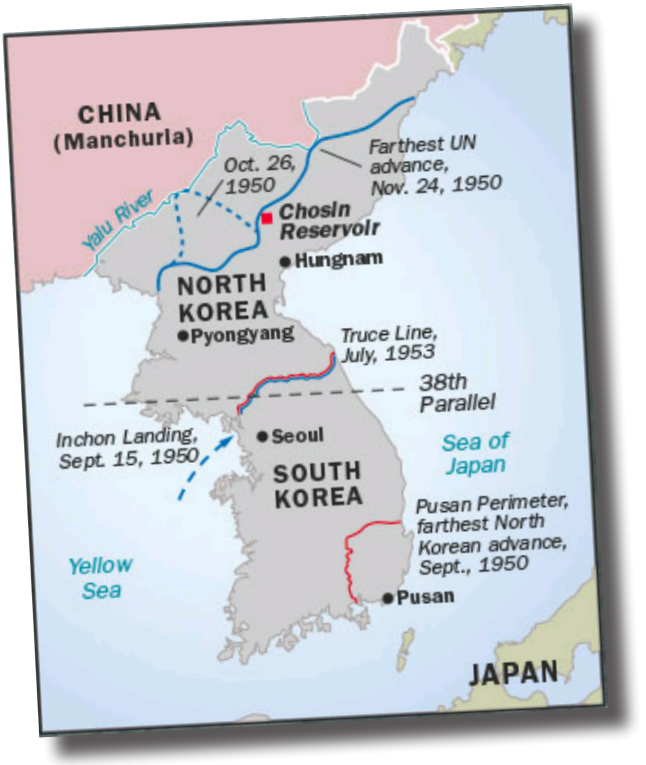
JIM EVANS

The Chosin Few

Jim Evans, an old Marine, rubs his toes and scooches a little closer to the stove. His feet ache, especially when it's cold. This freezing February day, a few miles north of Hoquiam along Highway 101, is balmy compared to the winter he endured 67 years ago when a cold front plowed into North Korea from Siberia. In 1950, Private First Class Evans was 5,000 miles from home in the craggy mountains surrounding a man-made lake called the Chosin Reservoir.*

How cold was it? "Thirty-five below zero seems to be the agreed-upon low," says Evans, who has read dozens of articles and books about the Korean War. "That's not counting the wind chill, so when some guys say it was 50 below maybe that's their rationale. When it gets that cold, another 10 degrees doesn't matter much. I couldn't feel my feet unless I stomped up and down and kept moving. But I kept them dry. That was important. Some guys lost their toes. Others their feet. And thousands of guys lost their lives. I'm one of the lucky ones."

Jim Evans is one of "The Chosin Few," a fraternity of soldiers who fought in one of history's most storied battles.



GENERAL Douglas MacArthur was certain he had the Reds on the run. He deployed his U.N. troops like armored pincers, intent on crushing the North

* Though "The Battle of Chosin Reservoir" is etched indelibly in U.S. Marine Corps history, Koreans chafe at "Chosin" because it is a reminder of the Japanese occupation of their country from 1910 to 1945. U.N. commanders during the Korean War used maps that featured Japanese place names The Korean name for the reservoir is Changjin Lake.

Marines stage their historic breakout from the Chosin Reservoir in December of 1950.
Corporal Peter McDonald, USMC photo

Korean army. "They would close the divide between them, form a solid front, and then race north before the long and brutal Korean winter settled in." Puffing his trademark corncob pipe, MacArthur told reporters, "This should for all practical purposes end the war and restore peace and unity to Korea." Some of his troops might even be home by Christmas, the general said.

The Marines had turkey for Thanksgiving—cold turkey, granted, but turkey all the same. As Christmas neared, some 30 miles below the Yalu River, they felt like mincemeat. They were outnumbered at least 8 to 1 by the Chinese army. Chairman Mao Zedong had sprung a massive offensive to support his communist ally and protect his borders. One wag posted a sign that said there were "only 18 shopping days" left.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, David Douglas Duncan, a LIFE Magazine combat photographer, captured the equivalent of *War and Peace* when he spotted a vacant-eyed, freezing GI clutching a can of C-Rations somewhere along the Chosin Reservoir. "I asked him, 'If I were God, what would you want for Christmas?' He just looked up into the sky and said, 'Give me tomorrow.' "

The 1st Marine Division, Jim Evans' outfit, recorded 11,700 casualties in the breakout from the Chosin Reservoir—7,300 just from the cold. Old Marines like Jim have learned that cold injury is an incurable disease that only gets worse with age.

IN 1776, soldiers of the Continental Army, "spread thinly along the banks of the frozen Delaware River," were also cold and dispirited as Christmas approached. Some, lacking shoes, left bloody footprints in the snow. Jim Evans' third great-grandfather, John Hurlbut III, was a 16-year-old flintlock infantryman. His Rhode Island regiment was part of a force of 2,400 Patriots handpicked for a daring raid General Washington hoped would turn the tide. Around

Rita Evans embraces her husband at the Korean War Memorial on the Capitol campus. *Ben Helle photo*

midnight on December 26th, they began boarding flat-bottomed boats to cross the river and storm the British post at Trenton, New Jersey. Taken by surprise, the garrison's Hessian pickets were overpowered. And when the Patriots unlimbered their cannons, the rout was on. "Washington did not lose a single man," historians at the Smithsonian wrote. "News of the triumph heartened Patriots everywhere, and the prisoners and captured colors were paraded through Philadelphia." It was a timely victory for a bedraggled volunteer army. Re-enlistments soared. When America's independence was secured, Captain Hurlbut went on to teach school, farm and found a whiskey distillery.

When Jim Evans heard Hurlbut's life story for the first time in 2016, he let out a chortle. "Well, don't that make you blink? Rita, did you hear all that?" he asked his wife, as if she hadn't. "Bow down!" She just shook her head and grinned. "Don't get conceited!" Rita is 18 years Jim's junior. It's the second marriage for both. Clearly a good one. They make one another laugh and have hundreds of friends. Rita, a Northup, is from pioneer stock on the Olympic Peninsula.

Jim retired from Interstate Asphalt Company in Aberdeen nearly 30 years ago. He and Rita live in a comfortable old house on a hillside. There's an apple orchard out back, a 1932 Ford dump truck in the driveway and an Indian canoe in the front yard near the Marine Corps flag. The block-long 1965 Cadillac convertible Jim restored for Rita is secure in a shed. There's a wire-wheeled 1938 MG-TA roadster in the basement. It doesn't run any more but it's all there. You can tell it used to be British Racing Green.

Jim Evans is the kind of guy who knows a lot of stuff and enjoys helping others. In 1950, with bullets whizzing past his helmet, he figured there was a distinct possibility he'd never see his 25th birthday, so you won't hear him kicking much about the aches and pains that multiply as you approach 90.

Dabbling in genealogy, Jim and Rita knew the roots of his family tree run deep, just not so wide. He is also descended from Alsatian German Mennonites who arrived in Pennsylvania around 1715 to avoid persecution by both Catholics and Lutherans; and from Welsh immigrants whose offspring made their way from Virginia to Iowa and Kansas. Jim's paternal grandfather fought for the Union in the Civil War. The branches, improbably, stretch all the way to Humptulips, where Jim was born on November 2, 1927, the son of a logging camp locomotive engineer.

Growing up at Humptulips, Jim was the baby of the family. *Evans collection*

"When I was in the Marines, the First Sergeant squinted at my records, looked up and said, 'Evans, where in the hell is Humptulips?!' " It's about halfway between Hoquiam and Lake Quinault on Highway 101. The Post Office for 98552 is next door to the general store/gas station. Truckers and motorcyclists stop for a smoke and a Twinkie. Back when Jim was born, there were logging camps for miles around. Humptulips once boasted several dozen houses, a hotel and a school, even a community band.*

JIM HAD a resourceful, resilient mother—a good thing, too, because he says his father largely disappeared when he was around 5. "He had shell-shock—today we call it PTSD—from serving in World War I and he corrected that with alcohol. I barely knew him. My mom was a strong woman who lived to be 96. When my dad split, she had five kids to support, including three from a previous marriage that also went south. We moved into town and she took in washing to pay the bills. She hated it, but we went on welfare during the Depression. I can well remember the cornmeal mush we ate all the time. What was left over was fried corn meal. We did a lot of cheese bricks and raisins. Sometimes when we got oatmeal I thought we had died and gone to heaven."

An enterprising boy, Evans at 14 was hired by a tug boat captain turned grocer to oversee the store from 6 to 10 most nights. "I did everything—sliced the lunch meat,

* The Salish-speaking Humptulips Indians (Xamtu'lapc) had several villages along the river that now carries their name. Legendary for its steelhead, the river was difficult to ascend in a canoe, so the natives called it "humptulips," which meant "hard to pole." Some sources say the word also means "chilly region." In a winter drizzle, that one fits too. In 1889, an enterprising settler bought up 480 acres and divided the land into lots for a stillborn "Humptulips City." There has been a store at the crossroads since the 1890s.

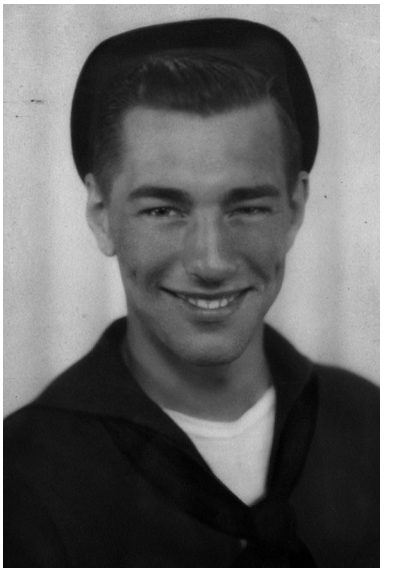
minded the till. I think he was crazier than hell for letting a kid assume all that responsibility, but he didn't know anything about retail sales, and I didn't let him down. It was quite an education."

On December 5, 1941, Jim's social studies teacher at Aberdeen High School told the class, "I don't know how many of you realize it but we are closer to war with Japan than we are with Germany." At twilight two days later, Jim was riding his new Columbia bicycle past a statue of a World War I Doughboy when the lights began to go out in every house. He switched off the light on his bike and pedaled faster. Before long, a caravan of trucks from Fort Lewis was rolling through town. Some military experts believed that if it came to war, the Japanese were likely to launch their invasion of the West Coast by landing along the lightly defended beaches on either side of Grays Harbor. "Everyone had their curtains drawn tight and windows blacked out," Evans remembers. "A Japanese girl who was one of my sister's classmates suddenly disappeared. The family was sent to an internment camp. People of German ancestry were nervous too. Everyone was nervous."

Boeing established three subassembly plants on Grays Harbor to manufacture parts for B-17s and B-29s. The Harbor's machine shops began cranking out shell-casings and hand-grenade parts. "You could get a job if you were lukewarm!" Evans remembers. "I started working part-time at Grays Harbor Prefab, which made boxcar parts. I got to drive a forklift and a big old lumber carrier, the kind that straddled a load of lumber. The kids always said that if you spotted one that wasn't loaded, you could ride your bicycle right under it as it was going down the road."

Jim's older half-brother, a Marine, was somewhere in the Pacific. "His winter greens were hanging in the closet. So on high-school Graduation Day 1945, I put on his uniform; it fit perfectly, too. I got up on the stage and sang the Marine Corps Hymn. I think about a dozen of us 17-year-olds were the only boys left in our senior class. The rest were already in the service."

The war was winding down. Evans signed up for the Merchant Marines, graduating from the U.S. Maritime Service Training School in California. He danced with Marlene Dietrich at the Hollywood Canteen and joined a choir that accompanied Bing Crosby at a war bond rally. Evans can still boom the refrain "Buy a bond! Buy a bond today!" But the voice that was once pitch perfect is now flat. For decades he sang bass in a barbershop quartet called the Chehalis Valley Stump Ranchers. He realized it was time to quit when the notes in his head began to sound muffled. "It was



In the Merchant Marines, 1945.
Evans collection

terrible," Evans laments. "That was one of my greater losses to old age."

In the fall of 1945, however, he was a young man on a freighter bound for Europe. "I turned 18 in Italy! The war was over, but the Italian men had not yet returned from POW camps. And a lot of them never would. So it was a good time to be a young guy in Trieste, even though there was rioting in the streets because Tito's Yugoslavs claimed the area ought to be theirs. That made for some excitement." In Venice, the black market was a bonanza for sailors and GI's. Evans traded six cartons of American cigarettes for an accordion. "Pretty soon everybody on the ship had an accordion! Anything that wasn't bolted down was used for barter. When we went into a restaurant, I said to myself, 'Jeeze this place looks familiar.' Blue Merchant Marine bedspreads were being used as table cloths. The waiter gave us an armload of Italian cash for one cartoon of Kools that had cost us 30 or 40 cents."

The Aberdeen Evans came home to in 1947 was buzzing, if a lot less exotic. He worked at a scrap yard until he mashed a finger, was hired as the head usher at the city's finest theater, got married and was working his way up to service manager at a tire store. In 1949, at the encouragement of friends, he joined them in Baker Company of the 11th Infantry Battalion of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. "At the time, I thought it was a really good idea," Evans says with a chuckle. Hey, he'd spend some summer-camp days in California with his pals in an elite corps—"semper fi!"—and earn a little extra money. One thing was for sure: He knew "next to nothing" about Korea. In that, he was hardly unique.

FROM 1910 to 1945, Korea was a virtual slave state to Imperial Japan. In the geopolitical maneuvering that followed World War II, the superpowers agreed to divide Korea at mid-peninsula along the 38th Parallel. The north now became a communist sphere, the south ostensibly democratic.

Believing South Korea was of "little strategic value to the United States," the Pentagon withdrew 45,000 American troops, leaving behind only 400 military advisers. MacArthur endorsed the decision. The Soviets pulled back too after installing a regime headed by Kim Il-sung, a former major in the Red Army and a doctrinaire Stalinist. Before long, Kim had nearly seven divisions equipped with the latest Soviet-made weaponry. Confident of victory, he was itching for civil war.

Syngman Rhee, the 73-year-old president of the Republic of Korea, appealed to the U.S. for more arms, telling President Truman his American advisers were "thinking in terms of piecemeal warfare, whereas we Koreans believe that when war comes it will be full scale and total."

On June 25, 1950, North Korean troops surged across the 38th Parallel and pushed south. Truman, stinging from Republican accusations that his administration had already "lost" China to the communists, vowed the aggression would not go unchecked. He hadn't flinched at using atomic bombs to end World War II. Now, however, Truman was anxious

to avoid igniting World War III, especially since combat-ready troops were in short supply. A reporter handed the president a euphemism that still prompts guffaws at meetings of the Marine Corps League and American Legion:

"Would it be possible to call this a police action under the United Nations?"

"Yes," the president said. "That is exactly what it amounts to."

That is exactly what it wasn't, or in any rate, what it would quickly become.

"If the best minds in the world had set out to find us the worst possible location to fight this damnable war, politically and militarily, the unanimous choice would have been Korea," Secretary of State Dean Acheson would recall.

FROM ABERDEEN TO ATLANTA, 33,500 Marine Corps Reservists were mobilized to reinforce the 1st Marine Division, which was deployed to defend the United Nations' Pusan Perimeter some 150 miles southeast of Seoul. All the bridges leading to the perimeter had been dynamited to create a redoubt. The Americans and South Koreans hunkered down, awaiting more troops and air support. The North Koreans now occupied 90 percent of the peninsula. It was imperative that the port of Pusan on the Sea of Japan not fall into enemy hands. Within eight months, military historians note, "reserves comprised 45 percent of all active-duty Marines." In Korea, 13 would receive the Medal of Honor.

"Some of the guys in Company B had joined up while still in high school," Jim

Evans, left, with two pals, Gerald Antich and Don Sellers, as Company B of the Marine Corps Reserves prepares to leave Aberdeen in the summer of 1950. *Evans collection*

Evans remembers. "They'd been to summer camp and knew how to handle an M1 rifle and a machine gun. I think I'd been to about a half-dozen meetings and lectures when—Bang!—we were called up on August 4, 1950. Five days later I was on a train headed for Camp Pendleton."

Baker Company's five officers and 145 enlisted men marched smartly through the heart of town and formed up in three long ranks in front of the Aberdeen Railroad Station as a crowd of family members and townspeople looked on. Pfc. Marion "Bogey" Bogdanovich, a star running back for the Grays Harbor College Chokers, saw his mom clutching her rosary, tears in her eyes.

When the Marines were at ease to say their goodbyes, Pfc. Tony Vlastelica stood head and shoulders above the throng as he hugged his girlfriend. The 6-5, hook-shooting center for the Aberdeen Bobcats had scholarship offers from 73 colleges. A roll call of the boys of Company B sounded like a page from the Zagreb phone book. Besides Bogey and Tony, the Harbor's large contingent of Croatian immigrants was represented by Jim's pals, Jerry and Jim Antich, plus Peter and Steve Bakotich, John Bebich, Bert Jovanovich, Steve Mihovilich and George Svicarovich. "All you itches line up over here!" Evans remembers a sergeant quipping when they got to California.

As the train chugged out of the station, Evans leaned out a window and waved goodbye to his wife.

RESERVISTS by the thousands poured into Camp Pendleton. If you had two years in the organized reserves, plus at least one summer camp and a minimum of 36 drills, it was next stop Korea.

Evans was in good shape—just under 6 feet tall, broad-shouldered and narrow-waisted at 165 pounds. He was older than many of the others but as green as a Marine can get. He was consigned to boot camp—a month of hell with squinty-eyed drill instructors barking in your face every waking hour. "I learned how to squirm along the ground under live machine-gun fire. We did 'The Grinder' over and over—running up a hill with a full pack, every muscle aching. I can still hear the DI's saying, 'Your souls belong to God, but your butts belong to the United States Marine Corps!' "

After four weeks, Evans was ordered to an audience with the First Sergeant. Even standing at attention it was hard not to notice that "CR" was stamped on the cover of his service folder in red four-inch letters. Evans ventured to ask what that meant. "Son, that means *Combattt Readddy!*" the First Sergeant shot back. Evans mimics his drawl, drawing out every syllable like Michael Buffer intoning, "Let's get readdddy to rumble!"

"It wasn't long after that that I found myself on the *USNS General Walker,* a troop ship en route to Japan, together with a lot of other seasick Marines."

Evans professes to not be superstitious. By then, however, he figured he'd grab any lucky charm available. "In Japan, just before we left for Korea, we were marching through a

field when I looked down. Here's this four-leaf clover. I broke formation and snatched that baby up. In the months ahead, I lost guys on either side of me—some very good guys. Somehow I escaped. And I don't know why." Evans shrugs, reaches for his wallet and fishes out the four-leaf clover. It's preserved under plastic.

Jim holds the laminated four-leaf clover he carries in his wallet. *John Hughes photo*

ON NOVEMBER 8, 1950, Pfc. Evans stepped ashore at Wonsan, a strategic North Korean port. He had just turned 23. The only present he got was live ammunition. The Marines of the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment, 1st Division—"1-1-1" for short—were now nearly a hundred miles north of the 38th Parallel. Evans was one of the replacement troops.

Six weeks earlier, General MacArthur's daring amphibious invasion at Inchon on the west side of the peninsula was an unequivocal triumph. "Except at high tide, the port was reduced to wide, oozing, gray mud flats." MacArthur's timing was perfect. Marines led the way as U.N. forces scrambled ashore at daybreak on September 15, catching the enemy by surprise. By nightfall, the North Koreans had been routed, with more than 35,000 casualties to 3,279 for the U.N. forces. By Sept. 25 Seoul was back in U.N. hands, together with a nearby prize—Kimpo airfield. The U.S. 8th Army, meanwhile, had broken out of the Pusan Perimeter. The North Korean Army, its supply lines interdicted, was in retreat, though still full of fight. The communist capital, Pyongyang, fell to the U.S. Army on October 19. When Bob Hope arrived to entertain the troops there were betting pools on when they'd be going home.

If Inchon was the boldest stroke of genius of MacArthur's legendary career, his hubris sent his troops a ridge too far. However, until MacArthur and his aides misjudged the Chinese, Truman was all in, relishing the victory headlines.

As U.N. troops advanced toward the Chinese border, Chairman Mao had seen enough. The Americans had sided with Chiang Kai-shek, his foe in the Chinese civil war. He figured MacArthur wasn't about to stop at the Yalu. Since July, Mao and Zhou Enlai, his foreign minister, had been "gearing up for a full-scale war with the United States," certain that

General MacArthur, with binoculars, observes the amphibious landings at Inchon. *National Archives photo*

the Americans wouldn't resort to nuclear weapons.*

At Unsan near the Chinese border, the People's Volunteer Army overwhelmed a South Korean infantry division moving toward a dam. Then, by accident, came the first encounter between Chinese and American troops. Swarming into battle on the night of November 1, 1950, the Chinese proceeded to crush the cavalry regiment on the U.S. 8th Army's right flank.

After five days, the Chinese suddenly disengaged. Though they were low on food and ammunition, it was also a ploy. MacArthur took it as a sign Mao had no appetite for escalation. The five-star general estimated Chinese troop strength inside North Korea at "no more than 30,000." His intelligence reports were spotty at best. In truth, there were 10 times that many, "waiting patiently for the U.N. forces to come a little deeper into their trap."

In *Douglas MacArthur, American Warrior*, an even-handed 2016 biography of MacArthur, Arthur Herman notes:

> It is important, however, to remember that MacArthur had good reason to believe that the tools of victory were still in his grasp. [H]e enjoyed overwhelming air superiority. He also had complete control of the seas on either side of the Korean peninsula, with ample port facilities for resupply. Even more, he had a battle-tested army on the march against a devastated North Korean enemy and a primitively equipped Chinese foe in worrisome but still (he believed) manageable numbers.
>
> In his mind the only things that stood in the way of final triumph

* MacArthur was itching to drop atomic bombs along the Yalu River corridor. Earlier, with the support of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, President Truman had publicly affirmed he wasn't ruling out the use of nuclear weapons in Korea. He authorized the Strategic Air Command to transport nine nuclear bombs to Okinawa as a contingency. Truman's successor, retired five-star general Dwight D. Eisenhower, viewed nuclear weapons as a last resort. "If we have a nuclear exchange," Ike warned his advisers later in the Cold War, "we're not going to be talking about re-establishing the dollar. We're going to be talking about grubbing for worms."

were the doubters in Washington and the naysayers at the United Nations…

OBLIVIOUS TO EVENTS way above their pay grade, Evans and Jerry Antich, Jim's pal from Aberdeen, were now members of a new Baker Company. They were replacements for some hapless Marines who had been bayoneted in their sleeping bags. If ever there was a cautionary tale, that was it, Evans says.

"I don't think you ever get enough training to make you feel fully combat ready," Evans says. "There were a few guys all filled with bravado—'I'm going to go over there and get me some gooks!'—and all that kind of tough talk. But when they issue you live ammo and you're in a truck headed to the front with darkness falling, you realize what it means to be a Marine in combat. I was now 100 percent alert, looking around the hills for any sign of the enemy. That was the start of the escalation of that feeling that staying alert and composed under fire was a matter of life or death. You'd better learn that in a hurry."

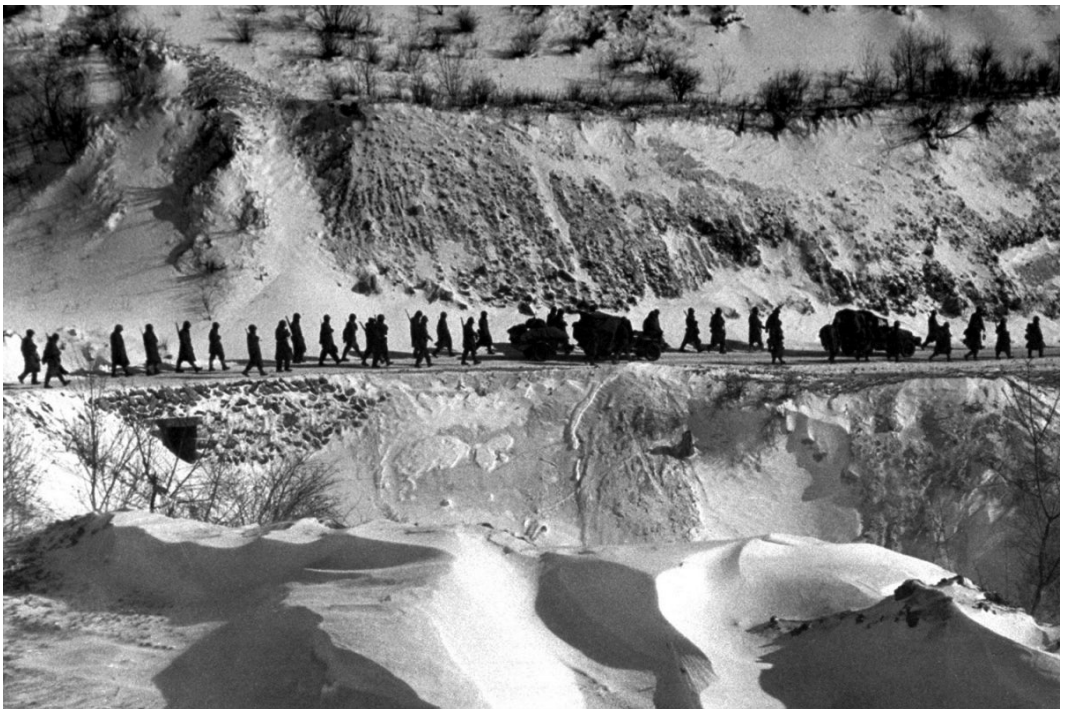
Evans was assigned as an ammo bearer in Baker Company's machine gun platoon, lugging two 250-round cans that weighed 25 or 30 pounds. "Plus you've got your pack and your M1 rifle. The joke was that ammo bearers started to look like an orangutan, with their arms dragging on the ground."

PUSHING AHEAD with his pincer strategy, General MacArthur was intent on the convergence of the 8th Army and the X Corps, which included the 1st Marine Division. In the rugged hills overlooking the Chosin Reservoir, the winding dirt roads were little more than ox-cart trails. If you strayed to the edge it was straight down. "Even Genghis Khan wouldn't tackle it," especially in the dead of winter, Major General O.P. Smith, a Marine for all seasons, would recall.

On the morning of November 27, an estimated 180,000 Chinese troops descended on the wounded 8th Army, which was outnumbered practically 10-to-one. That night, some 15,000 soldiers of the X Corps found themselves encircled by an enemy force of 120,000. The pincers were now Mao's. Edward "Ned" Almond, the fearless yet habitually over-confident X Corps commander, refused to believe his troops were outmanned. "We're still attacking and we're going all the way to the Yalu," Almond famously declared. "Don't let a bunch of goddamn Chinese laundrymen stop you!"

The Chinese became "a human battering ram of one massed infantry regiment following another on a narrow front, heedless of casualties as the Americans poured on everything they had: rifle fire, machine-gun fire, artillery firing nearly at point-blank range," Arthur Herman wrote. "Then slowly, inevitably, the Americans would give ground, gathering up their casualties, and fall back to the next line of hills as the Chinese would regroup and begin the attack again."

Breaking out from the Chosin Reservoir would cost the Marines 200 men per



Marines make their way down a narrow road along the Chosin Reservoir. *National Archives photo*

mile. When a war correspondent called it a retreat, General Smith shot back, "Retreat, hell! We're just advancing to the rear." Along the way, the 1st Division inflicted far heavier casualties on the enemy. Marine Corps historians call it the Corps' finest hour.

JIM EVANS' outfit had been guarding the supply routes south of the reservoir. "At 0200 on December 8 it was 'Move out!' So we grabbed our packs and ammo and away we went, up into the mountains to protect the guys breaking out from the reservoir. It was snowing like hell," he remembers, "with drifts as high as three feet. And there I was with my pack filled with nonessentials. I had a lot of extra food and three pair of dungarees—three of everything. I think we went about five miles before I dumped all those nice new clothes. I lightened the pack up to where I could survive. Our job was to open up the road so the 5th and 7th Marine regiments could come back through us. And we were to follow them out. That was the plan."

Burrowed into the hills along the escape route, the Chinese had also blown the bridge spanning a wide ravine at Funchilin Pass. Do-or-die plans were under way to air-drop girders for a temporary span. The 1st Regiment needed to seize the high ground on Hill 1081 and provide cover. As Baker Company advanced, the wind-blown snow scalded their faces. Jim's throat was dry, hands and feet numb. His heart began thumping like a bass drum when

they rounded a bend and saw hundreds of tiny footprints in the snow. Just then, a pocket of Chinese opened fire from a camouflaged bunker. Baker Company responded with such ferocity that the enemy fled, leaving behind a kettle of rice cooking on a tiny stove.

"That people are trying to kill you comes as kind of a shock the first time you hear the rounds whizzing past," Evans remembers. "There's a double report from a single shot—the first as the bullet breaks the sound barrier." And when a bullet strikes flesh that's the worst sound of all. "It's like you took your hand and slapped a side of beef."

Baker Company was lucky this day. Its causalities were light as it cleared the Chinese off the flanks of the hill. At sundown, however, the enemy still occupied the top. That it had stopped snowing at first seemed a blessing. Then, as the sky cleared and a million stars twinkled like icy diamonds, the temperature plummeted to 25 below zero and the wind howled down the ravines.

Several members of Baker Company awoke with frostbitten feet. Evans remembers what a relief it was to discover his precautions had paid off. "On the march into the hills, I wore my boondockers, our standard-issue boots. The leather got wet, but as long as I kept moving my feet felt fine." Evans had kept his rubber-soled, winter-issue "shoepacs" in reserve. "If you marched in your shoepacs, which had felt insoles, your feet would sweat, especially when you were going uphill. And if you stopped moving, the insoles froze and you'd be walking on ice. But if you could get to where you were going and then put on dry socks and the shoepacs, hell, your feet were toasty!" Relatively speaking, at least. Evans had a spare pair of socks tied over his belt under his parka. Body heat kept them dry. He changed to his shoepacs before getting what sleep he could. The nights ahead would get even colder. And no amount of sock-changing and foot stomping could stave off the never-ending numbness.

Marines take a break in the bone-chilling cold.
National Archives photo

Whenever they took prisoners, Evans marveled that the Chinese were "a lot worse off" in quilted uniforms that looked puffy but provided little insulation from the brutal cold. "We were freezing too, but at least we had our mittens and parkas with woolen hoods under our helmets. I never saw any of the Chinese with gloves or overcoats, and their shoes were just rubber-soled sneakers. They were

short on food, too. If they got inside your perimeter, they seemed more interested in looting than shooting. A lot of them just froze to death. Most of the Chinese soldiers we captured were experienced troops from World War II and the Chinese revolution. One guy had been in the states and spoke some English. I asked, 'Why do you guys fight?' He looked at me, shrugged and said, 'It's just a job. Just like you.' " No Marine has ever said it's just a job.

The North Korean propaganda flier Evans found in a cave. *Evans collection*

A central article of the Corps' "Semper Fi" faith is that you never leave a brother behind. Evans remembers horrific mounds of frozen bodies and truckloads of wounded men, their stretchers stacked three high. Plasma froze; doctors and corpsmen thawed morphine syrettes by holding them in their mouths. The sick bay tents were so jammed that "the less critical were heaped outside and covered with canvas and straw." In the mountains above the reservoir, Marines were forced to bury some of their dead in bulldozed mass graves. "There were so many they had no choice," Evans says.

Evans found a North Korean propaganda flier in a cave and brought it back as a souvenir. It depicts five British POWs from the UN forces enjoying a hearty meal. "First class treatment" would be accorded anyone who surrendered, the General Political Bureau of the Korean People's Army declared, including "food, tobacco and medical treatment." The alternative was shown as a field of graves. "Come and join us, fellow soldiers, in this fight for peace. Live and let live instead of plugging away in this stupid, unjust American-sponsored war, especially the Reservists, the majority of whom, like us here have families." Evans and his buddies gleefully noted that one of the POWs in the photo was sending a clear signal with his middle finger that it was all bogus.

EVANS PASSED the real-world combat-ready test clearing the slopes of Hill 1081. "That damn hill overlooking the pass was steep. I'm grabbing hold of everything I can grasp. I felt a tug on my sleeve and thought I'd snagged it on some brush. It was a bullet hole. The guy who was shootin' at us was crouched behind a boulder, 400 or 500 yards away. So I crept down on the other side of him. There he was, just sitting there with a bolt-action rifle, picking guys off. The other ammo bearer braced his M1 on my shoulder and whispered,

'OK, don't breathe.' With a 'whooof' we took him out."

Evans was still scrambling up and down the hill, delivering ammunition to the machine-gunners, when a lieutenant barked, "Evans, take the gun!"

"I never did find out what happened to all the ammo bearers who were in front of me," Evans says, "but now all of a sudden I'm a machine gunner." And he had to get the hang of it in a hurry. "I got so I could crank out two or three rounds at a time. If you fired off too many you attracted a lot of attention. You used the tracer bullets to dial in your aim."

The GIs and Marines formed a column "and hacked their bitter, bloody way through waves" of Chinese communist soldiers, "moving ever eastward over a corkscrew trail of icy dirt in subzero cold," historian William Manchester wrote.

Supported by artillery and air power—"We cheered every time a Corsair or F-86 streaked over our heads," Evans remembers—the Marines secured Hill 1081 on the afternoon of December 9, 1950. The replacement bridge was soon erected. Exhausted soldiers and a stream of hapless North Korean refugees began pouring across the span, which at "that moment in history was without a doubt the most vital bridge in the world," William B. Hopkins, a Marine Corps company commander at the reservoir, recalled.

During the next two weeks, the Port of Hungnam, some 78 miles below the reservoir, was the site of one of the largest evacuations in military history. Newspapers dubbed it the "Miracle of Christmas." What was left of the gallant 1st Marine Division, fittingly, was the first to leave. In all, 100,000 battered U.N. troops, 91,000 refugees, 17,500 vehicles and 350,000 tons of cargo were sealifted south to safety on 193 ships. When the last vessels departed on Christmas Eve, demolition specialists destroyed the docks and cranes.


1st Marine Division
Christmas Dinner
25 December, 1950.
Korea
Menu
Shrimp Cocktail
Stuffed Olives Sweet Pickles
Roast Young Tom Turkey
with
Cranberry Sauce Giblet Dressing Brown Gravy
Green Beans Creamed Corn Wipped Potatoes
Glazed Sweet Potatoes
Bread Butter
Cole Slaw with Salad Dressing
Fruit Cake Mincemeat Pie
Coffee
Hard Candies Mixed Nuts
Fruit Salad
Cigarettes Cigars
MERRY XMAS
P.F.C. James O. Evans
The 1st Division's Christmas Dinner menu at Pusan in 1950. *Evans collection*

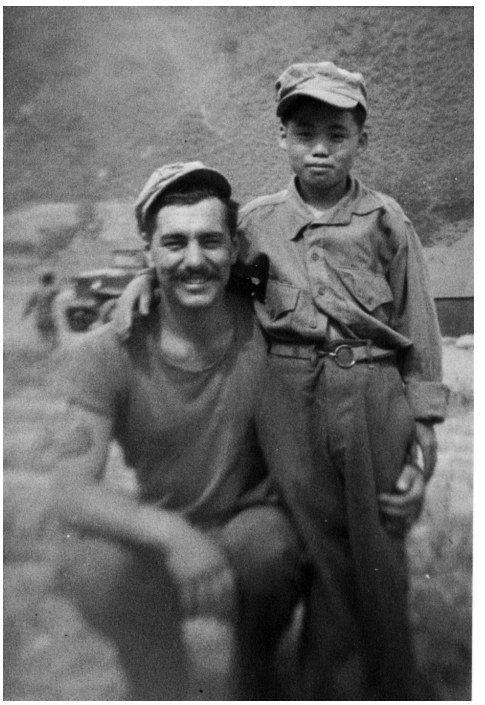
It was a spectacular way to leave North Korea, Evans remembers. "The whole waterfront just exploded." They had lived to fight another day. Though the Marines lost 836 brothers at the Chosin Reservoir and the U.S. Army 2,000, the communists had paid dearly to once again control North Korea. Their causalities at the reservoir included an estimated 35,000 dead.

JIM EVANS SPENT Christmas 1950 bivouacked west of Pusan in a tent city dubbed "The Bean Patch." There, the 1st Marine Division was treated to hot chow and show-

ers for the first time in months. "When I took off my longjohns, there was a little doughnut of hair and clothing fuzz around each ankle." Scraggly Marines with bony butts luxuriated under streams of hot water. "It was magnificent!" Evans remembers. As they emerged from the showers, each was issued new clothing—"everything from skivvies and socks to dungarees and field jackets." The filthy, ragged old uniforms were consigned to a huge bonfire.

Evans still has the hand-lettered menu from the 1st Marine Division's festive Christmas Dinner: "Roast Young Tom Turkey, giblet dressing and cranberry sauce; fruit cake, hard candies, mixed nuts, cigarettes and cigars."

Temporarily reunited, Evans and several other Grays Harbor guys swapped war stories and decorated a scrawny Christmas tree. They sent a photo to their hometown papers. *The Aberdeen Daily World* wouldn't print it because they had used beer cans as ornaments. Given what they'd been through, that priggishness was a hoot. They laughed it off and got ready to head back north.



Evans with one of the young Korean "mascots" the Marines adopted. *Evans collection*

U.N. FORCES recaptured Seoul on March 15, 1951. They were advancing into North Korea when the communists launched a huge offensive with a joint force of nearly 700,000 Chinese and North Korean soldiers. The U.S. Navy launched a blockade of the port of Wonsan on North Korea's southeast coast. The siege would last 861 days. Lieutenant Commander Jimmy Stewart, a Naval Reservist from Montesano, was in the thick of it as commander of a rocket-launching landing ship. Stewart, who had worked his way through Grays Harbor Junior College and won a Silver Star during World War II, was a hero to the Naval Reservists and Marines on the Harbor. As Jim Evans' outfit prepared to move out once again, Stewart's ship was engaged in a running duel with North Korean shore batteries

Spring found Evans and the 1st Marine Division in vicious combat in the rugged Taebaek Mountains near a "punchbowl" created by the crater of an ancient volcano. The valley below only looked calm. It was a thicket of enemy artillery and snipers.

A Korean proverb goes: "Over the mountains, mountains." As far as the eye could see, there were steep, dun-colored hills, "speckled here and there with boulders, scrub oaks and stunted firs."

For Jim Evans the worst day of the war came not long after he was promoted to corporal. A sniper picked off the guy at his side on the run-up to the Punchbowl. "He died while I was holding onto him. When you see the light go out of someone's eyes, you know they're gone." Tears well up; his voice is choked with emotion. The moment is still so vivid after 66 years. It will never go away. "Seconds earlier, he's covering your back. You're covering his. You wonder, How come him instead of me? That sticks with you. And when you try to analyze things, you feel somewhat guilty for surviving. … When you first go in, you're full of that old gung-ho: I'm gonna get 'em and cover myself in glory. To that I say, Bullshit! I'm proud to be a Marine, and I salute bravery, but there's no glory in death."

Evans says he hasn't met many Marines who love to brag about what they did in the war—any war. Asked about the Purple Heart he received on his second foray into North Korea, he shrugs: "I was hunkered down in my hole when an artillery shellburst sent a couple of ounces of metal into my left shoulder. It was just a minor wound. They patched it up on the spot and I was right back in action." Maybe there was something to that four-leaf clover he carried. Evans counted his blessings, too. Exhausted, he was crossing an open field with a heavy pack when bullets began kicking up dirt at his heels. "Oh boy," he thought, "*this* is close." Adrenalin kicked in. When he made it to safety, he said out loud, "Thank you very much, Lord."

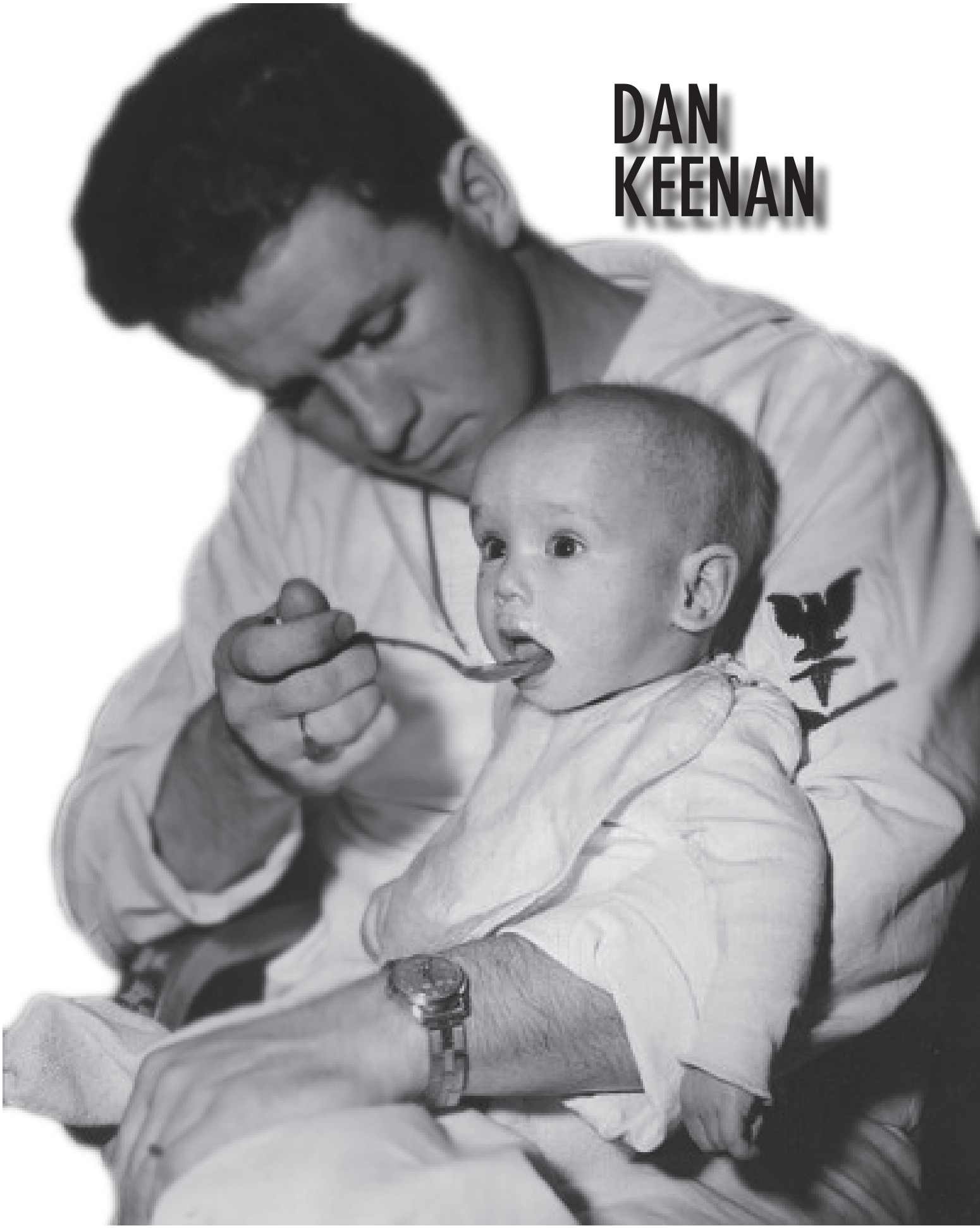
If you want to talk heroism, he'll tell you about the corpsmen who braved withering enemy fire to aid the wounded. And about the lieutenant who was a perfect target as he exhorted his men to keep moving. "A bullet nicked the artery on his throat. There was a corpsman right there. He reached up and snapped a clamp on the artery, and the lieutenant stood there with it dangling, directing traffic. And I thought, 'What a gutsy guy.' "

TRUMAN FIRED General MacArthur for publicly grousing once too often that his hands were being tied by his commander-in-chief and the Pentagon. The war settled into a stalemate. Evans shipped out of Pusan at the end of 1951. At Camp Barstow, California, he bought a beat-up 1936 Plymouth. He got the guys in the motor pool to help him overhaul the engine, slapped on some recapped tires and on February 19, 1952, set out for Aberdeen and the rest of his life. He made it home—1,100 miles—on $9.80 worth of gas.

Jim got his old job back at General Tire. People were glad to see him, just no confetti. On his lunch break one day, he was sitting at the counter in Addie's café when a military plane headed for the Hoquiam airport buzzed by at low altitude. "The next thing I knew I was looking up from the floor and everybody's looking down at me. I thought I was still in Korea."

The folowing summer, the Korean War ended in an armistice. Now they call it "The Forgotten War." Jim Evans hasn't forgotten. He's one of The Chosin Few.

John C. Hughes


DAN
KEENAN

The Gratitude of Dan Keenan

At a quaint table inside Tacoma's Antique Sandwich Company, Dan Keenan, 64, unfolds a faded letter. It reveals a story so remarkable that it inspired a TV movie. The letter was written in 1954 by a U.S. Navy chaplain, Father Edward Riley. The kindly priest from Iowa couched Keenan's first weeks on the planet as a kind of mix-up in Heaven. Instead of sending Dan to Spokane in July 1953, "God's Angel" delivered him halfway around the world to war-torn Korea and got "his britches warmed for making such a serious error."

"Man, there's a baby out there!" a Navy medic exclaimed. Someone had left an emaciated infant wrapped in rags outside a sickbay in the Demilitarized Zone that separated the combatants on the Korean Peninsula.

Roused from a deep sleep, the other medics on the late shift came running. The baby was badly malnourished, filthy and afflicted with burns. The men sterilized a Coke bottle and concocted baby formula from milk, sugar and water. He was hungry. Then they carefully bathed him, dressed him in a clean GI T-shirt and rigged up a crib from a footlocker. The next morning the child was taken to an orphanage in nearby Inchon, the port where General MacArthur had staged a daring amphibious landing in 1950.

In the intense heat of summer, the Star of the Sea Children's Home was an oasis of hope surrounded by rubble. Inside the brick orphanage, 100 babies slept in apple crates; older children lined the floor in blankets. Caring for that many homeless children—many with injuries and disabilities—challenged the most nimble of the caretakers.

Keenan with Sister Philomena. They were reunited when he was 7. "She hugged me and I'm sure told Dad what a big boy I was now. Sister was a truly altruistic person whose daily life was simply devoted to God and helping those in need." *Keenan collection*

Keenan with John T. Hayward, the skipper, in 1953. Hayward authorized Keenan's stay on ship, declaring, "In an emergency, regulations are to be intelligently disregarded." A former batboy for the New York Yankees, Hayward retired from the U.S. Navy as a decorated aviator and a vice admiral after 45 years. *Keenan collection*

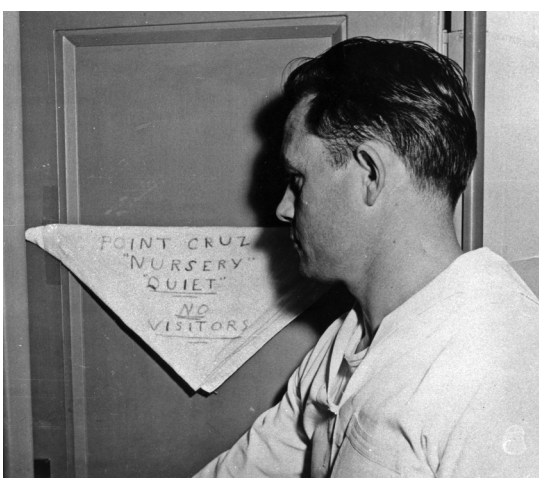
Sister Philomena, the no-nonsense Irish nun who ran the orphanage, took one glance at Dan's fair skin and blue eyes and knew he'd never survive. "The Asians are very big on racial purity," Keenan explains. To the Koreans, he was a tiny pariah. "They wouldn't touch me. They wouldn't hold me. They wouldn't feed me. They didn't change my diapers. They didn't want anything to do with me. *So, she knew*."

"He's an American and he's very sick," Sister Philomena told Father Riley. "I have very little food for him and no medicine. Can you not help?"

He could. The 37-year-old priest alerted John T. "Chick" Hayward, captain of the *USS Point Cruz,* an aircraft carrier docked at Inchon. A former go-fer for Babe Ruth, Hayward had dropped out of a Jesuit high school at 15 to chase his dream of becoming a naval aviator. He went on to design and test America's earliest rockets, fly dozens of bombing missions in the South Pacific in World War II and help develop the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki. It was a career about to get even more legendary.

What would endear him most to the officers and men of the *Point Cruz* was a single decision he made just after the armistice ended three years of brutal warfare between the communist north and the U.N. backed south. The skipper's decision didn't impact the truce talks, but it saved Dan Keenan's life.

"A good leader knows when to intelligently disregard a regulation," was



Sailors built a makeshift nursery. They made diapers from sheets and a carriage from a bomb cart. *Keenan collection*

the way Hayward put it. He agreed to bring the baby on board to be nursed back to health as long as the ship was docked in the harbor. "He literally put his career on the line," Keenan says. "He had killed countless people during World War II. He said that that always bothered him. When Father Riley told him about this Caucasian baby in the orphanage, Hayward saw this as an opportunity to save one life instead of taking lives."

The baby lifted the spirits of a thousand beleaguered sailors. Dan Keenan reminded them what they'd been fighting for. "By then, the armistice was signed and we were all waiting to go home," remembered William Powers, a petty officer in charge of the hanger deck. "And along comes this little kid to hit us right in the heart."

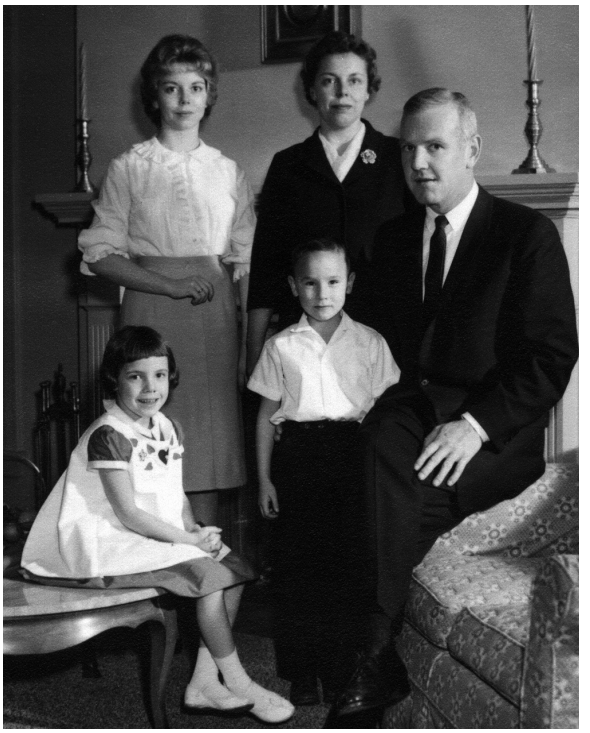
The *Point Cruz* had been patrolling the Yellow Sea that spring. The carrier played a key role in "Operation Platform." Six thousand Indian troops boarded helicopters on its flight deck to be airlifted to Panmunjom to supervise the prisoner of war exchange that was a crucial condition of the armistice.

When the ship dropped anchor at Inchon Harbor, its home base, the sailors tend-

Father Riley looks on as Mrs. Keenan holds her new son in 1953. The next year Riley wrote to Keenan: "You see, it happened this way: When God's Angel, who delivers little guys like you, started on his way from Heaven, he got his directions mixed up. So, instead of going to Spokane, he ended up in Inchon, Korea." *Keenan collection*

ed to the baby. The ship's carpenter built him a makeshift nursery, complete with a crib, a playpen and a carriage fashioned from a bomb cart. The crew called him "Baby-san."

When it was time to hoist anchor, Keenan bounced back to the Star of the Sea Children's Home. Sister Philomena focused on finding him a permanent home in America. She had her sights set on Lt. Hugh Keenan, a surgeon from Spokane serving as the doctor aboard the *USS Consolation.* Sister Philomena knew that the doctor was married and the father of an 8-year-old girl. She also knew his wife had endured several miscarriages. One day in November 1953, he came to the orphanage for tea. Keenan tells what happened:



Keenan with his sisters, Marny and Coleen, and his parents, Hugh and Genevieve. Lt. Hugh Keenan, a Navy surgeon, was the doctor aboard the *U.S.S. Consolation.* He first met his son on downtime in Korea, at the Star of the Sea Children's Home in Inchon. Holding Danny for the first time, the elder Keenan said he "fell in love with the baby and decided to adopt." *Keenan collection*

> He's feeding me and Sister goes: "Oh, saint's alive. It's a miracle! You're the only one who can feed the child." Which is total malarkey. I'm sure I was ravenous. But Sister was getting him to bond with this baby.

The doctor came back the next day with ointment to treat the baby's rash, then returned to his shipboard duties.

Weeks passed. When Lt. Keenan returned to check on the child, he discovered that the baby would be sent to an orphanage in America. He wouldn't hear of it. He contacted Father Riley and told him he wanted to adopt the child. Then he wrote his wife Genevieve and explained that he was making arrangements "to send you a Christmas present that I hope you will love."

As the story goes, Captain Hayward gave Father Riley a bottle of whiskey and urged him to scrounge up a passport and a visa for Baby-san. Vice President Richard Nixon learned of "Hayward's baby" at an awards ceremony, and during a dinner in Seoul, prod-

Ben Helle photo

ded Ellis O. Briggs, the American ambassador, to make it happen. Before long, Father Riley and baby Dan were en route to the United States on the *USS Gaffey*.

Just before Christmas, Genevieve Keenan welcomed a new son she fell in love with instantly. The story about "the Navy's baby" generated headlines around the country.

Every year Dan Keenan attends reunions of the *USS Point Cruz*. The most memorable occurred in 1996.

"Attention on deck!" came the command. The gray-haired men rose to their feet in the dining room of an Arkansas hotel. "Even now I get goosebumps thinking about it," Keenan remembers.

White-haired and frail, their 88-year-old skipper emerged from a doorway. John T. Hayward, a retired vice admiral, was fighting a grueling battle with bone cancer. Yet he had flown from his home in Florida to be with his former shipmates. "It was quite a feat for him to go—to fly that far," recalls Hayward's daughter, Victoria. "He was not in terrible pain, but he was pretty crippled up." With the aid a cane, Hayward inched his way down the aisle, shaking hands with some of the best sailors of his 45-year career. "He loved that crew," she said. "And it was a small ship. He really knew each and every man and some of the stories about them and some of the crazy things they did."

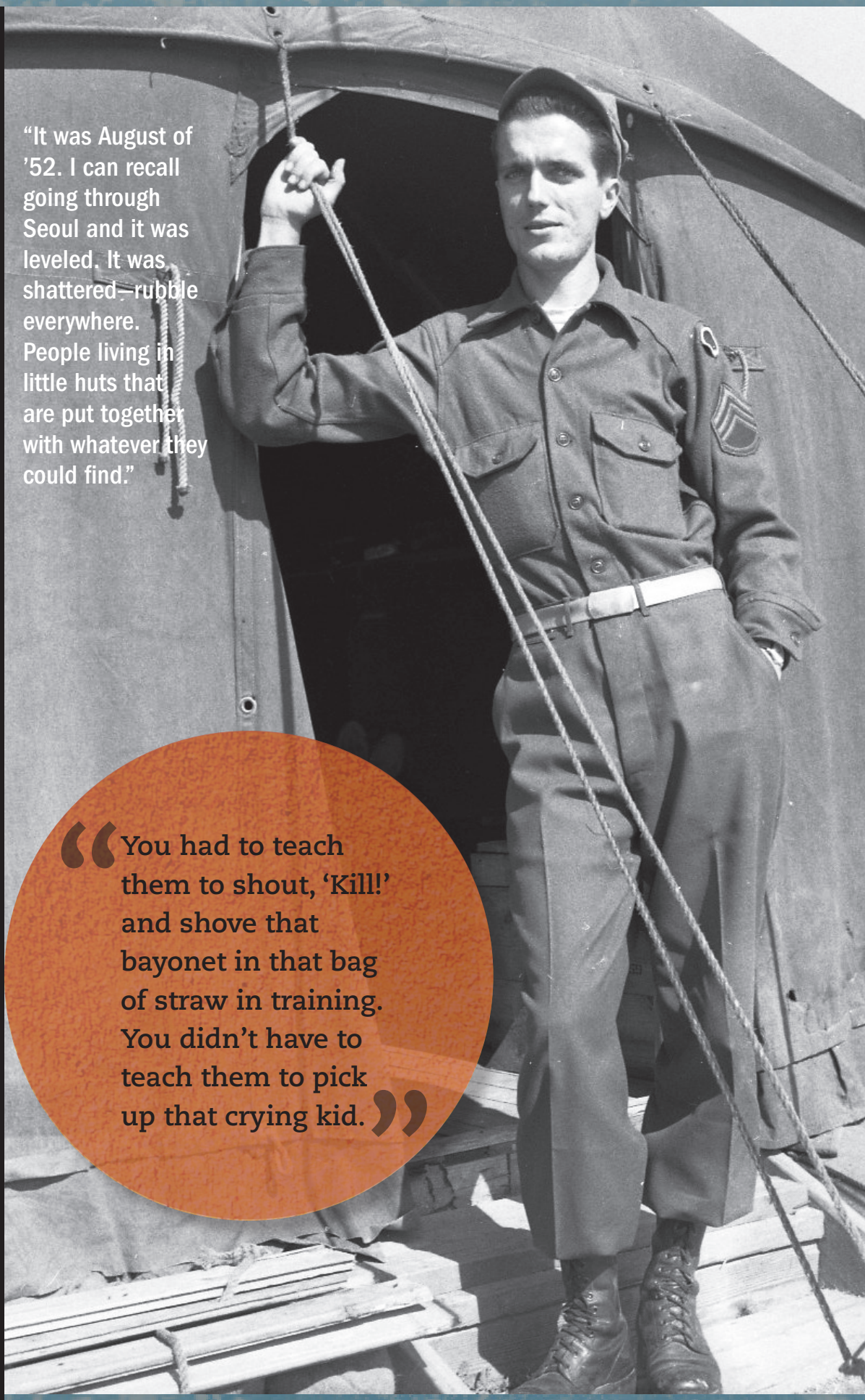
When Dan Keenan saw Hayward, "It was an absolutely electric moment. I knew in a second *that's him*—that's the skipper." They shook hands and Dan said, "You literally saved my life." They sat together at the head table while photos were taken. "I was in awe. This is a great man. You know, the adjective 'great' is really overused. But it applies to him. And he couldn't have been nicer."

Today Keenan works as a social worker and lives in Spokane. He considers himself an ordinary guy with an extraordinary start. He says he owes his life to John Hayward, Sister Philomena—whom he met when he was 7—his adoptive parents and Father Riley. Unfortunately, Keenan was never reunited with the priest from Iowa.

Story told, he tucks the letter back into his briefcase and pauses to remember his remarkable life. "It has really brought to the forefront how much I have to be grateful for on a personal level. I think that's important—to appreciate and be hopeful. Don't take things for granted. To me, that's one of the important legacies."

Trova Heffernan

GEORGE DRAKE



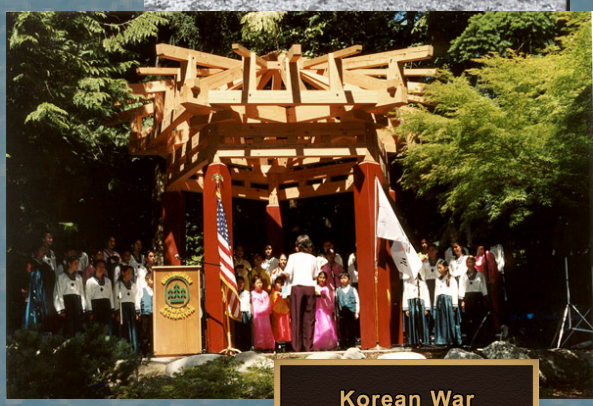
"It was August of '52. I can recall going through Seoul and it was leveled. It was shattered–rubble everywhere. People living in little huts that are put together with whatever they could find."

"You had to teach them to shout, 'Kill!' and shove that bayonet in that bag of straw in training. You didn't have to teach them to pick up that crying kid."

"What motivates a guy to spend thousands of hours of volunteer labor and his own money to develop a national memorial for a cause that most people are totally unaware of? The Korean War is called the forgotten war. You cannot forget what you never knew. My contribution is making the public aware of the phenomenon.

"I was not in a combat unit but rather was assigned to the 326th Communications Reconnaissance Company, which was an Army Security Agency radio intelligence company located a fairly safe distance from the front lines.

"My involvement with the Company orphanage committee was intense. Somewhere I noted that in the first six months I was in Korea I had sent out over 1,000 letters soliciting help for the orphans. I was spending upwards of 20 hours each week on orphanage affairs. This after pulling my regular shifts in the operations tent or guard duty."



Top: An example of Drake's extensive collection of photographs documenting the compassion of U.S. servicemen and women toward children. *Drake collection*

Middle: Over the years, Drake has met orphans like Eddie Cho—just 4 when the Korean War broke out: "They see me, since I took their picture, as the one who saved their lives. So they hug me and cry, and I let them hug me and cry knowing damn well that they need closure. They're dying to find that person." *Drake collection*

Bottom: Near his home in Bellingham, Drake built the Korean War Children's Memorial dedicated to U.S. forces that rescued more than 10,000 children. *Drake collection*


PATSY
SURH
O'CONNELL

Making a Difference

Steeped in Confucianism, Koreans venerate their elders. Sixty used to be a big birthday, with a celebration called *hwangap*. The singing, soju toasts and sumptuous banquets now salute those turning 70 because people are living longer, in South Korea at least.*

In 1950, life expectancy on the Korean peninsula was anyone's guess. People were dying by the thousands—teenage soldiers on both sides and hapless refugees caught in the crossfire, including orphaned children, nursing mothers and wispy-bearded elders in their traditional long white coats and stovepipe hats.

Patsy Surh O'Connell remembers it all. When you study her radiant face it's hard to believe she is 74, though there's no mistaking her wisdom. Her Korean name is Surh In Suk, which means "kind-hearted person who does good things for others." As a child caught up in the Korean War, she saw enough bad things for several lifetimes. It's a wonder it didn't dim her optimism and eye for beauty.

In keeping with family tradition, the westernized Surhs adopted English given names. Patricia In Suk became "Patsy" before she could walk. It just seemed to fit such a sprightly girl. Heartache and disappointment couldn't keep her down. She grew up to be patiently persistent. In 1963, when she came to America, her English was rudimentary. Now, as she mingles confidently with congressmen, mayors and diplomats, her command of the language is evident. When you watch her bantering with the waitstaff at a Korean restaurant along South Tacoma Way, however, ordering more kimchee to go with our bulgogi, one thing is abundantly clear: You can transplant a Korean but never sever the roots.

Patsy Surh O'Connell, an accomplished artist, founded the Asia Pacific Cultural Center in Tacoma in 1996. In the beginning, it was Patsy and a handful of friends and allies, determined to preserve the cultural history of Washington's growing population of Pacific Rim immigrants. Today, with thousands of donors and an army of volunteers, the center partners with schools, the military, government and industry "to bridge communities and generations through arts, culture, education and business." Its annual Lunar New

* In 2016, the average life expectancy in South Korea was 82.3 years, compared to 70.7 in North Korea and 79.3 years in the United States.

Patsy, second from left, at a traditional Korean tea ceremony. *Surh O'Connell collection*

Year celebrations have attracted upwards of 10,000 to the Tacoma Dome. Unsurprising, really. Asians are now the state's fastest-growing ethnic group, their numbers estimated at 603,000 in 2017. Of those, more than 100,000 are of Korean ethnicity. Nationally the Korean population has grown 41 percent since 2000. Patsy is one of America's 1.7 million Koreans.

THERE WERE only a handful in 1889 when Patsy's grandfather disembarked at San Francisco after a long voyage. Beyond the redwoods and across the Columbia, Washington was about to become the 42nd state. Diplomatic relations had been established between the U.S. and "the hermit kingdom" of Korea five years earlier. The first delegation of Korean diplomats was followed by a trickle of students. Patsy's grandfather was the second Korean to graduate from an American college.

Surh Byung Kyu died half a century later in the middle of the civil war ravaging his homeland, his hopes and dreams for a unified, independent Korea dashed. His son's family had fled Seoul as the communists pushed the South Korean army and its U.N. allies practically to the sea.

Memories of the Korean War are palpable for Surh Byung Kyu's granddaughter. Patsy was 7 when the fighting erupted in the summer of 1950. Patsy and her big brother, Ronny, climbed onto the roof every time they heard the telltale drone of approaching bombers. "B-29! B-29!" they'd shout. "Americans are here!" In the sky above at least. The communists were literally downstairs. The North Koreans appropriated the Surh

Patsy in Seoul after the communists occupied her family's house. *Surh O'Connell collection*

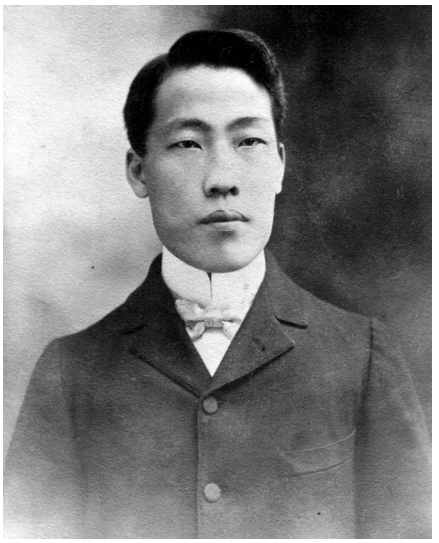
family's comfortable two-story house as a command post when they captured Seoul. Each day began with the soldiers hup-hupping around the room to the strains of a rousing marching tune on the Victrola. For the first few days, Patsy scampered downstairs to join in. Then her mother, voice hushed, pinched her little arm and said there'd be no more of that. They were in mortal danger. Mrs. Surh was pretending to be a widow. Her husband, an electrical engineer and successful capitalist who spoke excellent English, was in hiding, lest he be killed or taken prisoner. Whenever the coast was clear, they'd drape a blanket over the balcony rail. At first, it seemed to Patsy that "it was all a big adventure."

HER GRANDFATHER'S big adventure began in an era punctuated by peace and optimism. Surh Byung Kyu was 18, the son of educated parents from Korea's *yangban* aristocracy. These "scholarly officials"—required to pass the equivalent of civil service tests—were the Korean equivalent of China's mandarins. The arrival of American missionaries in the 1880s broadened Byung Kyu's horizons. His parents encouraged him to study in America.

Though he worked diligently to perfect his English and acquire an American high school diploma, college seemed out of reach. In return for room and board, he was working long hours on a California farm. Luckily, his mother had connections. When Patsy's great-grandmother learned that Korean diplomats were headed to Chicago for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, she asked them to interview her son. They were impressed by his language skills and affability. Byung Kyu was hired to work at the Korean Pavilion where he met the president of Roanoke College, a liberal arts school in Virginia that was cultivating a reputation for welcoming international students. Byung Kyu received a full scholarship worth around $150 per year.

Most people he met weren't sure where "Corea" was. They definitely had never met anyone from there. Patsy's grandfather politely explained he wasn't a "Chinaman," Japanese, Filipino or Hawaiian. A newspaper reported that his eyes were "the color of burnt umber, looking out from a broad flat face that was yellow but not sunburned."

Byung Kyu, a serious student with impeccable manners and a winning smile, made



Her grandfather, Surh Byung Kyu, around 1898 when he graduated from Roanoke College in Virginia. *Surh O'Connell collection*

his mark at Roanoke College. He excelled at debate and became a fixture in the literary club, sporting "a natty straw hat." He joined the Masonic Lodge and the American Geographical Society, became an Episcopalian and worked summers at the Korean Embassy in Washington, D.C. When he graduated with honors in 1898, the Korean ambassador and a member of Korea's royal family were there to hear his ringing commencement address. The "ideal to which the best and bravest throughout the world" were aspiring, Byung Kyu declared, was "the principle of equal justice to each and all." He denounced "communistic socialism" and said it was "an act of treason and an act of war against humanity" to violate the rights of a single individual.

Patsy's grandfather went on to receive a master's degree in literature at Princeton University in 1899, having taken "a special course in the science of government" taught by Professor Woodrow Wilson. His goal was to "better prepare himself to serve his country, which he loves with truly patriotic devotion," newspapers noted.

His career took off practically the day he set foot back in Korea. The emperor had taken note of his accomplishments in America. At 29, Surh Byung Kyu was appointed governor of Inchon, the nation's central port. He was now a diplomat, trade czar and emigration official rolled into one, "credited for sending out the first 6,000 Korean laborers to Hawaii." Next, he was appointed to Korea's highest court, followed by a stint as minister of Education and Agriculture. Acting on his Western education and the influence of missionaries, he decreed that Korean girls must attend public school, a social reformation initiative that would face stout resistance in such a patriarchal society.

Surh Byung Kyu was director of the Korean Chamber of Commerce in 1905 when Imperial Japan, fresh from a resounding victory over Russia, strong-armed Korea into submission as a "protectorate"—a misnomer if there ever was one. Japan formally annexed Korea five years later and set out to crush its soul. Patsy's grandfather was already "in exile," as he put it. He had fled first to Russia, then to the British sector of the international settlement at Shanghai. The British appointed him deputy commissioner of their Maritime Customs Service. Patsy's father, Surh Chung Ik—"John" to the family's English-speaking friends—was born in Vladivostok in 1910.

BY 1932, with the Japanese growing more bellicose and fascism on the rise in Europe, there were 70,000 foreigners in Shanghai, including White Russians, Jews, Greeks, Koreans, Filipi-

nos and Frenchmen. It was the Casablanca of the Far East. As a consequence, "most Surh family members spoke Korean, English, Japanese and different Chinese dialects with varying levels of fluency," Patsy remembers. Her father graduated from the University of Shanghai in 1933 and within a year was named chief engineer of China Radio Service Corporation.

Japan entered an alliance with Hitler and Mussolini and set out with ruthless determination to annex its resource-rich neighbors. Shanghai's Chinese sector fell to the Japanese in 1937 after savage combat, with Chiang Kai-shek's troops retreating to the interior. The British government declared its settlement "indefensible" in 1940. The Americans followed suit shortly thereafter. The roundups of foreigners were soon under way.

Patsy's father was in a Japanese jail the day she was born, February 7, 1943. "They accused him of being a spy since he worked with radio and electronics," Patsy says. Many prisoners dragged off for interrogation never returned.

Patsy's mother visited the jail practically every day. Surh Young Sook Yoo was a beautiful, resourceful woman, educated at Korea's most prestigious school for girls. Her family had fallen on hard times when her father died of tuberculosis in his 40s. Her arranged marriage to Patsy's father—a handsome, wavy-haired young man with a roguish streak—was complicated by her inability to speak English. The clannish Surhs gave her a new first name—"Dorothy"—but proceeded to make her feel ostracized. The jail guards saw her in a different light. They admired her loyalty to her husband. Great with child, a 2-year-old in tow, she brought him clean clothes in exchange for his lice-ridden prisoner pajamas. They called her "pretty Korean" and predicted her husband would be freed before long.

The Japanese must have concluded that Patsy's father was who he said he was—a multi-lingual electrical engineer, not a spy. He became the production superintendent at a Japanese-owned engineering firm in Shanghai.

After Japan's surrender in 1945, the Surh family made its way back to Seoul by boat, truck, train and on foot. At one point American soldiers gave them a lift. For long stretches, however, they trudged along dirt roads, lugging their possessions. Five-year-old Ronny had a little backpack of his own. "My mother was eight months pregnant with my brother Freddy, so she was unable to carry anything very heavy. And there I was, not yet walking, still in diapers, riding atop my father's backpack. They told me years later that they hid things in my diapers."

Her parents in traditional costume on their wedding day in 1936.
Surh O'Connell collection

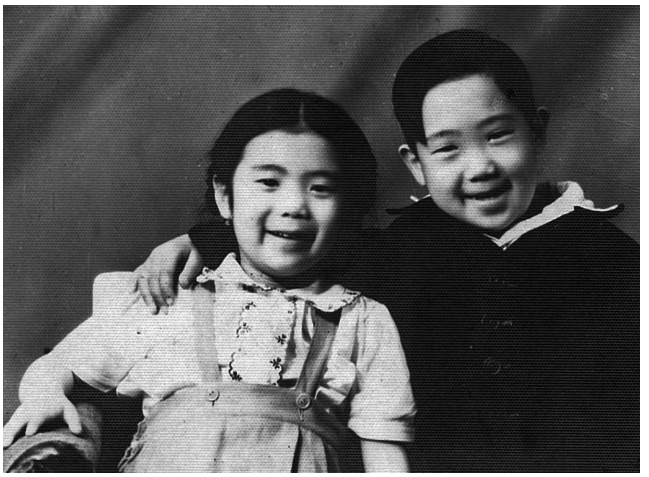
Patsy's grandfather, aunts and uncles also ar-

They changed into western-style clothes for another formal photo with the entire wedding party.
Surh O'Connell collection

rived in Seoul before long. They all set up housekeeping in a three-story building. The men sought work; the women foraged for food; the children went back to school. An Asian iron curtain was descending across the Korean peninsula. In the new, anti-communist Republic of Korea, there was much rebuilding to be done. Patsy's father found a succession of good jobs. By 1950 he was the first general manager of the fledgling Korean National Airlines. Patsy went to a Catholic-school kindergarten and lived in a handsome, four-bedroom house with a sizable yard. Their lilac bushes were "the envy of the neighborhood." Patsy's vibrant watercolor paintings often depict flowers she grew up loving.

EVERYTHING CHANGED overnight on June 25, 1950. Artillery shattered the morning calm as panzer-like divisions of North Korean troops plowed across the 38th Parallel. "Our enemies looked just like us," Patsy says. "For a child, it was all beyond comprehension. Soldiers moved into our house. My father went into hiding. Why was this happening?"

Pretty soon the North Koreans declared they needed the whole house. Patsy remembers her mother's fortitude—and a close call: "She begged them, 'You have to find me somewhere else for us to stay.' So they found us a place two houses down in the same neighborhood. It had one room with an outdoor kitchen." That their maid remained with them was incongruous but a godsend. The poor woman had nowhere else to go and they needed her.



With her brother Ronny in Shanghai before the war.
Surh O'Connell collection

Patsy's father usually hid in the ceiling until it was dinner time. Then, making sure there were no soldiers around, he'd slither down and eat rice with his family.

One day, my mother was late returning from her regular trip to the market, so we went ahead with dinner. When someone knocked on the door, my father hurried back to his hiding place. So it was just me, my two brothers and our maid. A strange man came inside. He was a North Korean agent. Somebody had told the officials my mother was not a widow. So they sent this guy to find out if there was a husband. Freddy, my cute younger brother was 5 years old. He had some rice stuck around his face. The stranger put him on his lap and began gently plucking the rice off his cheeks. "Where's your father?" he said. In that instant I realized Freddy might point to the ceiling, so I said, "We don't have a father!" The man slapped my face. "I didn't ask you!" By then we were all just frozen in place.

Though it happened 67 years ago, every second of that incident is seared in her memory. Patsy brushes away tears. "It was one of the scariest moments of my life. I was only 7, but I grasped that my father's life was in danger."

The man snooped some more before departing. When Patsy's frantic mother burst through the door an hour later, they learned she had been waylaid by the authorities. They didn't want her around while they searched the house.

"We had to grow up fast," Patsy says. A neighbor girl sent to fetch water from a well came crawling back with a nasty shrapnel wound.

On another day, "I saw a body covered with a straw mat on a cart—bare feet sticking out—and a weeping woman surrounded by her kids. Then one morning the house next door got bombed. It was just chaos. My father came out of hiding, got an ax and tried to stop the fire. I saw the body of a person burned charcoal black from head to toe. It was leaning like a burned board against a stone wall. Even to this day I don't have to close my

eyes to see it. It's just so clear. You realize you have to be strong and find ways to survive. Today when I read about soldiers with PTSD who have gone through such terrible times, I understand what war does to a person."

IT WAS TIME to flee. Patsy's father hopped a plane because he was safeguarding an American friend's funds. The rest of the family boarded a packed refugee train headed 250 miles south to Pusan where the U.S. military and its allies had established a defensive perimeter. Today, high-speed trains whisk travelers from Seoul to the port city of 3.6 million in 2½ hours. In 1950, it took days, danger ever-present.

The excitement of her first train trip evaporated when Patsy realized she was privileged to be inside the train. Hundreds of other refugees were on top, holding on for dear life. "At night it was so cold for small children and elders. I heard horror stories about what people on top of the train had to go through." If a bone-tired adult clutching a child fell asleep, the child might slide over the side to almost certain death. Old people died the same way.

"We were very fortunate in our family that no one was harmed during the war. But I never felt we were victims. I think if you have that mentality it's really hard to get out of it. We were coping with the reality around us. My father never complained. Never said it's too hot, or it's too cold; never said 'I'm hungry.' My mother was also strong and resourceful. Despite the hard times, I was always an optimist."

At Pusan, Patsy went to fourth grade in an old streetcar. Her mother and other educated parents volunteered in the make-shift classrooms, anxious to ensure schooling would continue. The city was teeming with refugees and soldiers from around the world. South Korean and American forces were joined by units from England, Canada, Australia, Thailand and Turkey. "It was exciting, though I also understood that beyond the safety of Pusan many people were dying."

With her teacher in a streetcar schoolroom at Pusan during the war. *Surh O'Connell collection*

Patsy loved wandering through the city's enormous market, its stalls filled with all manner of still-squiggling creatures from the sea.

"I was an adventurous girl, always curious. I bought some whale meat, watched them gutting fish and unloading cuttlefish. On the way home, I always saw

people living under bridges. Now, every time I see homeless people huddled under freeway overpasses and off-ramps, I am filled with empathy and think about Korea during the war."

PATSY'S ELDERLY grandfather broke a hip and was increasingly melancholy. Patsy arrived home from school one day to see a shaman dancing around the yard as her grandfather wagged a tree branch. They were trying to conjure the spirit of her late grandmother. When Seoul changed hands for the fourth and final time during the war, her grandfather returned to the capital to live with another son.

Surh Byung Kyu died at the age of 80 in 1952 as the city was bulldozing rubble to welcome President-Elect Eisenhower, making good on a campaign promise to go to Korea. Nine-year-old Patsy accompanied her mother to Seoul to attend the funeral of the Surh family patriarch. Educated in American colleges, he had risen to the highest ranks of Korean society, only to see his country brutalized by the Japanese and fractured by the communists. "In Korea we have a saying that when tigers die at least they leave their skins," Patsy says, tears welling up again. "As a human being, especially from Korea, it's important to make a difference."

There's an ineffable sadness—a concept called *han*—that scholars acknowledge is central to the Korean character. "In a relatively small nation with a long history of being invaded by more powerful neighbors, it's a sense of incompleteness," one writer observes. In an episode of *The West Wing*, President Josiah Bartlet (portrayed by Martin Sheen) summed it up like this: "There is no literal English translation. It's a state of mind. Of soul, really. A sadness. A sadness so deep no tears will come. And yet still there's hope."

Patsy, holding a squash, with her mother, aunts, grandfather and other grandchildren in Pusan during the war. *Surh O'Connell collection*

What Patsy's mother endured in her marriage was beyond *han*. Her husband, prodded by colleagues, had exercised one of the unwritten prerogatives of his station as a business executive: He acquired a mistress, euphemistically referred to as a "girlfriend." Patsy's mother was devastated. "She loved my father and was a subservient, traditional Korean wife to a man who had grown up as the spoiled oldest son. My mother would cry in silence. It was just sad to see. The family strife was one of the reasons my grandfather and

Uncle Errol moved back to Seoul."

WHEN THE armistice was signed in 1953, Patsy's father was largely absent. When he wasn't at work, rebuilding Korean National Airlines, he was with his mistress. Patsy's mother packed up the meager household goods. Husband or no husband, she was moving back to Seoul with her three kids. They would stay with Patsy's Uncle William if their old house was uninhabitable.

They found it remarkably intact. However, the jewelry and other family treasures Patsy's mother had hidden in a crawl space were gone. "People were starting to fix homes as best they could," Patsy remembers.

"Every time I had the opportunity to go beyond my neighborhood over the next year, I knew things were changing for the better. Streetcars were running. New buildings were being constructed. My mother rented the upstairs to a doctor and his family, while our living room was rented to a woman who was going with an American soldier. The small room where I used to play was rented to one of my schoolteachers who had taken in her mother and sister. It was a busy house. I liked that. We did not see father and we did not ask our mother where he was."

With her parents and brothers around 1961. *Surh O'Connell collection*

He had become president of an engineering and manufacturing firm, with scant concern for his family's financial plight. At one point, Patsy's mother took a humiliating job as a maid at an American military base, only to quit after one day. She sold the lone diamond ring she had kept with her during the war. Patsy was in high school when her father moved back home. "Everything seemed normal again and I thought we were the perfect family. I took piano, ballet and Korean traditional dance, and began taking private lessons on charcoal drawing after school. I also went to operas, symphony concerts and gallery shows with school friends." Then the family ruptured all over again. Her father was back with his mistress. At her mother's urging, Patsy periodically rode the streetcar across the city to beg him to come home. It was all so confusing. She abhorred his willfulness but missed him all the same. Her distraught mother, whom she dearly loved, was now resorting to a fortune teller for advice. Divorce was unthinkable. As conundrum's go, this one was complex. Patsy was a dutiful daughter with one foot in old Korea and the other in its high-rise future. She was attending a progressive school whose founder inculcated girls with the notion that their generation was destined to play a key role in shaping modern Korea. Right or wrong, it also entered Patsy's mind that her mother could have tried to do more things her father liked. "I promised myself that I would have many interests so my future husband would not find me boring, and I would not have the same fate as my mother." She also came to see that above all you must be "true to yourself—strong and competent."

IN 1961, when Patsy was a high school senior, her father returned from a trip to the U.S. with a new job: director of the American-Korean Foundation, a postwar organization dedicated to providing "a mutual bridge of aid and an exchange of culture between the American and Korean people." He promised he would clear the way for her to study in the U.S. Then, without a word of explanation, he left her dangling. It was too late for her to take the Korean college entrance exams. She pounded out "The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" on an English-language typewriter until her fingers ached. She was hired as a sales clerk at the U.S. 8th Army's Post Exchange in Seoul, intent on improving her English and making it to America on her own.

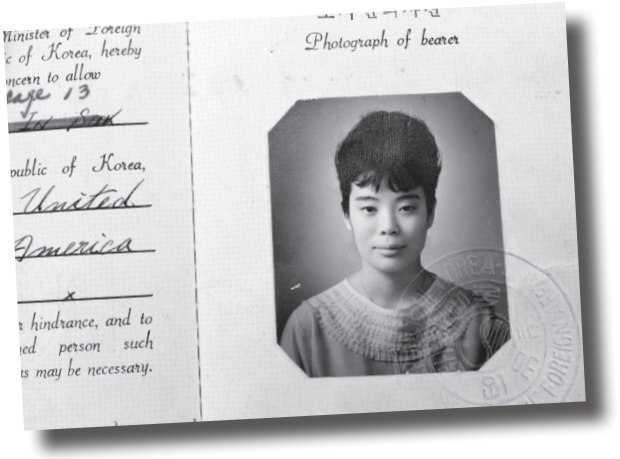
Practicing on an English-language typewriter in 1962.
Surh O'Connell collection

Her enigmatic father now signaled he was proud of her gumption. One day when she awoke too sick to go to work, he called her manager in the house-

wares department, astounding the man with his flawless English and obvious connections. Patsy won a promotion. Life with—or without—father was full of surprises. Mother, meantime, had hired a person in the know to help Patsy secure a passport. When her father casually announced they were going to see the American ambassador, Patsy was astounded. She sat silently, knees together, hands in lap as the men chatted amiably in English. She had been approved for a U.S. student visa. "However, even though he still had connections at the airline, I would need to pay my own airfare. This was my father's way of saying nothing was free in life—something handed down from my grandfather."

Patsy signed on as a chaperone with Holt International, an adoption agency. It would pay her airfare, and she would escort an orphan being adopted by an American couple.*

As Patsy was packing, her father came into her room to offer a cautionary tale: "In America he had met people who did not have successful inter-racial marriages. He believed that when people came from different cultural backgrounds they were not able to communicate with each other." It didn't make much of an impression at the time. Besides, her aunts and uncles had spouses from other Asian countries, including Japan—never mind that there is a unresolved antipathy between many Koreans and Japanese.



Her 1963 passport photo. *Surh O'Connell collection*

ON THE TIRING flight to America, Patsy ended up caring for not one but two Korean toddlers. They cried inconsolably and clung to her neck all the way across the Pacific. Exhausted, Patsy worried she wouldn't recognize her Aunt Hannah, who had settled in San Francisco years earlier. But as she surveyed the crowd greeting disembarking passengers, she spotted a smiling woman with an unmistakable Surh family face. Patsy's new life had begun. It was September 3, 1963.

Patsy worked nights as a receptionist at the YWCA in Chinatown while attending the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design. "Mr. Schaeffer was a classic, stylish Jewish man, immaculately dressed, with a tailored suit and pocket square," Patsy remembers. Danish Modern and Asian-influenced interiors were the rage, especially on the West Coast. The

* The adoption agency was founded by Bertha and Harry Holt, a devoutly Christian couple from rural Oregon. The Holts were stirred to action by a 1954 documentary on the plight of mixed-race "GI babies" languishing in Korean orphanages.

school attracted international students. Patsy had an eye for color. She excelled in her classes and stood out at social gatherings. As a hostess for a school function at San Francisco's historic fine arts museum, the de Young, she was stunning in a traditional Korean *hanbok* dress. Modeling jobs came her way. At the Korean Consulate's Christmas party for overseas students, Patsy bumped into a chum from the Army PX in Seoul. They resolved to move in together and found a tiny furnished apartment. They dreamily window-shopped at I. Magnin on the way to Macy's bargain basement and Woolworth's.

Patsy and Wally on their wedding day in 1965. *Surh O'Connell collection*

The two Korean girls had part-time jobs at the Presidio, the U.S. Army's San Francisco headquarters, Patsy at the NCO Club, her roommate at the Officer's Club. One night they double-dated with a pair of Army dentists to see a program featuring Korean performers. Patsy's roommate's date, Captain Wallace J. O'Connell, seemed to particularly enjoy the singing and dancing, having just returned from a tour of duty in Korea. "Wally" began calling Patsy. With her roommate's blessings, they started dating. It certainly wasn't love at first sight. They were both contemplative people. Mostly Irish, Wally was a dark-haired Catholic guy from Wisconsin. "And in the back of my mind," Patsy remembers, "I thought I should marry a Korean." However, the more she learned about Wally, the more she liked. He was a gentleman. His persistence sprang from a childhood spent chafing in the shadow of an older brother. He had practically survived on Twinkies through college and dental school. When he proposed 10 months into their courtship, Patsy accepted, vowing that this would not be one of the doomed cross-cultural American marriages her father had warned against.

Patsy and Wally O'Connell celebrated their 52nd anniversary 10 days before this story was published.

WALLY'S MILITARY career took them to Japan, Texas, New Jersey, Okinawa and back to California before five years in Indiana. Patsy's dream of coming back home to Korea came true in 1983. They spent two years in Seoul before Wally's last assignment, Fort Lewis. They loved it here, resolving to stay after his retirement in 1990. Along the way, their family had grown. First came two Irish-Korean biological sons, Kevin and Brian. Then, in 1971, a daughter arrived from Korea through Holt International. Karen Tricia Young Yi O'Connell

met her grandparents before her parents. Patsy had asked her mother and father to visit the orphanage to check on her infant daughter.

With motherhood, Patsy became a teacher's aide, Cub Scout den mother and chauffeur. Karen took gymnastics and joined her brothers at *Taekwondo* lessons. All three became second-degree black belts. Patsy immersed herself in learning about other Asian cultures and began taking watercolor lessons. In Indiana in the 1980s, Wally built her a studio in the garage. Patsy started entering paintings in juried shows and winning awards. During their two years in Korea, she had a one-woman show in downtown Seoul, delighted when friends and former high school teachers attended.

After Wally was posted to Fort Lewis, Patsy enrolled at Clover Park Technical College to brush up on her interior design skills. She opened a Korean Cultural Center on a shoestring budget and taught continuing education classes at Pierce College in Puyallup. The pace caught up with her. Her parents were in and out of hospitals in Seoul. One year she flew home three times. She couldn't continue with the cultural center, promising herself it was merely a goal on hold.

Wally retired, they built a comfortable home in Gig Harbor and in 1992 Patsy and a silent partner purchased a travel agency. In three months of 18-hour days, Patsy taught herself how to run the business. She joined a Korean artists' group, which led to the vice-presidency of the Korean Women's Association.

Patsy, Wally and their children with her parents. *Surh O'Connell collection*

Patsy and Wally brought her ailing parents to America to live with them. Wally had promised to help look after his in-laws while she worked at the travel agency. He was as good as his word, understanding the filial piety central to her Koreanness.

Patsy's parents died 10 months apart, her mother the last to go in 1997. In their shared elderliness, they had long since reconciled from the troubled earlier years of their marriage.

Patsy was now free to pursue her dream.

HER PASSION for the arts led to a seat on the Board of Trustees of the Tacoma Art Museum. After serving as president of the state's Korean American Artists' Association, she was named to the State Arts Commission. "I learned a lot from my work with the Korean American Artists' group, hearing compelling stories from immigrant artists who could not devote their time to painting because they had to make a living. So when they smelled the turpentine, they had tears in their eyes." Their work was as good as you'd find in any reputable gallery, Patsy says. They just lacked the organizational skill and connections to launch successful exhibitions. She felt strongly that Asian American kids—from kindergarten to high school—deserved competitions of their own. And as long as they were at it, why not feature performing arts as well?

Patsy reached out to other Asia Pacific immigrant communities in Pierce County, astounded at the cultural diversity she discovered. There were proud, talented people from no less than 47 Pacific Rim countries. Some were the sons and daughters of refugees from war-torn Southeast Asia; others had roots three generations deep in Washington State. Gary Locke, the grandson of an Olympia houseboy, was poised to become the nation's first Chinese American governor.

The downside of Americanization is that immigrants' children and grandchildren often begin to lose touch with their culture and language, be it Korean or Arabic, Tagalog or Spanish—especially when there's little interaction with other people of their ethnicity. "Because I married an Irish man and we moved so much in the military, I didn't get a chance to teach my children about Korea as I would have liked," Patsy says. Her voice was choked with emotion. "That troubled me. I dreamed of a place where language and culture could be passed down."

With Gary Locke, the nation's first Chinese American governor.
Surh O'Connell collection

With students, staff and volunteers at the Asia Pacific Cultural Center. *Surh O'Connell collection*

In 1996 Patsy became the first president of the Asia Pacific Cultural Center. It acquired a home when Metro Parks Tacoma—tentatively at first—rented the fledgling nonprofit a large old neighborhood center along South Tacoma Way. Before long, the place was buzzing with cultural workshops, cooking and language classes and kids' art projects. The Polynesians hosted luaus; the Koreans barbecued bulgogi; Samoans staged their rough-and-tumble traditional games and Japanese ladies presided fastidiously over traditional tea ceremonies. After two years, the city saw that the center was such a success that it said "just pay for the utilities."

With a paid staff of 10 and hundreds of volunteers, the center now offers a wide array of programs, including a "Promised Leaders of Tomorrow" mentoring effort tailored to at-risk youth and a summer camp where kids learn about 15 Asia Pacific countries in 15 days. The center's first Lunar New Year celebration was such a happening that it had to become an annual event. There's a different host country each year. The event draws

thousands from all over the Northwest.

WHAT'S NEXT? Patsy points to an artist's rendering of a 390,000 square-foot project set for the Point Ruston waterfront development near Point Defiance. Condominiums, restaurants, a movie-theater complex and an array of other retail outlets are already sprouting at the site of a former toxic landmark, Asarco's copper smelter. The developers have donated 5.9 acres of land valued at $5 million for the proposed new Asia Pacific Cultural Center. The design calls for a campus of striking modern buildings incorporating traditional Asian architectural themes. A spacious new cultural center building is the centerpiece, surrounded by retail outlets, a Uwajimaya-style grocery and housewares store, a food court, gift shop, gardens, galleries, classrooms and 200 housing units.

"We see it as a regional destination," Patsy says, another facet of Tacoma's emergence as a vibrant city in its own right after so many decades in Seattle's shadow. She points to the nexus of the Washington State History Museum, the Tacoma Art Museum, the Museum of Glass, the LeMay auto museum, UW Tacoma and the Tacoma Dome. "Look what's happening here," she says, noting that Tacoma's mayor, Marilyn Strickland, is an Asian-African American born in Seoul.

"How great would it be for other countries to know that America—*Washington State*—really embraces the culture and contributions of its Asia Pacific immigrants? Our goal is to open in 2021."

How much will all this cost? "Eighty-seven million dollars," Patsy says with a smile that says, Yes, that's a lot of money. "We can do it because we're persistent."

Like the tigers who leave behind their skins, Patsy Surh O'Connell wants to be remembered as someone who helped preserve Asian/Pacific Islander culture as part of the rich mosaic of a land of immigrants. "In America we concentrate on differences more than similarities. Sharing cultures in a nonthreatening way brings people together."

As a child, she knew war. The volatile hatefulness she sees around the world today, with Korea at the epicenter of potential disaster, make her yearn for peace. "Face-to-face relationships can make a difference. All this is in my heart."

John C. Hughes

JOAN KIM

Joan Kim's unstable childhood bounced her between North Korea, Manchuria and South Korea. She spent little time on the soil her family occupied for two millennia as the communists forced her father to give up the generations-old family farm.

Joan didn't return to North Korea for another 48 years, when she was given the rare opportunity to visit her two older brothers in 1992 after being separated for nearly five decades. Joan finally had a place to call home when she and her husband bought a house in Centralia, Washington, when she was 40. Her daughter, Cindy Ryu, is now a member of the Washington State Legislature.

Opposite page: In 1953, Joan, front left, with her husband Jae, siblings and father outside the family home in Pusan, South Korea. *Kim collection*

Top: Visiting the iconic Mount Kŭmgangsan during her travels in North Korea, 1992. *Kim collection*

Bottom: Home at last, in Centralia, Washington. *Kim collection*

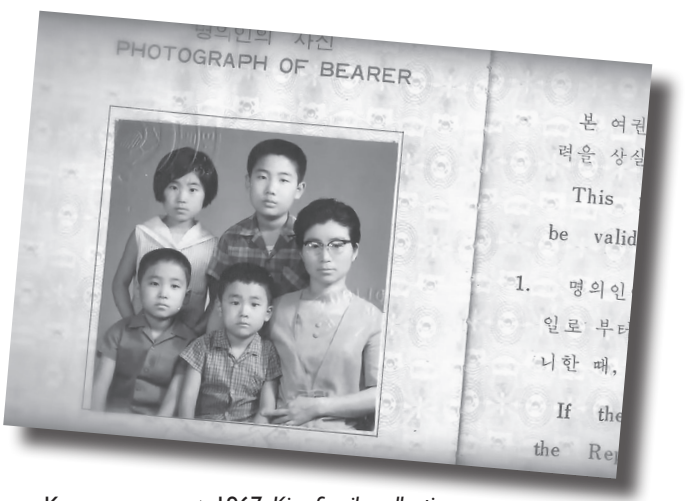

CINDY
RYU
THE
FORGOTTEN WAR
잊혀진 전쟁

The American Dream

Cindy Ryu remembers the jolt as the big jet's wheels touched down at SeaTac Airport. It was Christmas Eve, 1969. She was 12 years old, and Seattle was a world away from the Korea her family had left behind two years earlier. Cindy's name back then was Kim Sin Hi.

Greeted by smiling sponsors, Cindy, her parents and three brothers piled into a bright red Volkswagen Microbus and headed south on newly paved I-5. The road was so smooth Cindy felt like they were taking flight again.

King and Pierce Counties, where most of the Asians lived, went by in a blur. They were headed for a former railroad junction called "Gate." Once upon a time, it was the gateway to the coast. Cindy jokingly describes Gate as "a suburb of Rochester and Oakville," some 15 miles from the remarkably un-diverse metropolis of Centralia. Among its 10,000 residents, the 1970 Census enumerated one Filipino, two Japanese, four blacks, 21 Chinese, 47 Native Americans and 24 people categorized as "all other." Koreans apparently didn't count. Cindy's family was a minority within a minority. Imagine what it was like in Gate.*



Korean passport, 1967. *Kim family collection*

Today, State Representative Cindy Ryu lives in Shoreline with her husband, Cody. Together they owned a successful insurance agency for 26 years. While raising their three children, Cindy got her start in community service as a Sunday School teacher at United Presbyterian Church of Seattle. It

* The 2010 census found only 31 Koreans in Centralia. Washington's total population in 1970, when the Kims arrived, was 3.4 million, with 20,000 Japanese, 9,000 Chinese and 11,000 Filipinos—1,693 were listed as Koreans.

Represenative Cindy Ryu. *Ryu collection*

doesn't get any more American than that. As president of the Shoreline Chamber of Commerce, she helped create the city's Green Business Program. In 2008, while on the Shoreline City Council, Cindy became the first Korean-American woman to serve as mayor of a U.S. city. Elected to the House in 2010, she is the state's first female Korean-American legislator. Her emergence as an influential legislator symbolizes the clout of Washington's steadily growing Korean population.

KOREANS, MORE THAN 100,000* by latest estimates, now represent one percent of the state's 7.2 million people. But why did these proud and resilient people from a land once known as the "Hermit Kingdom" make their way to the upper left corner of the United States?

Between 1910 and 1953 Koreans endured brutal colonialism and a civil war that for a while threatened to become World War III. However, "as early as 1873, just two decades after Japan's own opening by foreign imperialism, the Japanese government discussed a plan to invade Korea," Frank Jacob wrote in his study of *The Korean Diaspora*. Next came the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905. With President Theodore Roosevelt as the broker—winning the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts—Japan won a free hand for expansionism in Far East Asia and the Russians surrendered their hegemony. Japan officially annexed the Korean Peninsula in 1910.

Washington's first Koreans arrived at the turn of the 20th century via Hawaiian plantations. They were mostly agricultural laborers and cannery workers. In 1910, the U.S. Census found only one Korean in Seattle; by 1920 there were 37—mostly men congregating in the International District between their seasonal jobs. A few were political refugees or students.

Korean women started to make their way to the United States as "picture brides." Many were hoping to escape colonialism and familial piety, the Confucian mandate to honor elders and ancestors above all else. Hoping for lives full of adventure and education,

* Includes population numbers from the U.S. Census, Department of Homeland Security and the Korean Embassy in Washington, D.C.

they instead found drudgery in the workplace. And those who settled on farms were burdened by many children and endless chores. Here's how it worked: A matchmaker in Korea would coordinate a marriage between a woman there and a Korean man in the United States. Often he was much older. "Love" had nothing to do with it. Colonial Japan encouraged the practice as a way to build trust with Koreans abroad. Between 1910 and 1924, roughly a thousand women came to the United States as picture brides.

Meantime, life in Korea under Imperial Japan was demeaning. The Japanese closed newspapers, purged Korean educators and imported teachers to inculcate Korean children with the Japanese culture and language. The colonial bureaucrats attempted to obliterate every aspect of Korean culture. Family names and place names had to be changed to Japanese; the Korean language itself was forbidden. Opportunistic Japanese flooded into Korea, buying up land.

With their homeland under foreign rule, Koreans at home and abroad dreamed of Korean independence, just as today they dream of unification of the entire peninsula. Many Koreans fled to the U.S. in order to support and protect their families. They formed organizations to work toward independence. Then Japan stopped Korean emigration. It needed laborers and soldiers to aid in their empire building.

By 1924, immigration was halted in the U.S. as well when the "Oriental Exclusion Act" was passed by Congress.* The numbers of Asian immigrants dwindled, with Seattle's Korean population listed as 15 in the 1930 U.S. Census. Interestingly, when Japanese were interned in the United States during World War II, Koreans were put into the same category because of Japan's iron control over Korea. Some Koreans—like the Chinese—declared their independence and innocence by wearing buttons that proclaimed, "I am not a Jap." With Japan's surrender in 1945, Korea was at first divided into U.S. and Russian spheres. Before long, however, Korean communists led by "Supreme Leader" Kim Il-sung controlled the north, while the U.S.-backed a government south of the 38th parallel. It was led by Syngman Rhee, an exiled anti-communist who for decades had been waiting for this opportunity. Each government claimed legitimacy. Civil war was imminent.

ALTHOUGH FROM DIFFERENT LINES, both of Cindy's parents carry the surname Kim. They can trace their lineage back two millennia to 10th Century Korea. Pronounced "Keem" by Koreans, Kim is the most popular surname in Korea, at 22 percent of today's population. Cindy's parents' roots run deep in what is now North Korea, a land she has never set foot on.

Cindy's father, Kim Jae Il, was born in 1925 in Hwanghae-do Province, which now borders South Korea. His financially stable parents owned an orchard. As the eldest living

---

* Congressman Albert Johnson, a Republican from Hoquiam, was the co-author of the patently racist act, and proud of it.

son, he was afforded a high school education, comparable to college in the United States.

Kim Seong Suk, Cindy's mother, was eight years younger than her spouse. Mrs. Kim—now Joan to her friends—was born in 1933 in P'yŏngan-namdo, the province of North Korea's current capital, Pyongyang. She was the daughter of a wealthy land owner who raised his children in the city so they could acquire an education.

Cindy's mother never knew a stable home in Korea. She was quite young when her father moved the family to Manchuria, leaving his eldest son to manage the large farm. Japan was gearing up for what would be World War II. Joan's father had three big worries. He feared his sons would be conscripted into the Japanese army, and that his daughters would be taken away to become "comfort women" for Japanese soldiers. He also wanted to ensure his children had access to education. His last worry was a practical matter: The Japanese occupiers confiscated all the brass in Korea to make ammunition. Those were the days before plastic and aluminum. Without brass pots and kettles, Korean families had no way to cook their food.

When Cindy's family left North Korea for Shenyang, a major Manchurian city, they weren't the Kims. They had been forced to choose a Japanese surname—in this case Kanemura. Her father picked it because Kane means Kim and mura is village in Japanese.

"The annexation of Korea and the Japanization forced many Koreans into exile," Frank Jacob wrote. "Due to this, more and more people left Korea. But they were not just forced; some were even encouraged to provide a reason for a more aggressive Japanese foreign policy in Manchuria, because they would not be just settlers, but Japanese citizens, for whose sake Japan was able to intervene in China. Due to this, between 1932 and 1940 around 732,000 Koreans left for the Northern state of Manchukuo, where the number reached 1,400,000 in 1940.* By 1945 over 2,160,000 were living in Manchuria."

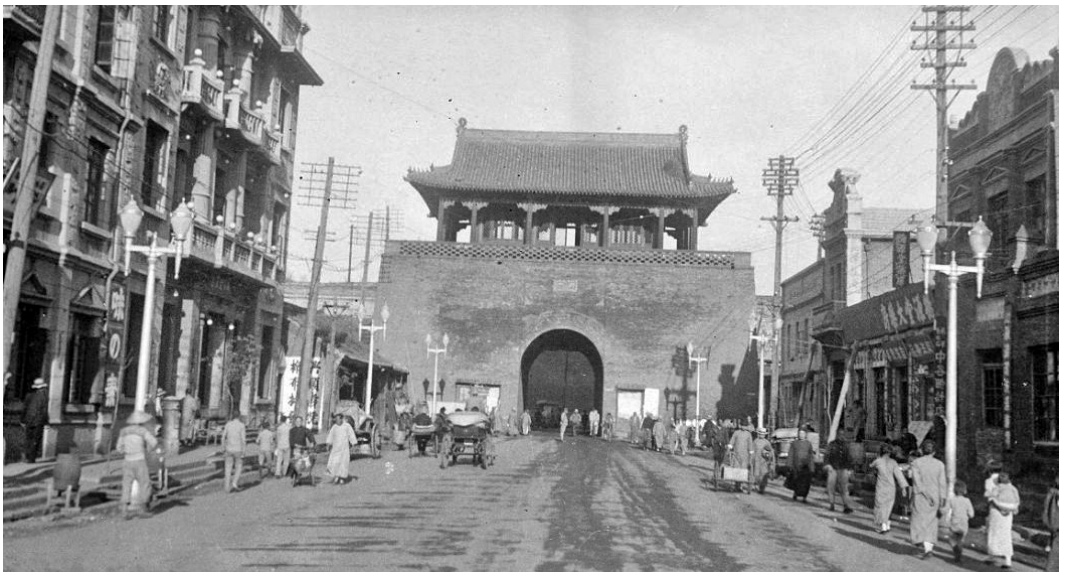
Ever resourceful, Cindy's grandfather was able to develop rice paddies to support his family and provide jobs for other Korean emigres. The Koreans in Manchuria "introduced paddy farming in their new area of residence and monopolized the rice trade in a very short time. Having belonged to a traditional agricultural society in former times, the settlers were able to use their broad knowledge of farming to produce a larger amount of rice, which made them prosperous."

Joan Kim's earliest memory is of losing her mother to tuberculosis in Manchuria. Joan was 6½. Her older sister, 10 years her senior, watched over her until a kind stepmother entered the picture. But there was a year of grieving.

Joan and her siblings attended school in Shenyang, where they were not a minority. There were 2,000 other Korean students, she remembers, emphasizing that her family took education seriously. They never got into mischief. "Even in Shenyang, however, they

---

* Manchukuo is the Japanese name for what is known as Manchuria. Both names represent imperialism, and are not how their original inhabitants, the Manchus, referred to this land.



The gate to the walled city of Shenyang, Manchuria (formerly Mukden, the Manchu capital) in the 1930s.

had to speak Japanese," Cindy said, translating for her mother. "They were required to turn each other in when they spoke a word of Korean. So each child had a card, and when a neighboring child heard a Korean word come out then they could take the card away. And they would be punished because they did not have a card. It's a way of ethno-genocide."

At war's end, Koreans had a brief moment of hope for independence. "As soon as her dad heard the news that Korea was free, he started drawing the Korean flag," Cindy says. "They were not allowed to hang onto anything Korean, even their name, so never mind the Korean flag. He started drawing it at his home so he could wave it. All the neighbors came to their house and started to draw the Korean flag to wave in the streets."

Joan Kim was 12. It was the first time she witnessed her native flag being flown.

THE KIMS—family name restored—were finally able to return to their homeland in December 1945. But they wouldn't stay in North Korea long. As the communists moved in, they started confiscating land "for the good of the state" and purging nonconformists. Joan's family was forced to surrender their farm. Her dad gathered the children who were still at home and explained that they must leave.

He hired a human smuggler. One dark February night in 1947, the Kims snuck across the border. Hands clasped over children's mouths. Even a cough could get you shot. They left behind Joan's now-married older sister, bound by tradition to stay with her husband's family. That was the last time the sisters would ever see each other.

An old friend of her father's met them when they arrived in Seoul. "They were childhood friends," Cindy says. "Back then, my grandfather's family had land, but the friend's family had no land. There was no reason for them to stay in North Korea, so they left to go to Taegu," a city some 200 miles south of Seoul. They were part of South Korea's early industrialization. "They had started a factory and he was doing *really* well by then. So their fortunes had completely reversed." Cindy's grandfather had been a generous man, helping the poor when he was a land owner. Now he was landless. But his old friend had a long memory. "He invited my grandfather to join them."

In Taegu, the friend purchased an orchard for Cindy's grandfather to manage. Though the dialects and customs in South Korea were slightly different, everything was in flux in that postwar era. Compared to her peers, Joan didn't notice anything different about her childhood. Her older brother attended the military academy and became a major for the South Korean Army. Joan went to school off and on until June 25, 1950—a day that will live in infamy among South Koreans across the globe.

Armed with the latest Soviet tanks and backed by heavy artillery, the North Korean Army surged across the 38th parallel just before dawn. The communists' intentions were clear: They were going to soak the peninsula in red as they pushed the enemy and its capitalist allies back to Pusan, the port city at the bottom of the peninsula. It was there that the Kims and hundreds of thousands of other civilians fled for their lives.

June 25th is South Korea's 9/11. "We just call it by '625,' " Cindy says. "You do not get married on that day; you do not have parties on that day—even now, 65 years later." She recalls that the South Korean Army was heavily outmanned and under-equipped:

> All they had were rifles—single-shot rifles. No cannons, nothing. The young soldiers of the South Korean army that were defending the last line before they jumped into the water, basically, were the children of un-landed people for thousands of years. They had *just* become land owners, receiving land from President Rhee through the land reform program. So they had personal as well as national pride in defending the land. They would have to fight until the bitter end. The young men were extremely brave in spite of not having the right equipment. That's the Battle of Nakdong River.

Then came General Douglas MacArthur. The legendary hero of the South Pacific War became commander of all the United Nations forces in Korea. He was the architect of the daring amphibious landing at Inchon that turned the tide of war that September, eventually pushing the communists all the way to the Chinese border. Joan calls MacArthur "the top." At Inchon, a towering statue of the five-star general rises to the heavens.

The communists wouldn't stay contained up north for long. Seoul would switch

hands four times over the course of the Korean War that raged until July 1953. "It is estimated that at least two million civilians were killed in the course of the war, a higher civilian death ratio than that of either World War II or the Vietnam War. By 1951, five million Koreans had become displaced refugees, as desperate families fled the shifting front line. US bombing raids destroyed almost all of the major cities and agriculture-producing areas in North Korea."

Left, Jae and Joan as newlyweds, with Joan's father and siblings at the family home in Pusan after the Korean War. *Kim family collection*

CINDY'S FATHER, Kim Jae Il, was also in Manchuria during those tumultuous years of Japanese occupation. After high school, he found a factory job to escape being conscripted into the Japanese Army. Jae Il had been educated strictly in Japanese schools. He spoke Japanese better than Korean. He was living in the south as he worked on a graduate degree in fisheries when the Korean War erupted. Jae Il was immediately drafted into the South Korean Army.

Jae Il's mother and sister, Song, had spoken to Joan about Jae. As soon as he returned from the war they were introduced at church. It was an arranged meeting, not an arranged marriage, the Kims emphasize. They had a choice.

The Kims went on to have four children who arrived every two years, starting in 1955: Sin Il, Sin Hi (Cindy), Gun Sam (now "Sam") and Sun Gil. Postwar Seoul was far from the modern city we know today. Cindy remembers her growing-up years:

> The residential areas were pretty much intact. They may have been ransacked going and coming, or even by neighbors. But there were still older homes and single-family homes and neighborhoods. The neighborhood I lived in is called Mapo. When you go to downtown Seoul you will still see the direction to Mapo. It was in the suburb, but it was still Seoul proper. Now, it's smack in the middle—it's so, so busy, with a whole bunch of freeways going by it.
>
> …You were lucky if you had a spout in your yard that was for the cooking and the washing, because even 10 years before it was go

Cindy, front, with her mother and brothers in Seoul, 1962. *Kim family collection*

to the river. I think we had a partial sewer so the grey water could go down but the human waste had to go separate in an outdoor closet ["outhouse"]. They had a system of regular collectors who would dump waste outside of the city. Now we celebrate the bathroom culture!

We had communal "spas," but in those days it was the communal bath (mogyoktang). So everybody would pay a few Korean won and the whole family goes in. The women go in here, the men go in there. And you scrub, and your mom scrubs you. It was within our generation."

IN THE 1960S, Cindy's father moved to Brunei, a nation on the island of Borneo, to support his family as a migrant worker. As an officer during the war, he supervised the engineers; building roads and bridges, running heavy equipment and doing welding and mechanical jobs. Cindy's mother stayed in Korea with the children. But, after three years, she knew this was no way to live as a family. Joan Kim packed up her four children and took the long journey to be with her husband. Cindy was nine.

While living in Brunei, the Kims were exposed to many different cultures. The Malays made up the majority of the population, but there were also Chinese, Indians, Australians, British and a smattering of Koreans. "It was a tropical rainforest. The papaya tree had fruit that was delicious. It was really paradise." After weighing their options, the Kims sent their children to a private Anglican School to be educated in English. Joan took in sewing to supplement their income. The Kims always made it clear that the parents were there

Cindy, front row, second from right, in a choir directed by her older brother, Sinil, while they attended school in Brunei. *Kim family collection*

Cindy's mother, Joan, had this studio portrait taken so her husband could see how his children were growing as he worked overseas in Brunei. *Kim family collection*

to work and the children were there to learn. Cindy, as the lone girl, was never excluded. "In Korea in those days women were not educated. Even my generation, if they had limited resources it would be the first son, and then all the other sons and then maybe the girls. But, my parents always said *all* of you."

Two years later, however, their visas expired. "The only place we could go together on the same visa, on the same passport, was the Philippines," Cindy remembers. "So that's where we landed while we were waiting for a visa to enter the U.S.A. And before we ran out of money and our welcome was wearing thin in Manila, we were able to immigrate to the United States. But it wasn't a done deal so I'm sure my parents were scared to death."

CINDY'S AUNT SONG, who had introduced her parents, orchestrated the Kim family's move to America. "She was working as a secretary on the Army base in Korea where she met Mr. Zobrist, who eventually became Colonel Zobrist. She was the more active and more engaged, practical, pragmatic aunt. She's the one who made sure everybody who could, could come to the United States, get a fresh start, but it was up to us to make our own way."

Cindy's aunt made sure the Kims had a connection and asked her neighbors to sponsor them. That's how they were introduced to the Johnsons, a benevolent Mormon family who lived at Gate, of all places.

"Korean Americans have been virtually unknown in the United States for most of this (20th) century … finally it seemed that each airliner arriving from Seoul brought another immigrant family," wrote Brian Lehrer in *The Korean Americans*.

The Johnsons showed up at the airport with the new VW van they had purchased for the occasion. They welcomed the wide-eyed Korean family of six into their already full home for six weeks. In addition to their own brood, the Johnsons had taken in foster kids.

Joan's first impression was that "Americans are friendly and it's a good place. Looking back, they truly loved us. They had never met us before—total strangers. We lived in that neighborhood, in another house, for about three years because they treated us so well and probably spoke well of us."

The new customs took some getting used to. Cindy's youngest brother, Sun Gil, was given a piece of cake that he promptly rejected. Mrs. Johnson was surprised. "She thought every kid would love cake," Cindy remembers, but her 8-year-old brother blurted, "You used your fingers. Dirty! My mom always washes her hands before she gives me food and you didn't wash your hands."

All these years later, Sun Gil was laughing and nodding as Cindy related one of the family's favorite stories. Their mom *was* always fastidious. "That's why I became a microbiology major, and that's why you're the toilet guy," Cindy said. Her brother smiled. He now works for the Gates Foundation as the Program Officer of Transformative Technologies—Water, Sanitation and Hygiene. "He's setting the standards for the world. How many years after the Romans?" Cindy says, her pride evident. Thousands, Sun Gil said. "Half of the population in the world has no access to improved sanitation systems," he noted. "We must support radically new sanitation technologies." Maybe he too remembers the outhouse at Mapo.

CINDY WAS AN EXTREMELY SHY sixth grader at Rochester Elementary School, where she would much rather read than talk. She found community at the Nazarene Church where she enjoyed singing in the choir. During her high school years, Cindy helped organize weekly church services at a local nursing home.

Making friends with other girls was not difficult. "They would invite me to their home. I may have invited them to our home, but our mom was pretty private and I knew in order to have friends over you had to have snacks ready and so on. I was not a good hostess. It was very one-sided. Any time they asked me to come over I was there. They really took me under their wings and tried to help me along and befriend me. One of them actually became my constituent."

Back in Korea, generations of people were homeless as their soil was overtaken by

foreign interests. After living in flux their entire lives, the Kim family finally had a place to call home in 1973 when they bought their first house in Centralia. Some Koreans moved to other states but the Kims were staying put in Lewis County.

"I didn't face discrimination but I knew I was quite different," Cindy remembers. In junior high and high school, the minorities were Cindy, her younger brother Sam, a Chinese girl and a Native American girl out of 800. Sun Gil adds, "I think the only Korean family that was not related to an American military person was in Chehalis. And then I remember there was one family that was from Hawaii—also Kims. I think in Centralia we were the only fully Korean family."

The children spent their summers picking blueberries at Drew's Blueberry Farm on the Black River. One year Cindy was elected Blueberry Queen, a real honor. A favorite site for the family was the Centralia Library where they were involved with events like the International Story Telling Festival. "We were at the library all the time. My dad definitely believed in the library because it was free, and it was like wow, look at the treasure trove. I would borrow the platters [records] to play all the music. My favorite was John Philip Sousa marching band music. The other kids would not rent it out so we were the ones that would check them out."

Cindy's father went to work at the Centralia Steam Plant for the next 21 years. His coworkers all wanted to know, "How can you have all four kids get into UW, and succeed?" With a smile, he always said it was the kimchi. Ironically, when Cindy's parents had discussions they didn't want their children to understand they would speak in Japanese. In fact, Jae Il ended up teaching Japanese to students at Centralia Community College.

Jae Kim's naturalization papers. "My dad became an American by choice."
Kim family collection

THE KIMS BEGAN PETITIONING for naturalization. And in 1975 at the age of 17 the future state representative became a United States citizen. She chose her own new name. "Cindy" sounded a lot like her Korean name, Sin Hi, which she combined to Sinhi as her middle name.

"My junior year English teacher was great because she would ask questions instead of just teaching us. She would actually have conversations with us, and that's what I needed. I needed that skill set, which was really timely, but I also needed somebody who would not straight teach English but also the rhetoric side of it—even asking questions like, 'Do you dream in English or do you dream in Kore-

The Kim family in America in the late-1970s: Cindy, Sun Gil, Sin Il and Sam, with their parents, Joan and Jae. *Kim family collection*

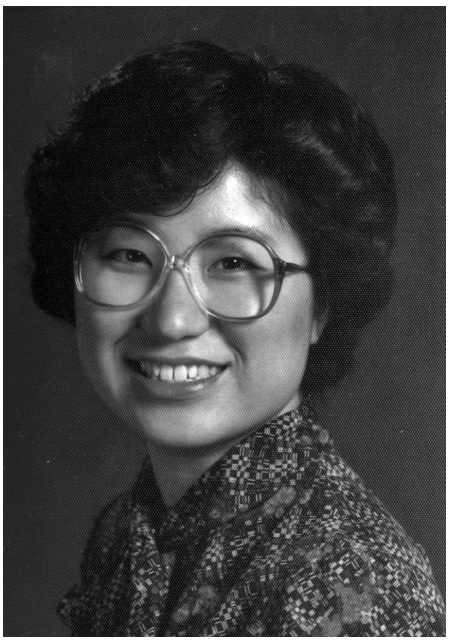
an?' And I couldn't answer her. For *years* I couldn't answer her. And then later on I think I did actually tell her, 'I dream in pictures.' Because I'm so much more position and vision oriented, so I don't talk much in my dreams but I remember vividly where we were."

Cindy Sinhi Kim graduated from Centralia High School in 1976. The United States was celebrating its bicentennial, so the graduates wore red and blue gowns instead of orange and black, the school colors. For Cindy, the symbolism was even more compelling. She was an American now. One of the top 10, she received the Centralia-Chehalis Soroptimist Club youth citizenship award, a scholarship to the University of Washington and departmental honors in science. Her class voted her "Girl most likely to succeed." That came as a surprise to her. But she would surely bring her classmates prophecy to fruition.

Cindy followed her older brother Sinil to the University. He had skipped a grade in high school, remarkable for a recent immigrant for whom English was a second language. Sinil was now advancing to medical school. Since education was so important to their family, Cindy's parents helped pay her way. But she always worked as a college student, mostly as a medical transcriptionist. Cindy graduated with her bachelor's degree in microbiology.

She was eager to fulfill her childhood dream of becoming a medical missionary like her hero Albert Schweitzer—the Nobel Peace Prize winner. After a couple tries, however,

she wasn't able to gain admission. Cindy switched gears and went back to get a Master's in Business Administration. Still very shy, she knew she had to shed her shell if she was going to be a business leader. Cindy joined the Toastmasters—a club to boost public speaking skills. Now, thinking back to the days when she was nervous to speak her mind, she laughs. That's not the case any more.



Kim family collection

As Cindy was approaching 25, her mother made it clear it was time to get married. As was true with their parents, Cindy and some of her siblings also had "arranged meetings," not arranged marriages. Many of her Korean friends were sent back to Korea to find spouses. They would meet with a matchmaker, either a family friend or a hired consultant. Cindy had a trip planned but was hopeful of finding a Korean husband in the states. She had seen the complications that came with bringing home a spouse from a foreign land. Besides the language barrier and cultural norms, there were everyday challenges. "You had to be a driving instructor since most Koreans did not own cars in the 1980s."

Lucky for her, as she was playing piano at a tiny Korean Methodist church in Seattle the minister said he knew of a young man she should meet. It wasn't much of a first impression. He had a bowl haircut and an ill-fitting jacket. His name was Ryu Chang Myung, Americanized to Cody Ryu. By Date Two, Cindy was proposing. This tells you something important you need to know about Cindy. Thirty-five years and three children later, Cody and Cindy are a match made in Heaven. Their Christian faith is a huge part of their lives.

UNFORTUNATLEY, EVEN WITH AN MBA, "in 1983, all the doors were shut. So I was happy to get $1,100 a month. I was happy to answer the phone. That was a blessing. For six months I had to talk all day long. I got over being shy."

Cindy landed a job with the City of Seattle's Department of Construction and Land Use. She really enjoyed the work, thinking she'd be a 30-year employee. Her husband was starting his own Allstate Insurance Agency. As is customary with Korean families, they were very close to Cody's parents, even living in their basement for a time. But that proved stressful. Cody was busy at the agency. Cindy was a full-time working mom with a commute. They'd just had a second child. She was burned out. The couple decided it would be best for Cindy to come work with Cody at the insurance agency. That was a life-changing

decision. With Cody as the salesman and Cindy as the operations manager, they made a great team.

In her book on the lifestyles of Korean Americans, Tamra Orr wrote, "Over two-thirds of the women in Korea do not have any type of job outside the home. In the U.S., on the other hand, more than 70 percent of the married Korean women work outside the home…"

Cindy and Cody Ryu enjoying a hike. *Ryu collection*

"My mom says she never told me, 'You also need money, not just love,' " Cindy remembers. "Maybe it was a series of conversations but I remember thinking, 'I'm going to get married for love, not for convenience.' Dreamy Cindy, right? With my nose in the books. What's the number one cause for divorces? Fighting about money. So what I learned was that money is just a tool that we figured out. And money is what I can use to send missionaries; money is what I can use to help support the church; money is what I can use to help my kids. So it buys you options."

After 26 years of hard work, they were able to sell their insurance agency and go on to their other life's passions. Cindy entered politics full time as a way to make a difference in her community. Cody took a different path. His family had been founding members of the United Presbyterian Church of Seattle, and over the years his faith grew until he decided it was his calling to receive a Master's in Divinity. Cody is now a pastor at the Korean Presbyterian Church in Fairbanks, Alaska, while Cindy serves in Olympia.

Their three children, Candice Hae Sun, Christine Hae Young and Cody Hyun Geun, have had to navigate what it means to be Korean American in 21st Century America. Because she arrived in America as a 12-year-old, "I'm considered 1½-generation immigrant," Cindy says, explaining that it's like the Japanese system. The Issei are the immigrants; the Nisei are the first generation born in America, and the Sansei are the grandchildren of the immigrants. "Americans don't count the immigrants as the first generation. They count the first generation born here. We have the motherland perspective: First generation in America, that's my husband because he grew up in Korea. I'm '1½' because I only spent part of my childhood in Korea, probably closer to '1¾.' So my children aren't really second-generation. They're more like 2½ generations. They were having a difficult time, not

Enjoying a Korean meal with her children, left to right: Cody, son-in-law, Teague, Candice and Christine. *Ryu collection*

with the kids but with the kids' Korean parents: 'Why don't you speak Korean? Are you a lesser Korean because you don't speak Korean?' So they had that challenge. But they are trying to learn Korean now. Even my white American son-in-law is trying to learn Korean one word a day because their kids will be half-Korean."

Surprisingly, in 1991, Cindy's mother was able to visit North Korea as part of a tourism effort promoted by the north to generate tourist dollars. Mrs. Kim hadn't heard a word from her siblings, two brothers and a sister, in almost 45 years. In particular, she was eager to finally reconnect with her beloved older sister. First, she tracked down one of the brothers to verify she had the correct family. Then she boarded a plane with 35 other Americans and landed in Beijing, China. From there, they took an old North Korean Air propeller plane to Pyongyang. The tourists were sent to specific locations, including the iconic Mount Kŭmgangsan, "The Diamond Mountain"—a centuries-old pilgrimage destination for Koreans that appears in many songs and artwork.

"They kept the visitors touring instead of introducing the families to them," Cindy said, translating for her mother. "They were remodeling and cleaning up the host family homes" to make a better impression. "She ended up in her nephew's house because her brother's house was too old. They could not remodel it. It's *really* clean, and nice. So she assumed that's how they lived. 'Wow,' my mother said, 'you have a really nice home.' But my relatives were very honest people. 'Because you're coming it took me three whole days to repaper the whole house,' my cousin told my mother. 'I am really tired.' "

The Kim family celebrating mom's 80th birthday. All of Jae and Joan's 11 grandchildren are college graduates. *Kim family collection*

So it was all for show.

Cindy's brother, Sun Gil, says, "There's one picture of my mom sitting around a big round table. They sit on the floor, and there's just piles of food everywhere. The amazing thing for me to see was that they had all this food and Korean beer. My mom is not a fat lady, but when you look at her versus my cousins she looks very big, compared to how skinny everyone else was. So it was clear they were not eating well."

Mrs. Kim had spent so little of her childhood in North Korea that it felt foreign to her. Sadly, she learned that her sister had already passed away, but she was able to visit with her two brothers. Joan's wish is that one day North and South Korea will be reunited so her children can know their cousins in the north. Right now, the only way to communicate is through letters, which don't always make it to the recipients.

FOR KOREANS, every birthday is special. Some more so. A child's first birthday is doubly happy because in days gone by many children died in infancy. Likewise the 60th birthday symbolizes the wisdom of age. Lately 80 is the new 60 as people live longer. Cindy turns 60 in 2017. She seems much younger. Cindy is active in the Korean community in Washington State and globally. She makes sure to return to South Korea at least every other year. Her

Running for the House of Representatives. *Ryu collection*

children have visited on their own as part of group tours, thinking it important to learn about their ancestral land through their own eyes and perspectives. Cindy proudly chairs the Overseas World Korean Political Council, where Korean politicians from all over the globe gather to share ideas. "It's that comradery, that diaspora that we all experienced either in our lifetime or previous generations, and yet here we are able to come together. It's just really precious."

Cindy snaps a selfie with a Korean War veteran who was awarded the Korean Ambassador for Peace medal. *Ryu collection*

As a four-term member of the Washington State House of Representatives, Cindy is honored to represent her 32nd District constituents, including many Korean Americans. A Democrat, she won each election by a landslide. Cindy leads the Community Development, Housing and Tribal Affairs Committee—overseeing tourism, veterans and emergency preparedness. She serves on two other House committees: Commerce and Gaming, and Capital Budget, and heads the Members of Color Caucus.

In 2011, Cindy was appointed

In 2016, Cindy was awarded the Grand Order of Honor presidential medal from the Republic of Korea. *Ryu collection*

to the special joint House and Senate committee overseeing trade policy for the Washington State Legislature. Washington now ranks third in the nation for exports. "Rep. Ryu is opening people's eyes to new global economic opportunities that allow even the smallest businesses to create jobs tied to international trade," Speaker Frank Chopp said. "Her leadership for small business will be a valuable addition to the trade policy committee."

Cindy strongly advocates for small business, public schools, public transportation, environmental and consumer protection and public safety. She consistently votes against payday loan bills because she believes they are predatory.

"There's a tiny little story that I tell the fifth graders who come to visit," Cindy says. "I say, 'I have three very accomplished brothers.' I ask the kids, 'Who wants to be a politician when you grow up?' No hands go up usually. Maybe one half-way, but the parents are not encouraging them to be politicians. So I tell them my brothers are very accomplished. One's a doctor, one's a chief information officer for Clark County and one is working for the Gates Foundation. And here I am. I earn the least. But guess what? My brothers have to obey the laws that I make!"

Washington's Korean American population is over 100,000, and more than 3,000 businesses are operated by Koreans. "My ethnicity helps in Washington State," Cindy says. "Asians, and specifically Koreans are assumed to be smart and hard workers." But, that doesn't mean it's easy to get into public office, she says. "In both the Democratic and Republican parties in Washington State, persons of color mostly do not participate at the grassroots, local or state levels. Even with its history with an Asian governor, politics here is still a white person's world.

"As an adult, I've been told 'Go back to where you came from'—yes, in PC King County," Cindy says. "Just because I'm getting in touch with my Koreanness does not mean I'm less of an American. Guess what? By becoming a better Korean I'm actually becoming a better American because people used to be given the false choice: 'Are you Korean or

American? Where is your allegiance?' They're not exclusionary. The American experience is the melting pot. We are a nation of immigrants. Even the Native Americans, they emigrated here from Asia, even if it was some 15,000 years ago.

"We are all immigrants."

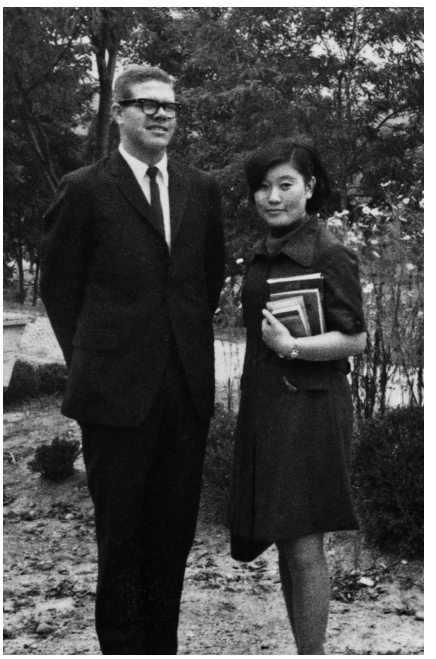
Lori Larson

MOONBEAM KUPKA

Moonbeam & Mike

One girl in the visiting church choir caught the lieutenant's eye. Her classic Korean face was like a lovely reflection from an ancient gene pool. Her hair was as black and shiny as a raven's wing. Afterward, she noticed him too. They exchanged quick smiles, hers demure, his reassuring. It was 1968. Michael Kupka introduced himself to Moon Bong Sook with careful attention to Korean etiquette. She was a 22-year-old university student from Seoul, an hour from his U.S. Army detachment.

Moon Bong Sook had lively eyes and a hearty Korean laugh she found difficult to restrain. The pastor warned the girls to stay away from American soldiers. But he was an officer—a tall, sandy-haired Lutheran from Minnesota with perfect manners. When she thrashed him in a game of Ping-Pong he raised his arms in surrender. On one of their secret dates, they saw *Doctor Zhivago*. A luminous full moon greeted them as they left the theater.



Mike and Moonbeam when they first met in 1968. *Kupka collection*

"Oh, look at the moonbeam!" she said.

"It's like you," he said. "I'm going to call you Moonbeam."

This is a love story and a war story rolled into one. Most of our earliest memories are just fragments from childhood's big moments—the puppy who mauled the birthday party cake, the Spiderman or Barbie doll under the Christmas tree. Moonbeam Kupka's first memories are chillingly vivid: streams of frightened refugees; tanks rumbling through the night; bombs raining from the sky; the cries of wounded soldiers and terrified children. That was the summer of 1950. "I was only 4, but I remember," Moonbeam says emphatically. "Those memories never fade. They keep haunting you. So what you do is count your blessings, make yourself busy and pray 'Never again.' "

The missile-rattling by North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un underscores her anxiety. Moonbeam has a son in uniform and brothers and sisters in Seoul, as well as long-lost relatives still trapped in the north. "How does one commemorate a war that technically is not over?" Sheila Miyoshi Jager writes in her acclaimed 2013 book, *Brothers at War, The Unending Conflict in Korea.* "While the Korean War, at least for Americans, 'ended' in 1953, the meaning and memories of the war have not been brought to closure in Korean society because of the permanent division of the peninsula."

"Exactly," says Moonbeam.

The achingly beautiful "Unification Song" is still often sung at closing time in Seoul's taverns and bars, though some, even its composer, fear it has become "a symbol of false hope."

In retirement, Moonbeam and Mike Kupka live in an immaculate home high on an evergreen hillside overlooking Grays Harbor. They produced three little Moons who grew up to be highly successful blends of Moonbeam's animated Korean persistence and Mike's creative yet calm Czech/Scandinavian DNA. Their firstborn, Erik, is an attorney in Aberdeen; Lisa, the middle child, is a CEO in Dallas, and Johnathon is an Army Special Forces lieutenant colonel twice stationed in Korea. When Johnny was reconnoitering his childhood neighborhood with a paintball rifle 30 years ago it was easy to imagine him as a soldier, just not with a Ph.D. in political science.

MOONBEAM was born in Pyongyang, now the North Korean capital, on the sixth day of spring 1946. An impressive bound volume traces her lineage to 1399 in endless rows of Chinese and Korean characters. Her paternal ancestors were scholars, educators and regional governors. Her mother's family had been land-holding nobility for generations.

Moonbeam's parents were married at 16 in a classic arranged marriage, virtual strangers on their wedding day. The new Mrs. Moon quickly discovered that her husband's mother, the lady of the house, was bossy. "When my mother was growing up as an only daughter with five brothers, she was just like a princess," Moonbeam says, "not doing much domestically because they had so many maids. She learned to sew and do embroidery—make beautiful things. Until my parents left North Korea she never even cooked."

After the Japanese annexed Korea in 1910, Moonbeam's politically agile great-grandfather and grandparents managed to hold onto the secondary schools they operated, as well as much of their land. However, as World War II progressed the Japanese colonial regime was increasingly brutal.

At war's end, the Korean peninsula was divided at its waist—the 38th parallel—with the Russians occupying the north, the U.S. the south. Stalin had declared war on Japan in the nick of time, giving the Soviets an important sphere of influence in postwar Korea. The North became a structured Soviet-style state; the South lapsed into political volatility.

Moonbeam's paternal grandfather early on sensed the inevitability of civil war. The North Korean communists—with Russian-speaking "Soviet Koreans" at the forefront—began instituting "land reforms" to confiscate private property. "They took inventory of my family's properties and said, 'You cannot have this much wealth. You must become communists.' In 1946, my grandfather told my father and his siblings, 'You kids better move south.' So my mother and my father and three kids—I was exactly three months old—moved from Pyongyang to Seoul on foot and by ox wagon. My father lost contact with all his brothers and sisters. Later we learned they also escaped to the south."

With her toddler brother, Yoon Sup, during the Korean War. *Kupka collection*

Growing up, Moonbeam often heard what happened on that perilous 150-mile trip:

> My mother said I was the family's protection because she was carrying me on her back with all of our blankets. Inside was hidden all of her valuables. Then as now, the monies are different in North Korea and South Korea so they had to carry gold or silver to exchange for food and other services.
>
> We were trying to hide from the communist soldiers. My mother said that when they left Pyongyang my grandmother told her, "If she's too much trouble just throw her in the river!" My mother told me, "A few times I thought about it because you were making dangerous trouble for the family with your crying." So when I was growing up and sometimes not obeying my parents, my mother and dad teasingly would say, "We shoulda thrown her in the river when we had a chance!" Everyone would laugh, but it wasn't funny at all to me because I knew that in 1946 they were very serious. The red army soldiers might have shot my parents if they'd heard me crying. It was survival. They were escaping. And I was just another girl anyway. It seems unthinkable now.

The U.S.-backed Republic of Korea was established on August 17, 1948, with Syngman Rhee, a crafty old nationalist, as its president. Three weeks later, the Soviet-sponsored Democratic People's Republic of Korea was born. Its president was Kim Il-sung, an enterprising young Stalinist who had emerged as a leader of the anti-Japanese guerrillas before earning a commission in the Soviet Army.

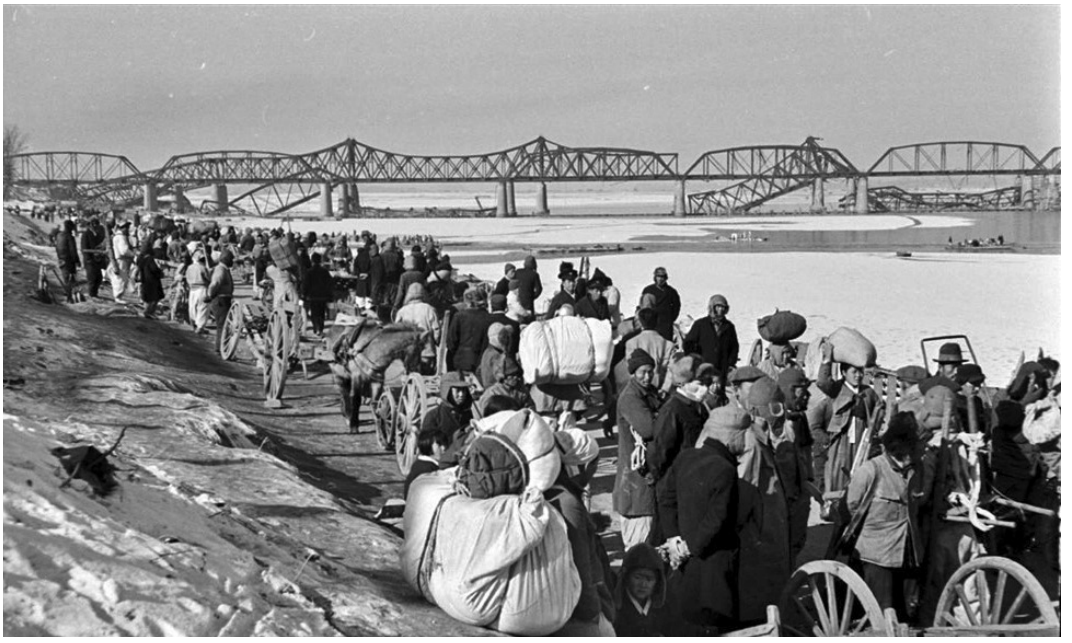
The U.S. and the United Nations resolved that the ROK was Korea's sole legal government. Kim, armed with Russian weaponry and a bevy of skilled Soviet advisers, had other designs. He believed his troops would be welcomed as liberators in a short-lived war. And Stalin believed the Americans, having withdrawn their troops in 1949, would not intervene. Sheila Miyoshi Jager calls the Korean War "a series of miscalculations." It became a deadly game of geopolitical chicken when General MacArthur underestimated the Chinese.

JUST BEFORE DAWN on June 25, 1950, an estimated 90,000 well-trained North Korean troops crossed the 38th parallel in carefully coordinated strategic thrusts. Though many ROK soldiers fought "with suicidal determination," the withering artillery fire and onslaught of powerful Soviet T-34 tanks caused many to flee in "a state of terror." The Truman administration—accused by Republicans of being soft on communism—swiftly committed American troops to come to Rhee's rescue. Other U.N. members sent soldiers as well, including Great Britain, Canada, France and the Philippines.

Moonbeam remembers the fear and urgency in the grownups' voices as the children were told to gather up belongings:

> On June 28 my mother's brother told her, "Sis, you better get out right away or you're going to die because the communists are already entering Seoul." I vividly remember walking over the Han River Bridge and hearing the loud noises of war all around us. At the time there was only one bridge over the Han. Here I am a little girl and everybody is carrying things, running and shouting. My mother has a baby on her back. And it's so hot! My feet are hurting and I'm crying, "I cannot walk!" And my dad says, "OK, you can stay there and you can die!" At least he carried my little backpack. I was so hot and tired. I remember being so afraid.

The south bank of the Han was littered with mangled bodies. "A milling, screaming mass of humanity" choked the roads. That first day of fleeing, the Moon family made it halfway to Suwon, some 20 miles south of Seoul. When they stopped to rest, a passing platoon of American GIs gave them some soda crackers. "That's all we had: soda crackers and water," Moonbeam says. "Now every time I'm eating a soda cracker I remember that day.



Thousands of refugees fleeing Seoul line the banks of the Han River after the invading North Koreans blew up the only road bridge. *National Archives*

It seemed like there were thousands and thousands of refugees. We couldn't stop. We had to keep walking." Once, when they heard machine guns chattering and spotted a clump of communist soldiers heading their way, they scrambled into a farmer's field.

> In June, the tomato plants are already getting tall, so we're hiding between the tomato plants. I could see bandaged, wounded soldiers being carried away. My dad kept saying, "Head down! Head down!" I don't remember how long we were hiding there, but we were hungry again. So my dad said, "Eat these green tomatoes!" They weren't ripe. Hard as rocks. I can still taste those green tomatoes in the back of my mouth. It makes my tongue crinkle. I don't know how many I ate. But when you are hungry you can eat just about anything. When the movie *Fried Green Tomatoes* came out I thought that was nuts. I'm never eating green tomatoes again!

When they reached Suwon, refugees were frantically trying to stuff themselves into an already overloaded train bound for Taegu, 130 miles southeast. "No more room inside," Moonbeam remembers, "but if we waited for the next train, it might be too late to escape from the communists. We climbed up on the roof of the train car. There was a

Refugees clamber aboard a train heading south as the North Koreans advance. *Hulton-Deutsch Collection/CORBIS*

rope you could hold onto because the roof was sloped. And if you're sliding down and off it's, 'Oh well, can't help them. That's too bad!' "

As the train chugged into a tunnel, Moonbeam's family was holding on for dear life, cinders stinging their faces and singeing their clothes. When they emerged, Moonbeam looked up to see her father's face black with soot. "All you see was his shining eyes. I realized we all looked that way. You'd wipe off your face, then there'd be another tunnel."

Finally they made their way to the strategic port city of Pusan, where the Americans and their U.N. allies were establishing a defensive perimeter. Issued Army tents, the refugees set up camp at Haeundae, which is now a popular beachfront vacation spot. The summer of 1950 was no picnic. "At first, the only thing we had to eat was what we could catch from the sea, using bamboo sticks or our hands. It was fish, small crabs and seaweed."

U.N. soldiers arrived by the boatload. Pusan acquired a commissary, medical facilities and a bustling supply depot. The famished refugees opened boxes of C-rations to discover tins and packets filled with strange food. Moonbeam was astounded by the powdered milk. She choked down her first oatmeal. "When we finally got SPAM, holy cow, it was a luxury."

Hundreds of children—orphaned or otherwise separated from their parents—

scrounged the hills around Pusan. Many were "adopted" by U.S. Marines, who were suckers for the ragamuffin kids.

Orphaned children on a hillside near Pusan.
Seattle Times photo

THE MOONS spent the next three months in the relative safety of the Pusan Perimeter. General MacArthur, the U.N. forces commander, hatched an audacious amphibious landing at Inchon that turned the tide of war—for the time being at least. Moonbeam can't remember details such as these, just the anxiety:

> Especially during this hard time when the war was going on all around us, I must say I always remember and appreciate my parents. My mom and dad were strong and did their very best to keep the family together. We were most fortunate not to have harm come to any of us. So many of my friends lost family members and I saw so many wounded people. We didn't have much but we had each other. My mother was very resilient. She was slowly selling her jewelry to help us survive. I remember thinking my mother must have had a prestigious family, because her jewelry was very wonderful.

Moonbeam still chafes, however, at the patriarchal norms that governed her childhood. The expectation of absolute filial piety would create a heartbreaking chasm between her and her father for decades. The social status of South Korean women today is dramatically elevated from those classic Confucian attitudes, but the country "still has a long way to go before it can shed its image and alter its reality as a male-dominated society," a female professor told *The Korea Times* in 2012. When Moonbeam was growing up, her place in the hierarchy was very clear:

> My first younger brother was three months old when the war started. Before he was born, we had found a house in Seoul and my mother was so proud and happy about her first son. We put him on a little swing set in the bedroom. Here I am as a 4-year-old and I wanted

to ride with my brother. And my mother said, "No, you can't. That's only for him."

During the war, white rice was hard to get. And it was very precious after the war. Very seldom you could get it. My dad and my brothers got the white rice and I got whatever I was going to get. When we cooked fishes I always got the tail. And when we had chicken I got the gizzards and necks. I never got the white meat because it's always about father and the boys first.

My mother and dad were poor after we came south but they have so much ego and pride over what they had in the north, my mother always said, "One of these days when we go back north you won't have to work because we left so much gold, pigs and cows there." That was my parents' dream, but that was not going to happen. Now it's been over 70 years. My father always said, "Poor isn't a sin! It's just an inconvenience for a short time." And my mother often said, "Work like a slave and live like a king."

BY LATE SEPTEMBER 1950, Seoul was back in U.N. hands and the allies were advancing on Pyongyang, the North Korean capital. The Moons made their way back to Seoul and discovered their old neighborhood had been reduced to rubble. They weren't even sure which mound was theirs. Before they fled, Moonbeam's father had buried their valuables, including her mother's sewing machine. "If I can find it then we know that's our place," he declared. After hours of poking, he found the spot. That's where they pitched their tent.

Moonbeam's father made plans to build a new house, confident that MacArthur would mop up the communists by year's end. *"Guess what?"* Moonbeam exclaims, all but rolling her eyes at the twists and turns of her childhood. "Then came the Winter War! Thousands of Chinese soldiers with white sheets over their heads came out of their hiding places in the hills across the Yalu River and overpowered the Americans and South Koreans. It was 40 degrees below zero in the mountains around the Chosin Reservoir."

The Marines staged a miraculous withdrawal, guarding an escape route for the other U.N. soldiers.

Seoul was evacuated and the Moons had to run for their lives all over again, this time in the dead of winter. Moonbeam's uncle, a physician with the South Korean Army, arranged for them to hitch a ride on an ambulance. Moonbeam is haunted by the faces of maimed and dying soldiers.

Her father decided they would be safe at Chungju, a city in the mountains of central South Korea. By the spring of 1951 the American 8th Army had recaptured Seoul. Still, Moonbeam's father said there was no point in going back because they no longer had a house. "He tried to find a job while my mother sold things. We settled in. Everyone listened to the

radio for what was going on with the war. It was back and forth, but we stayed put." Seoul changed hands four times during the war.

A year later, 6-year-old Moonbeam awoke to a commotion. A pair of South Korean MP's had arrived to take her father off to the army. The Republic of Korea was conscripting all men under 40. They had caught up with Moon Sang Jum.

A woman and her children on the move during the war. Seoul changed hands four times. *National Archives*

> Here was my mother, three months pregnant with my second youngest brother. And they just took my dad away. We went to the Army campground to make him a meal, and here were all these men—maybe a thousand—sitting there waiting for their orders. Then he was gone. We knew nothing about where he was going. Two or three months later, we received a letter. "I'm doing fine," he said. "Take care of the kids. I'm sorry for all of the burden on you." My mother sent him a picture of me standing next to my youngest brother. He never got it. All we ever had from him was that one letter.
>
> He had been a teacher, but in a war what are they going to do with a teacher? They said they were going to train him to shoot guns. But one day they asked, "Anybody know how to cook?" My dad raised his hand. Probably saved his life.

DAYS AFTER giving birth to her fifth child, Moonbeam's mother took to selling dried fish on the streets. Moonbeam carried her baby brother on her back to a nursemaid. "It was tough on all of us. My mom was a very tough lady with lots of common sense—and very smart, even though she wasn't formally educated."

> One cold winter morning (in 1953) when I was a first grader, somebody was knocking at our door. Here's a bearded old man in shag-

> gy clothes. "Hello!" he said. And my mom is screaming. It was my dad! We were all crying, and my dad was holding everyone. It's so hard to explain the emotion. Then we heard our neighbors crying because they had received a body. The husband had been killed. The same day the MP's took away my father they also took away six neighbor men. Five of them died in the war. My father and another neighbor were the only ones who came home alive.
>
> My father soon learned how resourceful my mother had been. If she got $10 by selling some jewelry, she would go buy as much dried fish as she could, then sell it for $12.
>
> When my father came back from the war, my mother had pretty much saved money. A good thing, too, because my father cannot find any teaching jobs. So many bright people without jobs. In Chungju we are treated like refugees. We had to pay cash to rent a house. No credit for refugees.

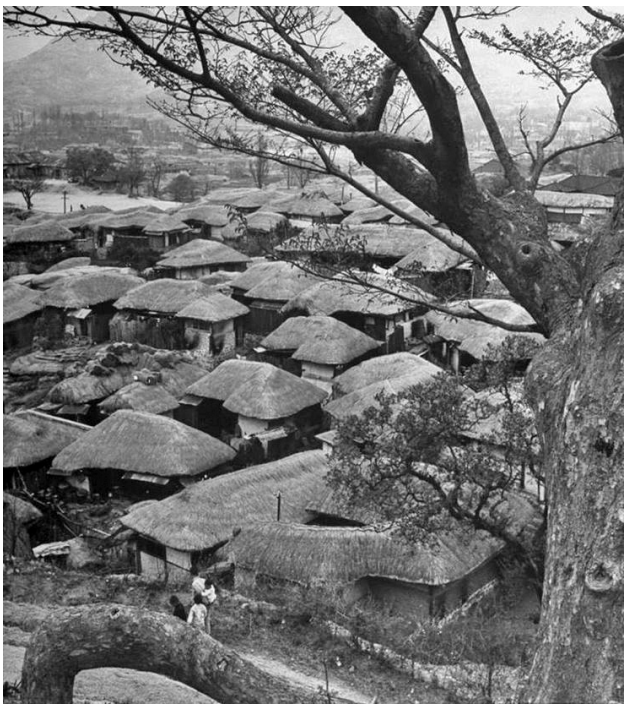
The armistice was signed that summer. "For Koreans, there has been no peace," Moonbeam says, sadness in her voice. "Just a truce, a country divided," with a hair-trigger, junior dictator ruling the north, threatening to rain missiles on Seoul—maybe even Tokyo and Seattle if his ICBM development continues apace and he is provoked by the West.

Post-war Korea on both sides of the 38th parallel was in ruins, infrastructure shattered. Total casualties—dead, wounded and MIA—were estimated at 5 million. Half of that total was civilians. Many South Korean prisoners of war were never repatriated. They became "virtual slaves" in the north. Moonbeam's grandparents in the north were never heard from during the war or after the armistice. "I'm sure they had a lot of punishments because all four of their children went south," she says. "When my father told us, 'Your grandparents were probably the first to be gone,' he meant it was likely they had been killed by the communists."

There were atrocities on both sides. Syngman Rhee's regime was as authoritarian as Kim's. South Korean security forces conducted mass executions of alleged communists and collaborators.

MOONBEAM'S FATHER decided it was fruitless to keep pursuing work as an educator. He opened a fabric store. Moonbeam remembers her mother sewing by candle light because there was still no electricity.

> When I was in third or fourth grade my mom always took me along when she was doing business to check the figures and make sure they were added up correctly. She had never been to school, so she



A cluster of traditional-style Korean houses with rice-straw roofs. *National Archives*

could not subtract or add. Girls in Korea during my mother's time were not formally educated, especially those from wealthy families, the thinking being that if a girl is educated they make trouble. My mother had very interesting handwriting because she had snuck behind the school and absorbed some of the lessons. She was a remarkable person. "You must go to school and learn," she would say. "Don't be like me."

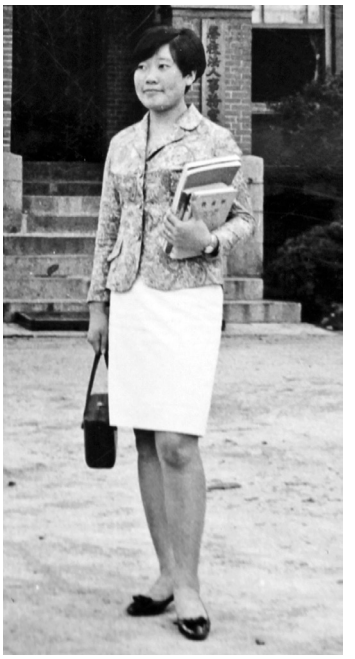
My dad was really not a business person. He liked to read a book and do calligraphy paintings, but that doesn't bring home the rice! My mother did a lot of the business. My father was too proud to do labor work. He was a very traditional Korean man of his generation. His lessons were about manners. "You must always be a humble person," he would say. "Look at the rice. When the rice is growing it's like this." He would gesture upright with his hand. "When it's ready to be harvested it's bowing down. Just like a humble person with bowed head. Respectful. But the ones who are always straight up like the rice stalk are stuck up and disrespectful. Straight up rice is not ripe and cannot be eaten."

I told my kids when I'm raising them, "You don't do bragging now. What you do is work hard and then later it will show by your actions."

By 1958, Moonbeam's mother had squirreled away enough money to buy them a traditional-style Korean house in Chungju. It had a rice-straw roof and two bedrooms, but no running water. A year later, the government exercised eminent-domain over the neighborhood and forced 30 families to move.

As compensation they gave us land on top of a hill. The mayor didn't know how to read or write, so he came to my father for help. He helped survey the land and establish 30 plots for new houses. The mayor was appreciative: "Since you worked on this, which land would you like to build your house on?" My dad picked a view property next to the mayor's. The government gave us material, and the family pitched in to build a house. Some of the walls were prefabricated. When I go to Home Depot and see the little sheds out front that's what I think of. Tiny two-bedroom house, little kitchen. Probably about 300 square feet with a small yard. My dad was trying to save money, so we're building it. When I come home from school at 2 o'clock, my dad is saying, "Give me a nail! Give me a hammer! OK, hold this board."

When it's done, we still have to get well water about two or three blocks away and bring it home in buckets. All the laundry is done in a creek. I remember going up and down that hill.



As a student dietician at Seoul's Konkuk University. *Kupka collection*

THE MOONS moved back to Seoul in 1962 when one of Moonbeam's uncles hired her father to work at his thriving textile company. By the time she was in junior high all the Moons who had escaped from the north were reunited in and around the emerging South Korean metropolis.

Moonbeam graduated from a Baptist Mission high school in 1965 and was accepted at Seoul's Konkuk University, where she studied to be a dietician. The private school near the Han River now has nearly 16,000 students and its own Metro station.

She met Michael Kupka, a U.S. Army combat engineer, during her junior year. Kupka was assigned to a Korean Military Advisory Group, working with ROK units along the demilitarized zone. It was fitting that they would meet at church. Their Christian faith is a crucial part of their lives. They exchanged letters. The young lieutenant asked if she could show him around her campus the next time he visited Seoul. Moonbeam said OK with some trepidation. What if her parents found out? "One day he sent me a letter that said he was coming to Seoul and would I like to meet him at the 8th Army Officers Club for lunch. He said he would send a Jeep to pick me up. I couldn't have him park in front of my house or my mother would kill me!"

They managed to keep their secret. Afterward, however, there was a complication: Kupka was transferred to the east side of the peninsula, seven hours from Seoul on narrow roads. They didn't see one another for several months. He promised to attend her graduation, set for February of 1969. Moonbeam's mother, meantime, was busy visiting matchmakers to line up a suitable husband for her college-educated daughter.

Graduation day in 1969. *Kupka collection*

> One time I came home and was reading one of Mike's letters when my mother says, "This Saturday at 2 o'clock at such and such teahouse, we gotta go!" So we went to see the match-maker to meet one of my prospective husbands. There was this guy. His mother. My mother. My dad. And the matchmaker. It's yada, yada, yada. Then they leave us and the guy says, "Would you like to go to the other teahouse?" If he's interested in me, he says, "Would you see me next week?" That's the way it goes. I was not interested in him. When I came home, my mother anxiously says, "How was it? What did you think of him?" I say, "Mother, no!"

A snowstorm kept Mike Kupka from Moonbeam's graduation. They were unable to see one another before he departed for the states that April.

As Moonbeam settled in to her new job as a hospital dietician, letters from Minnesota were arriving practically every day. Her mother was suspicious. "Mom, it's my pen pal friend," Moonbeam said, still dodging the matchmaker. Mike's mother was doing some long-distance matchmaking of her own.

> She sent me a package with a lovely gift: a broach that had belonged to her grandmother who came from Norway. "I want you to keep it," she wrote. Wait a minute, I thought to myself. This is getting serious. Then Mike sent a letter saying, "I would like to marry you." Oh my! Then in August, he's coming back for a visit. So then I'm thinking, "How am I going to tell my parents all this?"

When Mike arrived in Seoul, Moonbeam revealed that their courtship was still a secret. He remembers his pulse racing as the color drained from his face.

"You haven't told your parents?!"

"No," she sputtered, "but tomorrow I will bring you to meet them and they will ask you some questions."

"Really?"

Moonbeam broke the news that night. Her father at first couldn't believe his ears.

"What did you say?"

"I met this person. He's an American. A very nice man. We've been corresponding since I was a junior in college. I'd like to go to the United States."

"What for?"

"So I can marry him."

Her father was furious. "I cannot believe that I raised this girl, gave her an education and now you are going to marry an American!"

Mike and Moonbeam on their wedding day in 1969. *Kupka collection*

"Dad, I'm sorry. Tomorrow you're going to meet a very fine gentleman, and if you think he's not good enough for me, then I will not marry him."

Did she mean it?

"Well, yes and no. I already made up my mind that I wanted to live with Mike for the rest of my life. But deep inside I knew what I was supposed to do. I was supposed to obey my parents and honor and respect them always."

The introductions were made over lunch at a big restaurant. "All the Americans are divorcing!" her father said. "How serious are you about my daughter and can you take care of her? Marriage isn't like playing with toys. When you are tired of the toy are you going to get a new one? How can I believe you that this won't happen?"

Mike remained calm, respectful and reassuring.

Moonbeam's father was still livid when they returned home. "Sit down!" he commanded. "I never thought this would happen. I educate my daughter and then she's going to marry a Yankee. However, he is a very fine gentleman.

"You really want to marry him? Do you really love him?"

"Yes."

"In that case, I'm going to disown you. You make a decision: You choose us or him."

She chose him, and was cold-shouldered for the next 30 years.

Moonbeam, standing second from right, visits her family in Korea in the 1970s. *Kupka collection*

"Mike left two or three days later. I had said yes to his proposal, but I hadn't told my dad. I developed my own plan. I had to get a visa and come to America. My brother said, 'You are the gutsiest sister I've ever known.'

"I came to Grays Harbor with $80 and a little suitcase. Mike was now a forester for the government. With his family's blessings, we went back to Minneapolis and were married in his childhood church. I didn't really know what Mike is going to be like as a husband, but I knew what my heart was telling me. I knew he was very patient. Very kind. A gentleman. He didn't even hold my hand when we were dating, especially in my neighborhood. He understood Korean customs. And his mother explained what a loving son he was—and is. I made a good choice, as difficult as it was."

"And I did, too," Mike says, reaching across the sofa to take her hand.

When the grandchildren began arriving, Moonbeam's father visited America three times. The boys were handsome, the granddaughter darling, her oval face the most Korean of the three. "Moon" was the middle name of each. When grandpa surveyed the Kupkas' comfortable home he noted that his masterful rice-paper calligraphy scrolls were prominently displayed. It was easy to see that his Yankee son-in-law, a senior forester with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, was a good provider. Moreover, his daughter had developed business investments of her own. She served him delicious beef bulgogi, mandu dumplings and

The Kupkas: Erik, Johnathon, Moonbeam, Mike and Lisa. *Kupka collection*

kimchee. Her white rice was flawlessly cooked.

"It was all polite, but he still wasn't happy with me," Moonbeam says.

JOHNATHON MOON KUPKA, then an Army lieutenant, arrived for his first tour of duty in South Korea in 1998. His grandfather's health was declining. Mr. Moon desperately wanted to see North Korea again. "That was his dream—for both my mother and dad," Moonbeam says. "It was their homeland. My mother, my dad, my brother and my sister-in-law all went to see Johnny at the DMZ. My dad was in a wheelchair, and Johnny was pushing him along at Panmunjom's Freedom House. They looked across to North Korea. That was the closest dad and mom were able to go to their homeland before they passed away."

Five months later, Moonbeam got the call to come quickly to Seoul. Her father was dying.

> My mother said, "He hasn't opened his eyes for over a week. No responding, so don't expect him to open his eyes." I said I'd like a little moment with my dad, so everybody went out of the room. I was holding

his hand and telling him I was sorry for our troubles. He didn't open his eyes but he was squeezing my hand. Next day, our family went to visit him at the hospital. Johnny held his grandfather's foot and said, "Hey grandpa!" My dad opened his eyes, looked at Johnny and had a smile. He made a hand salute for Johnny. Then he said, "Thank you"—in English.

Everyone in the hospital room was stunned. It was hello and goodbye—a reconciliation tinged with sadness, but a reconciliation nevertheless.

"Today, practically every other house in Seoul has a couple (of mixed ethnicity), but not back then," Moonbeam remembers, noting that those matchmaker marriages often end in divorce. She and Mike are closing in on half a century of happiness. "Marriage means you work hard at it and give back 150 percent." she says. "We both are not disappointed."

Koreans are characteristically strong, stubborn and resilient. They also have long memories. "I'll tell you what," Moonbeam says. "If you make me mad you'd better be sure you're stronger than I am!"

She leaned forward and laughed, but she wasn't joking.

The Kupkas at the Korean War Memorial on the Capitol Campus. *Ben Helle photo*

John C. Hughes

JOHNATHON KUPKA

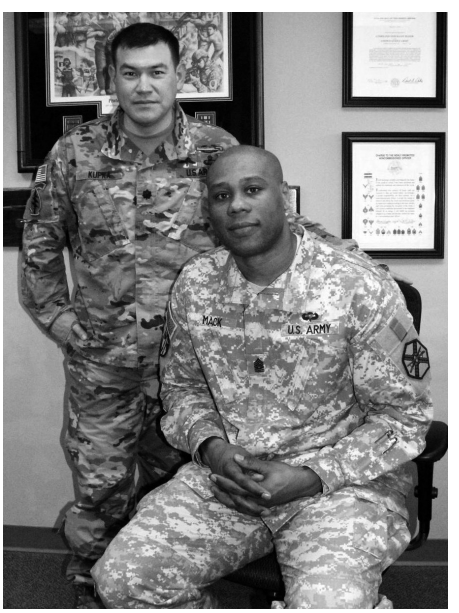
Kupka, a Special Forces officer, exults in a training jump at the eastern edge of Seoul in 2010. *U.S. Army photo*

Today's Soldier

Lieutenant Colonel Johnathon Moon Kupka, U.S. Army Special Forces, is half-Korean, a quarter Czech and the rest Norwegian. It's tempting to call him all soldier, but that's not the whole story.

His Korean mother was shunned by his grandfather when she left for the U.S. in 1969 to marry a former American Army officer. Two tours of duty in the Republic of Korea left John Kupka proficient in Korean and with a new appreciation for the challenges his parents faced when they dared to fall in love. He also acquired a keen understanding of the complicated military calculus on the Korean peninsula.

Now 42, but still "our Johnny" to his mom, Moonbeam and Michael Kupka's youngest child was an adventuresome, strong-willed boy. When he was roaming the hills above Grays Harbor with a paintball rifle in the 1980s it was easy to imagine him in camo fatigues. Yet when he was commissioned a second lieutenant through the ROTC program at Pacific Lutheran University in 1997, Kupka was far from certain he'd make the military his career.



Lt. Col. Kupka with the battalion's Command Sergeant Major, Kenyatta Mack.
U.S. Army photo, Jim Dresbach

Twenty years later, he's the commander of the Headquarters Command Battalion at Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall at Arlington, Virginia. It's the Army's largest battalion; more than 6,000 soldiers. Kupka's steady progress up the chain of command has been propelled by exceptional soldiering, academic achievement and an instinctive ability to inspire teamwork. Kupka is a master parachutist, combat infantryman and survival school standout. He is steeped in the unconventional warfare skills required to earn the right to wear Ranger and Special Forces insignia.

There's more. In 2015, when Kupka was awarded a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Kansas, his dissertation explored the

"warrior class" in the armed services and the way society perceives and stereotypes the military. With "its self-perception of moral superiority," the warrior class is a distinct sub-culture within the military, Kupka wrote, but "the attitudes and beliefs of a few" can create a negative image for the military as a whole. Rambo and the swashbuckling *Apocalypse Now* colonel who loves "the smell of napalm in the morning" are enduring warrior-class caricatures.

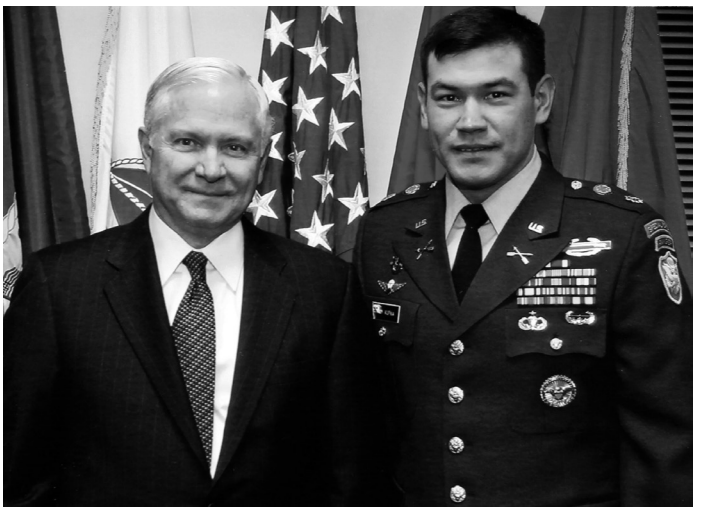
Elaborate honor guard rituals at sporting events and support-our-troops banners on freeway overpasses spring in part from a desire to make amends for the way our troops were demonized during and after the war in Vietnam, Kupka wrote. The public is also showing its appreciation for the valor and sacrifice of 21st century soldiers in the war on terror. But "over-sentimentalization" of gung-ho soldiering may be widening a worrisome gap.

"My research set out to identify an issue that potentially could become a real problem," Kupka says. "I think the most danger from the warrior class mentality is to the potential fighting force. We no longer have a draft, so if Americans begin to think it's all someone else's responsibility; that someone else's son or daughter will volunteer to take up arms and protect the nation, that's a problem. And if different sectors of society, especially bright young people, don't see the military as a viable career path, the problem intensifies."

A special report by *The Los Angeles Times* in 2015 underscored Kupka's thesis. The newspaper's research concluded that the U.S. military and civilians are increasingly divided: "While the U.S. waged a war in Vietnam 50 years ago with 2.7 million men conscripted from every segment of society, less than one-half of 1 percent of the U.S. population is in the armed services today—the lowest rate since World War II. America's recent wars are authorized by a U.S. Congress whose members have the lowest rate of military service in history, led by three successive commanders in chief who never served on active duty."

"I am well-aware that many Americans, especially our elite classes, consider the military a bit like a guard dog," said Lt. Col. Remi M. Hajjar, a professor of behavioral sciences and leadership at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. "They are very thankful for our protection, but they probably wouldn't want to have it as a neighbor," he said. "And they certainly are not going to influence or inspire their own kids to join that pack of Rottweilers to protect America."

Kupka believes policymakers, senior military leaders and the media would do well to explore ways to combat these stereotypes. He is also worried about America's obesity epidemic. A 2015 study found that nearly 30 percent of high school students were overweight—14 percent of them certifiably obese. "If the pool we are drawing from can't meet the physical standards of the military and we're spending billions on heart/cardiovascular issues and diabetes, then that's a national security issue, too," Kupka says.



Kupka with U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, 2010. *Kupka collection*

KUPKA'S master's degree thesis, *Alliance or Reliance? Reconsidering U.S. Forces in the Republic of Korea,* is even more topical. Writing in 2012, he submitted that reducing our military presence in Korea "and transferring a majority of the security burden onto the Republic of Korea will not diminish stability or degrade U.S. interests in the region." In 2012, the United States was still recovering from the worst economic downturn since the 1930s, with significant reductions in defense spending. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq had taxed, literally and figuratively, the U.S. military and the national debt. "In stark contrast," Kupka wrote, "the growth of the ROK Army has not kept pace with the continuing growth of the South Korean economy. Instead, the rising expense of security on the Korean Peninsula has increasingly fallen to the American taxpayer."

Given the heightened tensions created by North Korean dictator Kim Jong-un's provocations, does Kupka still feel the same way?

He does—with two disclaimers: The first is that the situation on the Korean peninsula is fluid. The second is that none of his opinions or reflections should be construed as official positions of the United States Army. Being a combat-ready commander *and* a military scholar in a volatile world requires strict separation of duty from point of view.

Kupka acknowledges we are "on a path to an enduring presence" in Iraq and Afghanistan to shore up their national defense and pursue terrorists who hate America and its allies. "What we need to consider now is what role our grandchildren will play if they are called upon to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan? Will they still be fighting terrorists, or will they be assisting and partnering in defense—like we have since 1953 in Korea? The problem in Korea hasn't gone away since 1953. But exactly what is the problem? What are we trying to achieve with a large troop presence in South Korea? That's what I think we need to figure out first. If 28,500 American troops in South Korea are intended to serve as a deterrent to North Korean aggression I think we should be questioning whether the strategy is working."

No one, least of all Kupka, is impassive about Kim Jong-un's apparent determination to achieve a stockpile of long-range ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. While South

Korea has the capability to produce nuclear weapons, it has pledged itself to non-proliferation. If it had nuclear weapons of its own, would that be a deterrent or a provocation to a character as obstreperous as Kim?

Recent articles in authoritative publications argue that downsizing U.S. troop strength in South Korea would "create incentives for Pyongyang to give up its nuclear weapons." But one international relations analyst, Khang Vu, challenges that notion, saying it would "do more harm than good" for U.S. interests:

"A U.S. withdrawal would beyond all doubt create a vacuum of power on the Korean Peninsula, prompting North Korea to take on more provocative actions such as more missile and nuclear tests, attacking South Korean troops near the DMZ more often or shelling on the South's ships and islands near the Northern Limit Line. In return, South Korea may respond militarily to avoid losing face, and if initial deterrence fails, the two Koreas will be drawn into another Korean War." In the meantime, the best way for the United States to curb North Korea's nuclear program should be to enforce U.N. sanctions and persuade China to join forces, and this approach only works as long as the United States sustains its influence in the region, Khang says.

Kupka agrees with Khang's last two points—the importance of U.N. sanctions and China's assistance. However, he isn't convinced it takes 28,500 boots on the ground to sustain our influence in the region.

With military service mandatory—an increasingly controversial issue in South Korean society—the Republic of Korea has a standing armed force of 625,000, with 3.1 million in reserves. Its air force is equipped with Boeing's formidable F-15K "Slam Eagle" fighter aircraft. Its Navy is expanding. In 2016, however, South Korea's military manpower ranking dropped four spots, from seventh the year before, to eleventh in the world, according to the website Global Power. North Korea ranked 25th. The U.S. was number one, followed by Russia, China, India, France, Britain and Japan. Once a brutal colonial overlord, Japan is now South Korea's strategic democratic neighbor, constitutionally limited to a defensive posture. During the Korean War, Japan played an important role in U.S. military operations. The U.S. today has a larger military force in Japan than in any other foreign country. By one estimate, the U.S. had 54,000 soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines in Japan in 2016. The Department of Defense pegged it at "about 38,000 ashore and 11,000 afloat," dispersed among 85 installations, with Okinawa as an American military stronghold.

America's capability and willingness to honor its mutual defense pacts with Japan and the Republic of Korea is not in doubt, especially given the Trump Administration's "don't mess with America" posture. The U.S. has multiple platforms—land, air and sea—to retaliate for a nuclear strike by North Korea. What's worrisome is that a first strike by Kim Jong-un could result in millions of casualties. Nearly 25 million people—half the population of South Korea—live within what is known as the Seoul Capital Area—just 120 to 200 miles from Pyongyang.

Kupka with his grandparents and other family members at the DMZ above Seoul. *Kupka collection*

Kupka has Korean aunts, uncles and cousins in harm's way. It gives him special insight on that anxiety. Having served in Iraq, he understands war.

KUPKA GREW UP with a loving but demanding Korean mother and a tall, calm Caucasian father. Serving in Korea and learning the language gave John Kupka a deeper understanding of his Koreanness. His mother's temperament is quintessentially Korean. "She's stubborn, smart, passionate, caring and resilient," Kupka says. His dad, a Lutheran from Minnesota, became a federal forestry manager after his Army days. "He's a perfect gentleman," the colonel says. "Very smart and kind of all-knowing in a laid-back way. They're loving parents and a great team." In Hangul, the Korean alphabet, Kupka's doctoral dissertation is dedicated "To Mother and Father": **어머니 와 아버지**

One highlight of Kupka's time in Korea was spending time with his ailing grandfather, who had fled North Korea in 1946 after the communist takeover. When they visited the Demilitarized Zone, his grandfather gazed mournfully across the barbed wire to the land of his birth. To his dying day, Moon Sang Jum radiated pride that his handsome, respectful grandson had become such an accomplished soldier. That bond also helped him

come to a reconciliation with his own daughter.

Kupka says the most important lesson he absorbed growing up translates in any faith. "The best way I can sum it up is The Golden Rule: Treat others as you would want to be treated. There's that adage in every language. In our domestic world today we've lost a lot of basic human courtesy. Technology is part of it—Twitter, Facebook, the Internet. It's happening everywhere, including South Korea. Seoul is now a high-tech metropolis. But the way we treat one another now isn't the way people treated one another 40, 50 years ago. We need to recover that sense of respect. It's important for success in any field, really, to show respect in dealing with other human beings. Everything my parents instilled in me is commensurate to Army values.

"Me becoming a professional soldier is more of an accident than it was an ambition or something I had aspired to be," Kupka says. "Growing up I was fascinated by the Green Berets and the Rangers, but it wasn't one of those things of how I saw myself in 20 or 30 years. It was more of a way to pay for college. When I started doing it, getting into it, I really enjoyed becoming a professional soldier. Next month will be 20 years on federal active service. I'm still excited about my job.

"I've traveled all over the world, seeing different countries and cultures. There's opportunities that a lot of people don't see—education, leadership skills and adventure. But most of all it's an honor to wear this uniform and serve my country."

John C. Hughes

Bibliography

Appleman, Roy E., *Disaster in Korea: The Chinese Confront MacArthur,* Texas A&M University, College Station, 2008

Brands, H.W., *The General vs. the President: MacArthur and Truman at the Brink of Nuclear War*, Doubleday, New York, 2016

Clark, Eugene Franklin, *The Secrets of Inchon*, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 2002

Cleaver, Thomas McKelvey, *The Frozen Chosen*, Ospey Publishing, New York, 2016

Cook, Bernard A., editor, *Women and War: A Historical Encyclopedia from Antiquity to the Present*, Volume 1, p. 351, Bernard A. Cook, editor, ABC-CLIO Inc., Santa Barbara, Calif., 2006

DK/Smithsonian, *The American Revolution: A Visual History*, Penguin Random House, New York, 2016

Donovan, Robert J., *Tumultuous Years*, University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1982

Frank, Lisa Tendrich, editor, *An Encyclopedia of American Women at War*, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, Calif., 2013

Gabreski, Francis as told to **Molesworth, Carl**, *Gabby, A Fighter Pilot's Life*, Orion Books, New York, 1991

Giusti, Ernest H., *Mobilization of the Marine Corps Reserve in the Korean Conflict, 1950-1951*, Historical Branch, G-3 Division, Headquarters USMC, Washington, D.C. 1951, www.koreanwar2.org/kwp2/usmckorea/reference/usmcreservemobil.pdf

Halberstam, David, *The Coldest Winter, America and the Korean War*, Hyperion, New York, 2007

Hallion, Dr. Richard P., editor, *Silver Wings, Golden Valor: The USAF Remembers Korea*, Air Force History and Musuems Program, Washington, D.C. 2006

Hammel, Eric, *Chosin, Heroic Ordeal of the Korean War*, Presido Press, Novato, Calif., 1981

Herman, Arthur, *Douglas MacArthur, American Warrior*, Random House, New York, 2016

Hopkins, William B., *One Bugle No Drums*, *The Marines at Chosin Reservoir*, Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, N.C., 1986

Jager, Sheila Miyoshi, *Brothers at War, The Unending Conflict in Korea*, W.W. Norton & Company, New York, 2013

Korean American Historical Society, *Han in the Upper Left: A Brief History of Korean Americans in the Pacific Northwest,* Chin Music Press, Seattle, 2015

Lee, Erika, *The Making of Asian America: A History*, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2015

Lehrer, Brian, *The Korean Americans*, Chelsea House Publishers, 1995

Manchester, William, *American Caesar, Douglas MacArthur 1880-1964*, Little, Brown & Company, Boston, 1978

Martin, Patricia Scott, *Arirang Pass*, Gorham Printing, Centralia, Wash., 2006

Nolan, John, *The Run-Up to the Punchbowl, a Memoir of the Korean War*, 1951, Xlibris, Bloomington, Indiana, 2006

O'Connell, Patsy Surh, *My Journey*, Laser Writing, Tacoma, 2013

O'Donnell, Patrick K., *Give Me Tomorrow, The Korean War's Greatest Untold Story*, De Capo Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2010

Oh, Arissa H., *To Save the Children of Korea*, *The Cold War Origins of International Adoption*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 2015

Orr, Tamara, *The Korean Ameircans,* Mason Crest Publishers, 2009

Pash, Melinda L., *In the Shadow of the Greatest Generation*, New York University Press, New York, 2012

Phillips, James W., *Washington State Place Names*, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1971

Reynvaan, Ted T., *The Boys of Company B*, Gorham Printing, Centralia, Wash., 2009

Ridgway, Matthew B., *The Korean War*, Da Capo Press, New York, 1967

Sandler, Stanley (editor), *The Korean War: An Encyclopedia*, Garland Publishing Inc., New York and London, 1995

Sarnecky, Mary T., *A History of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999

Spiller, Harry, editor, *American POWs in Korea: Sixteen Personal Accounts*, McFarland & Co. Inc., Jefferson, N.C., 1998

Van Syckle, Edwin, *The River Pioneers*, Pacific Search Press, Seattle, 1982

Viola, Herman J., *Warriors in Uniform, The Legacy of American Indian Heroism*, National Geographic, Washington, D.C., 2008

Weintraub, Stanley, *A Christmas Far from Home*, *An Epic Tale of Courage and Survival During the Korean War*, De Capo Press, Boston 2014

Westover, John G., *Combat Support in Korea*, Center of Military History, U.S. Army, Washington, D.C., 1990

Winchester, Jim, general editor, *American Military Aircraft, A Century of Innovation*, Metro Books, New York, 2005

Witt, Linda; Bellafaire, Judith; Granrud, Britta, and Binker, Mary Jo, *"A Defense Weapon Known to be of Value," Servicewomen of the Korean War Era*, University Press of New England, Hanover, 2005

Source Notes

- Richard Frailey -

Frailey's F-86F on 6-15-1953 was No. 51-2923

"Screw the camera!" quoted in *MiG Madness*, Lawrence Spinetta, HistoryNet, 1-3-2008, www.historynet.com/mig-madness-the-air-war-over-korea.htm

"a knight of yore," quoted in *Captain James Jabara: Ace of the Korean War*, William B. Allmon, 11-14-2006, www.historynet.com/captain-james-jabara-ace-of-the-korean-war.htm; originally published in *Aviation History*, March 1995

"the ultimate warrior," and **"punch *you*,"** quoted in *Silver Wings, Golden Valor*, Richard P. Hallion, p. 54

"a fighter pilot's airplane," and **"it was fast,"** *Gabby, A Fighter Pilot's Life*, Francis Gabreski as told to Carl Molesworth, p. 213

Kill ratio debate, Michael Peck, "Cold War Battle in the Sky," The National Interest, 5-18-2015, nationalinterest.org/feature/cold-war-battle-the-sky-f-86-saber-vs-mig-15-12909; also, *American Military Aircraft, A Century of Innovation*, p. 347

Number of Soviet aces, *Soviet MiG-15 Aces of the Korean War*, Leonid Krylov and Yuriy Tepsurkaev, Osprey Publishing, 2008; and *Russian Aces over Korea*, Diego Zampini, Acepilots.com, updated 1-27-2012, acepilots.com/russian/rus_aces.html

Jabara's victories included, *Yevgeny Pepelyayev, Top Ace of the Korean War*, Diego Zampini, Acepilots.com, acepilots.com/korea/yevgeny.html

Additional details on Soviet pilots, *Soviet Union in the Korean War*, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union_in_the_Korean_War

"hurried back across the river," quoted in *Captain James Jabara: Ace of the Korean War*

"Cease fire!" quoted in *Silver Wings, Golden Valor*, Richard P. Hallion, footnotes, p. 61

"Friendlies firing at Sabres," Ibid.

"I'm thoroughly familiar," Lt. Gen. Alvan C. Gillem II, "Additional Endorsement" to AF Form 77a, 1968-69, copy now in Legacy Washington Archives

Yermakov claims, *Biplane fighter aces: Soviet Union*, surfcity.kund.dalnet.se/soviet_yermakov.htm; also noted in *Red Wings over the Yalu*, Xiaoming Zhang, Texas A&M University Press, College Station, 2002

Jabara's death, "First American Jet Ace Dies," *The New York Times*, 11-18-1966

"Heroes die young," quoted in *Captain James Jabara: Ace of the Korean War*

-Barbara Nichols-

"Everything seemed all right," quoted in *Women and War: A Historical Encyclopedia from Antiquity to the Present*, Volume 1, p. 351, Bernard A. Cook, editor, ABC-CLIO Inc., Santa Barbara, Calif., 2006

Marine Corps losses, www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-the-Chosin-Reservoir

"Pseudo Gallantry," Mildred McAfee Horton, "Why Not Draft Women?," *Ladies' Homes Journal*, February 1951

"Howland managed," Mayflower History.com

Howland ancestors, The Pilgrim John Howland Society, www.pilgrimjohnhowlandsociety.org/john-howland/famous-howland-descendants

"legislation mandated," "Rep. Frances p. Bolton dies," Andrew Glass, Politico, 3-9-1977, www.politico.com/story/2009/03/rep-frances-p-bolton-dies-march-9-1977-019760

"it was considered," quoted in *The Bolton Act*, Case Western Reserve University, nursing.case.edu/about/history/the-bolton-act/

"The Corps united," quoted in *The Bolton Act*, Case Western Reserve University, nursing.case.edu/about/history/the-bolton-act/

Cadet Nurse Pledge, U.S. Cadet Nurse Corps, Rochester Regional Health, www.rochesterregional.org/about/history/rochester-medical-museum-and-archives/digital-exhibits/us-cadet-nurse-corps/

"sometimes *dishonorably*," *A Defense Weapon Known to be of Value*, Linda Witt, Judith Bellafaire, Britta Granrud and Mary Jo Binker, p. 3

"the biological differences," quoted in The Women's Armed Services Integration Act of 1948, The Women's On-line Collections, chnm.gmu.edu/courses/rr/s01/cw/students/leeann/archresreshistkwintact.htm

540 nurses volunteered, *An Encyclopedia of American Women at War*, Lisa Tendrich Frank, Editor, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, Calif., 2013

57 nurses arrived in Korea, Ibid.

"in all my 17 years," quoted in *A Defense Weapon Known to be of Value*, Linda Witt, Judith Bellafaire, Britta Granrud and Mary Jo Binker, p. 177

"the journey from," "Battlefield Medics: Saving Lives Under Fire," Christine M. Kreiser, originally published in the November 2005 issue of *Military History* magazine, www.historynet.com/battlefield-medics-saving-lives-under-fire.htm

"that number was cut," "Battlefield Medicine in the Korean War," Dwight John Zimmerman, Defense Media Network, 2-9-2014, www.defensemedianetwork.com/stories/battlefield-medicine-in-the-korean-war/

"8th Army surgeon estimated," Ibid.

Sanitary napkin mission, quoted in "Rowdy medical unit inspired 'M*A*S*H'," Tim Evans, USA Today. 7-1-2013

"almost constantly," *A Defense Weapon Known to be of Value*, Linda Witt, Judith Bellafaire, Britta Granrud and Mary Jo Binker, page 170

"often hysterical," Ibid., p. 208

"placed postoperative patients," Ibid.

"during relocation marches," "U.S. POWs during the Korean War," Li Onesto, Global Research, 9-3-2008, www.globalresearch.ca/u-s-pows-during-the-korean-war/10050

American POW accounts, quoted in "Atrocities Against American POWs in Korean War," B-29's over Korea, b-29s-over-korea.com/POWs-In-Korean-War/POWs-In-Korean-War_2.html

"Dysentery became," *American POWs in Korea: Sixteen Personal Accounts*, Harry Spiller, editor, McFarland & Co. Inc., Jefferson, N.C., 1998, p. 2

"would rather die," quoted in *A Defense Weapon Known to be of Value*, Linda Witt, Judith Bellafaire, Britta Granrud and Mary Jo Binker, p. 208

"and did what they could," Oh, Arissa H., *To Save the Children of Korea*, *The Cold War Origins of International Adoption*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, Calif., 2015, p. 21

"radiatorlike ribs," quoted in Ibid., p. 23

"These tiny innocents," quoted in Ibid., p. 25

"By some estimates," "Vietnam Legacy: Finding G.I. Fathers, and Children Left Behind," James Dao, *The New York Times*, 9-15-2013, www.nytimes.com/2013/09/16/us/vietnam-legacy-finding-gi-fathers-and-children-left-behind.html

"to an early end," "I shall go to Korea speech," 10-25-1952, Eisenhower Presidential Library, www.eisenhower.archives.gov/education/bsa/citizenship_merit_badge/speeches_national_historical_importance/i_shall_go_to_korea.pdf

- Sotero Soto -

20 Indians killed in combat, "20 U.S. Indians Killed in Korea," *The Seattle Times*, 12-27-1950, p. 5

"Short Wolf Men," *Warriors in Uniform*, p. 117

"mines, explosives and demolitions," *The Korean War: An Encyclopedia*, "Engineers in the Korean War," pp. 105-108

"hard, dirty battles," *History of the 35th Infantry Regiment Korea*, www.cacti35th.org/regiment/history/35thkorea.htm

"To understand the role," *The Korean War: An Encyclopedia*, "Engineers in the Korean War," pp. 105-108

"The typical outpost," *History of the 35th Infantry Regiment in Korea*, www.cacti35th.org/regiment/history/35thkorea.htm

Hispanic/Latino statistics, U.S. Census reports, 1970, 2016

- Nam Pyo Park -

"often under appalling," *Death by Government*, R.J. Rummel, p. 150.

"to find enough food," *"Simon Partner: The WWI Home Front In Japan," Duke Today*, 3-20-2003

"scattered from Turkestan," "Koreans Are Trying to Tell Us Something," Harry G. Summers Jr., *Los Angeles Times*, 12-1-1988

Casualty figures, Korean War Casualty Summary, www.koreanwaronline.com/arms/casualty.htm

- Jim Evans -

"close the divide," *The Battle of Chosin*, American Experience, PBS, 2016, transcript at www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/transcript/battle-chosin-transcript/

"for all practical purposes," quoted in Ibid.

"home by Christmas," *quoted in Disaster in Korea, p. 57*

"Give me tomorrow," quoted in "David Douglas Duncan: A LIFE Magazine war photographer looks back," William Lee Adams, *Time* magazine, 11-23-2011, time.com/3783066/david-douglas-duncan-a-life-magazine-war-photographer-looks-back/

"Spread thinly," *The American Revolution: A Visual History*, p. 132

"Washington did not lose," Ibid.

"News of the triumph," Ibid., p. 133

addressed as "captain," Ancestry.com documents with the Evans Family Tree, search. ancestry.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=61157&h=4040460&ssrc=pt&tid=103767542&pid=280035060789&usePUB=true

Humptulips place name origin, *The River Pioneers*, p. 56, 126, 186; also *Washington State Place Names*, p. 64

"little strategic value," quoted in *Tumultuous Years*, p. 96

MacArthur endorsed pullout, *The General vs. The President*, p. 47

"piecemeal warfare," quoted in *Tumultuous Years*, p. 96

"Would it be possible," quoted in *The Frozen Chosen*, p. 58

"If the best minds," quoted in Ibid., p. 45

"Within eight months," www.koreanwar60.com/gallery/marines-call-reserves
"Except at high tide," *American Caesar*, p. 574
Inchon casualty figures, "Korean War: Inchon Landings," Kennedy Hickman, about education, militaryhistory.about.com/od/battleswars1900s/p/Inchon.htm
"no more than 30,000," *The Coldest Winter*, p. 382
"gearing up for a full-scale war," *Douglas MacArthur American Warrior*, p. 752
Nuclear bombs moved, Carl A. Posey, "How the Korean War Almost Went Nuclear," *Air & Space Magazine*, July 2015, www.airspacemag.com/military-aviation/how-korean-war-almost-went-nuclear-180955324/
"If we have a nuclear exchange," quoted in *Three Days in January*, pp. 58-59
"waiting patiently," *The Coldest Winter*, p. 382
"It is important, however," *Douglas MacArthur American Warrior*, p. 772
"Even Genghis Khan," quoted in *The Coldest Winter,* p. 431
"We're still attacking," quoted in Ibid., p. 439
"a human battering ram," *Douglas MacArthur American Warrior*, p. 778
200 men per mile, quoted in *The Frozen Chosen*, p. 17
"Retreat hell," quoted in "The Battle of Chosin," American Experience, PBS, 2016, transcript at www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/transcript/battle-chosin-transcript/
Tiny footprints, *One Bugle No Drums*, p. 168
a kettle of rice, Ibid., p. 170
"the less critical," "Battle of the Chosin Reservoir," The Chosin Few newsletter, January-March 2017, p. 24
"First class treatment," North Korean propaganda flier, Jim Evans collection, copy now with Legacy Washington and Washington State Archives.
"hacked their bitter," *American Caesar*, p. 610
"that moment in history," *One Bugle No Drums*, p. 192
Hungnam evacuation, "The Hungnam Evacuation," Naval Historical Center, www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/OnlineLibrary/photos/events/kowar/50-chin/hungnam.htm
Chosin Reservoir deaths, "Korean War: Battle of Chosin Reservoir," militaryhistory.about.com/od/battleswars1900s/p/chosin.htm
"from skivvies and socks," "Back to the Bean Patch," Sgt. Harold E. Riker Jr. skaneateles.org/H-3-5-Marines/Harold07.html
"Over the mountains, mountains," quoted in *American Caesar*, p. 545
"speckled here and there," Ibid.

- Dan Keenan -

A former go-fer for Babe Ruth, "Former bat boy relishes memory of Yankee greats," *The Albany Times-Union*, 3-19-1995

- Patsy Surh O'Connell -

Life expectancy statistics, "Life expectancy increased by 5 years since 2000, but health inequalities persist," World Health Organization, 5-19-2016, google search

Korean population statistics, U.S. Census, worldpopulationreview.com/states/washington-population/

"kind-hearted person," *My Journey*, p. 36

"B-29! B-29!" Ibid., p. 41

"all a big adventure," Ibid., p. 42

"the color of burnt umber," quoted in "Easy Mr. Surh," *Denver Post*, 8-2-1899

"a natty straw hat," Ibid.

"the best and bravest" quoted in *My Journey*, pp. 20-21

"an act of treason," Ibid.

"better prepare himself," quoted in *The Morning News*, Wilmington, Delaware, 7-21-1898

"sending out the first 6,000," *My Journey*. p. 22

"with varying levels of fluency," Ibid., p. 25

British settlement "indefensible, "City of Terror," Military History Monthly, 2-8-2013, www.military-history.org/articles/war-zone-city-of-terror-the-japanese-takeover-of-shanghai.htm

"Pretty Korean," *My Journey*, p. 36

"envy of the neighborhood," Ibid., p. 41

"I heard horror stories," Ibid., p. 45

"A concept called *han*," "A complex feeling tugs at Koreans," John M. Glionna, *Los Angeles Times*, 1-5-2011, articles.latimes.com/2011/jan/05/world/la-fg-south-korea-han-20110105

"It was a busy house," *My Journey*, p. 51

"I promised myself," Ibid., p. 59

American-Korean Foundation, "Statement by the president on the Fund-Raising Campaign of the American-Korean Foundation," 5-5-1953, www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=9835

"not able to communicate," Ibid., p. 64

"in the back of my mind," Ibid., p. 73

-Cindy Ryu-

"Korean Americans in King County," by Casey Giudici, www.historylink.org/File/3251
Population statistics: U.S. Census
"as early as 1873," *The Korean Diaspora in Manchuria—Korean Ambitions, Manchurian Dreams, Japanese Realities* by Frank Jacob
"The annexation of Korea," Ibid.
"introduced paddy farming," Ibid.
"It is estimated that at least two million civilians," quoted in *Han in the Upper Left*, p. 32
"It was a tropical rainforest," Quoted in "Ryu unique as mayor of Shoreline," *NW Asian Weekly, March 1, 2008*
"Korean Americans have been virtually unknown," quoted in *The Korean Americans*, p. 13
"Half of the population in the world," Sun Gil Kim quoted on ASTM International Facebook page, www.facebook.com/ASTMInternational/posts/10153716690861514
"Over two-thirds of the women in Korea," quoted in *The Korean Americans*, p. 51
"Rep. Ryu is opening people's eyes to new global economic opportunities," quoted in "Ryu nets appointment to key trade policy committee" by *Washington House Democrats*, July 5, 2011, housedemocrats.wa.gov/news/ryu-nets-appointment-to-key-trade-policy-committee/
"In both the Democratic and Republican parties," quoted in *Horizons*, the official magazine of Presbyterian women, interview with Cindy Ryu by Unzu Lee, May/June 2008

- Moonbeam Kupka -

"How does one commemorate," *Brothers at War*, p. 2
"a symbol of false hope," "Looking back and the original Unification Song," 7-30-2015, www.hyunjinmoon.com/-looking-back-and-the-original-unification-song/
"a series of miscalculations," Sheila Miyoshi Jager, interviewed on Truth, Politics & Power, NPR, April 2017, beta.prx.org/stories/202181
"with suicidal determination," *Douglas MacArthur American Warrior*, p. 714
"a state of terror," *Brothers at War*, p. 68
Mangled bodies, *American Caesar*, p. 555
"A milling, screaming mass," Ibid.
"still has a long way to go," "Korea still male-dominated," *The Korea Times*, 12-11-2012, www.koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2012/12/116_126660.html
"were forced to remain," *Brothers at War*, p. 231

- Johnathon Kupka -

"self-perception," from *Toward a Concept of the "Warrior Class,"* University of Kansas doctoral dissertation, Johnathon Moon Kupka, 2015, kuscholarworks.ku.edu/bitstream/handle/1808/19061/Kupka_ku_0099D_13973_DATA_1.pdf;sequence=1

"While the U.S. waged a war," "U.S. Military and Civilians are Increasingly Divided," David Zucchino and David S. Cloud, *The Los Angeles Times*, 5-24-2015, www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-warrior-main-20150524-story.html

"I am well-aware," quoted in Ibid.

Obesity statistics, 2015 Youth Risk Behavior report, stateofobesity.org/high-school-obesity/

"reduction in U.S. forces," from *Alliance or Reliance? Reconsidering U.S. Forces in the Republic of Korea*, Johnathon Moon Kupka, School of Advanced Military Studies, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 2012

"create incentives," quoted in "The Ultimate Nightmare: U.S. Withdrawal from South Korea," Khang Vu, *The National Interest*, 7-10-2016, nationalinterest.org/feature/the-ultimate-nightmare-us-withdrawal-south-korea-16904

"more harm than good," Ibid.

"create a vacuum of power," Ibid.

"in the meantime," Ibid.

"ranked 11th," Elizabeth Shim, "South Korea's military strength," UPI Top News, 4-13-2016, www.upi.com/Top_News/World-News/2016/04/13/South-Koreas-military-strength-ranks-11th-in-the-world/3451460570692/

"the U.S. had 54,000," Hannah Beech, "The Tense Realtionship Between Japan and the U.S. Military," Time, 6-17-2016, time.com/4360940/us-military-navy-japan-okinawa-alcohol-bases/

"about 38,000 ashore," U.S. Forces, Japan, Department of Defense, www.usfj.mil/About-USFJ/

INDEX

We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations that lent expertise, artifacts, time and financial support to the *Korea 65* project.

Adam Owen
Alex McGregor
Amber Raney
Arnold Samuels
Asia Pacific Cultural Center
Association of WA Businesses
Barbara Nichols
Ben Helle
Bette Fisher
Bob Day
Bob Hart
Brad Owen
Brenda Hunt
C. Louise Miller
Callie Birklid
Capitol City Press
Carl Molesworth
Catherine Brazil
Chip Duncan
Cho Ki Seung
Cindy Ryu
Coleen O'Brien
Consulate General of the Republic of Korea
Dan Keenan
Daniel Grimm
Darrell Holt
Daughters of the American Revolution
Dave Ammons
David Elliott
Don Brink
Donna Kaminski
Francis Petit
George Drake
Georgia Gardner
Gerry Alexander
Hye Parkman
Hyong Eun
Jackie Wheeler
Jaleen Bacon
Jan Ames
Jan Walsh
Jennifer Kilmer
Jerri Honeyford
Jerry Axlund
Jim Bricker
Jim Evans
Joan Kim
John Hayward
John Dorsey
John Hughes
Joshua Parker
Kerri Kroll
Kim Wyman
Kim Nickerson
Korean Women's Association
Krista Mikealson
Kristofer Johnson
Landon Baldwin
Laura Mott
Lori Drummond
Lori Larson
Mandy H. Ma
Mark Neary
Mary McCullough
Matt Devlin
Moonbeam & Michael Kupka
NaHye Kwon
Nam Pyo Park
Office of the Secretary of State
Olympia Federal Savings
Patsy Hughes
Pat Martin
Pat & Susan Dunn
Patricia Mack
Patrick McDonald
Patsy Suhr O'Connell
Peter Kwon
Philip Kerrigan
Regina Chae
Regina Tollfeldt
Richard Frailey
Robert Doran
Rodney Anderson
Ryan Keenan
Sally Paxton
Sam Reed
Sandra Englund
Sandy DiBernardo
Seattle-Washington State Korean Association
Shirley Stirling
Slade Gorton
Sotero Soto
Stuart Halsan
Sun Gil Kim
Sunny Lee
Suzanne Cofer
Tom Boyer
Tom Copeland
Trova Heffernan
TwinStar Credit Union
Victoria Cunningham
Victoria Hayward
Victoria Woodards
Yun S. Hong
Washington State Heritage Center Trust
Wayne Ehlers
William Jacobs

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

AWB

DAR
Daughters of the American Revolution®
Washington State Society

KWA

CAPITOL CITY PRESS

Olympia Federal Savings

TwinStar®
CREDIT UNION
Bright Solutions

CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA SEATTLE