



# KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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## Newsletter May–June 2017

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## Hallowed Korean Soil Added to San Francisco Veterans Memorial

On May 20, 2017, Armed Forces Day, in a ceremony co-sponsored by the San Francisco Veterans Memorial Committee and the Korean War Memorial Foundation (KWMF), sacred soil from the Korean War's Inchon (now Incheon) battlefield was added to the Memorial. Over the years, soils from other battlefields, from World War I to Afghanistan and Iraq, have been interred in the Memorial Court, which is situated between the War Memorial Opera House and the War Memorial Veterans Building, on Van Ness Avenue across from City Hall.



*Passage of Remembrance, San Francisco Veterans Memorial*

The long-awaited Veterans Memorial itself, titled *Passage of Remembrance*, was completed and dedicated in 2014, to honor and remember all those who sacrificed in America's wars. At that time, the battlefield soils were all reinterred within the walls of the *Passage of Remembrance*. And now the Korean War soil has been interred there as well.

### **In This Issue:**

Korean Soil Added to San Francisco Memorial, p.1  
ROK New Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, p.6  
Memorial Day Gathering at Korean War Memorial, p.8

How ROK President Moon Jae-in's Parents  
Escaped Communism, p.11



The program began with the singing of the National Anthems of the Republic of Korea and the United States of America, led by accomplished singer Woojeong Lee.



Following the National Anthems, the 23rd Marines Color Guard posted the colors.



A large contingent of Korean veterans of the so-called "Forgotten War" participated in the ceremony. Given the current state of affairs on the Korean Peninsula, the war is by no means forgotten by these veterans.

Next, Chaplain Bob Butchart, VFW Post 4618, delivered the Invocation.



Major General J. Michael Myatt, USMC (Ret.), President of the War Memorial Board of Trustees and Co-Chair of the San Francisco Veterans Memorial Committee, served as Master of Ceremonies. He welcomed the audience and introduced the speakers and other dignitaries.



An Honor Guard from the U.S. Army presented ceremonial wreaths.

Four dedication speakers then addressed the gathering.



Mayor Edwin M. Lee, City and County of San Francisco



Consul General Shin Chae-Hyun, Consulate General of the Republic of Korea

Donald F. Reid, Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War and Treasurer, Korean War Memorial Foundation (at right)



Dr. John Huh, Republic of Korea veteran of the Korean War and Library Commissioner, Contra Costa County

Following the speakers' remarks, Consul General Shin Chae-Hyun and Dr. John Huh were joined by Lieutenant Colonel John R. Stevens, USMC (Ret.), Korean War veteran and 2nd Vice President, Korean War Memorial Foundation.

Lieutenant Colonel Stevens and Dr. Huh then interred the ceremonial soil within the memorial walls. Lieutenant Colonel Stevens himself participated in the Inchon Landing, the battlefield where the soil originated. So this was a particularly meaningful moment for John, taking the 96-year-old Marine back 67 years, to September 15, 1950, when the rifle company he commanded scaled the Inchon seawall into hostile fire.

Next came a heartfelt reading of the Archibald MacLeish poem "The Young Dead Soldiers" by Noah Griffin, poet, writer, and founder of the Cole Porter Society.

The ceremony came to a close with the playing of Taps and the retiring of the colors. Major General Myatt thanked all the dignitaries and audience members for their participation.



Consul General Shin, Lieutenant Colonel Stevens, and Dr. Huh with the Korean battlefield soil



Noah Griffin, Founder, Cole Porter Society

## Thank you, Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions

KWMF wishes to thank Dr. Kim Tae Yun and her staff at Lighthouse Worldwide Solutions in Fremont, CA — [www.golighthouse.com](http://www.golighthouse.com) — for their generosity in underwriting the costs of printing and mailing this newsletter.

# Republic of Korea's New Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs

*Story courtesy of Jim Fisher, Executive Director, Korean War Veterans Association*

On May 17, Republic of Korea President Moon Jae-in appointed Pi Woo-jin, 61, a lieutenant colonel in the Army reserves, as Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs. This is remarkable for a number of reasons. It's unprecedented for a female field officer in the reserves with progressive tendencies to be appointed to lead the Ministry, which has typically been directed by conservative male generals in the reserves. Pi is the first female Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs since the Ministry was established in 1961.

Born in Chungju, North Chungcheong Province, Pi graduated from Cheongju University with a degree in physical education and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Army in 1979. After commanding a company in the Special Forces, Pi served as the Army's first female helicopter pilot. "In a career that is even challenging for male soldiers, Pi shattered the glass ceiling through her own strength and blazed the trail for women," a statement from the Blue House (the Presidential Residence) read.

Astute observers of the Korean political scene and of the sentiment of the public in South Korea opined that newly elected President Moon would appoint a woman as Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs, to replace Minister Park Sung Choon, who left his post in the same week that President Moon took office. Such observers also agreed that she would have to be a woman of outstanding credentials, whose personality and record of achievement would strike vibrant chords with eager South



Newly appointed Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs Pi Woo-jin burns incense at the Daejeon National Cemetery on May 18, one day after her official appointment was announced at the Cheong Wa Dae (Blue House) in Seoul.

Koreans who were watching expectantly for President Moon to form his promised new progressive-thinking cabinet. Few should have been disappointed by his selection of Minister Pi. In fact, her appointment as Korea's first woman minister in that post was cheered throughout Korea by women, by the larger general population, and by virtually all Koreans of younger years.

On the day she was appointed, Minister Pi said, "Taking care of our veterans is the past and future of security. These days, I understand that veterans' families feel somewhat neglected and are really worried that they're being forgotten. In the future, I will implement veteran policies that are focused on veterans' families." KWMF wishes Minister Pi Woo-jin well in her new position.



Minister of Patriots and Veterans Affairs Pi Woo-jin

**For information on the Korean War Veterans Association—<http://www.kwva.org>—contact Jim Fisher at [jfisher@hrmgroup.net](mailto:jfisher@hrmgroup.net)**

## *Note:* Last Chance to Get A Commemorative Tile On the Memorial Site

The original design for the tile and plaque wall at the Korean War Memorial allowed for 600 commemorative tiles total. And by the time the Memorial opened on August 1, 2016, all 600 had been taken by Korean War veterans and other donors. A number of veterans and their families who heard about the tile program too late were deeply disappointed that they would no longer have the opportunity to sponsor tiles.

Recently, however, our partners at the Presidio Trust found a way to add one panel with 96 additional commemorative tiles to the tile and plaque wall. 70 of these tiles have already been claimed, leaving only 26 still available.

These 26 remaining tiles are now being offered on a first-come, first-served basis subject to the following conditions:

- The text may ONLY be in honor or memory of a Korean War veteran. No other individuals or organizations may be honored or mentioned in the text.
- Each tile requires a tax-deductible donation to KWMF of \$500 or more.

***Please note that once these 26 tiles are taken, there is no room for any more to be added to the Memorial. This is your last chance to honor an individual Korean War veteran!***

If you can comply with the above conditions, and if you would like to take advantage of this final opportunity to sponsor one of the remaining tiles, please contact Anna Jovel, KWMF Office Manager, by phone at (415) 817-1858, or by email at [ajovel@kwmf.org](mailto:ajovel@kwmf.org).



Examples of some of the tile inscriptions

## An Intimate Memorial Day Gathering at the Korean War Memorial

On May 29, 2017, right after the larger Memorial Day event in the adjacent San Francisco National Cemetery, a smaller, more intimate ceremony took place on the Korean War Memorial Plaza. Korean War veterans, donors, and friends of the Foundation gathered with KWMF's officers for a few moments of prayer and remembrance, followed by the placing of a ceremonial wreath in front of the Memorial wall.



KWMF Executive Director Gerard Parker began by welcoming the guests and introducing the Foundation's officers and Deputy Consul General Jimin Kim, representing the Government of the Republic of Korea (at right).



From L: Secretary Arthur Curtis, 2nd Vice President John Stevens, President and Chair Judge Quentin Kopp (ret.), Treasurer Donald Reid, Executive Director Gerard Parker, Vice President Man J. Kim, and Deputy Consul General Jimin Kim

Donald Reid then led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.



Next came an invocation by Arthur Curtis, in acknowledgement of the solemnity of Memorial Day.



Following the invocation, Judge Quentin Kopp (Ret.) thanked the guests for their participation, and spoke of the need to honor and remember all those who sacrificed for South Korea's freedom (at right).



Man J. Kim and Deputy Consul General Jimin Kim then placed the ceremonial wreath in front of the Memorial wall. The gold and purple ribbon on the wreath reads, "Remembering the Forgotten War."



The ceremony came to a close with a benediction by Art Curtis. Then the speakers and guests had an opportunity to mingle for personal conversations and renewals of friendships.



# How ROK President Moon Jae-in's Parents Escaped Communism

By Ned Forney

American men and women stationed on the front lines of potential flash points around the world are in harm's way. From recent deployments to Afghanistan and Eastern Europe (NATO), to America's continued presence in South Korea, Germany, and Japan, well-trained and dedicated soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines are ready to fight. They are prepared for battles they hope will never happen.

But unfortunately, conflicts erupt and when they do, young Americans inevitably die. We can only hope their deaths are not in vain and that our leaders have a compelling reason for sending them into combat. As history teaches us, however, those reasons can take years to understand, and the long-term political, economic, and social consequences - good and bad - of our military actions are sometimes not fully realized until generations later.

Case in point. On May 10, Moon Jae-in, a South Korean born in a refugee relocation center during the Korean War, became the 12th president of the Republic of Korea. His "refu-



Republic of Korea President Moon Jae-in

gee to president" story was covered around the world. But what many articles fail to mention is that Moon Jae-in's parents were rescued by US servicemen in North Korea sixty-seven years ago. Without the sacrifices made by Americans at Chosin, and the subsequent Hungnam Evacuation, Korea's current president would almost certainly have spent his entire life in North Korea.

In late November of 1950, American troops fighting in the northeast mountains of North Korea were surrounded by tens of thousands of Chinese soldiers at a remote reservoir called Chosin (or Changjin). In one of the most epic and terrifying battles in US history, US Marines and soldiers, vastly outnumbered by Mao's forces, held off the Chinese and "attacked in another direction" seventy-eight miles to the coast. Their destination was the port city of Hungnam, where they would evacuate by ship to the South.

By December 1950, Moon Jae-in's mother and father had already lived under communist rule, first Stalin and then Kim Il-sung, for five years. With US troops now evacuating from Hungnam, about 10 miles from their hometown of Hamhung, North Korea, Moon's parents hoped the Americans might give them the



Writer Ned Forney with John Y. Lee, an honorary US Marine who, as a young ROK Army lieutenant in 1950 served as an interpreter/translator with the 1st Marine Division in the Chosin Reservoir campaign. Mr. Lee is also KWMF's Special Agent in the ROK.



Refugees on the main deck of the SS Meredith Victory, Hungnam Harbor, December, 1950

opportunity to escape from the Chinese army. Thankfully for Moon Jae-in, who was born two years later in freedom, the US military did give them the opportunity. US Navy and Merchant Marine ships rescued nearly 100,000 North Korean civilians, and Moon's family was sent 350 miles down the coast to Geoje Island, a refugee relocation center, where they lived until moving to Busan.

In the final two months of 1950, thousands of Americans were killed or listed as MIA, missing in action, fighting the Chinese army. The sacrifices made by these US Marines, soldiers, and sailors impacted thousands of lives. Today it is estimated there are one million descendants of Hungnam refugees living in freedom in South Korea, the US, and countries around the world. President Moon is one of them. Let us always remember the Americans who died not only for our freedom but also for the freedom of others around the world.

*Ned Forney, a Marine veteran, lives in Seoul, South Korea, and is the grandson of the late Colonel Edward H. Forney, USMC, the evacuation control officer of the Hungnam Evacuation. He is currently writing a book about the Chosin Reservoir Campaign and Hungnam Evacuation and can be reached at: [ned@nedforney.com](mailto:ned@nedforney.com)*



# KOREAN WAR MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

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