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November 16, 2011

**MEMORANDUM FOR:**

Members, Affiliates, Media  
Louisiana Veterans Coalition  
Camp Beauregard, LA

In accordance with the continuing measures aimed at improving the operations and relevance of the Coalition, I have appointed Colonel Barrett R "Bear" Byrd, USMC, Ret, to be an LVC Vice-Chairman in accordance with the By-Laws and the election direction given to me by the members at the October 22, 2011, meeting. The other Vice Chairman is LTC Lessie A Griffith, USA, Ret. The Secretary will announce the election procedures this action will require relative to the next meeting, February 2012.

Col Byrd is replacing CSM James Myrick, USA, Ret, who has fulfilled his elected terms in accordance with the By-Laws. Jim is "Mr. Veteran" to the Central, Southwest Central, and Fort Polk areas, as well as the rest of the state. He was the one principally responsible for the Veterans Cemetery, in my experience and view, nearing completion in Vernon Parish. He was also a leader in obtaining the colocated VA Community Based Outreach Clinic which opened on November 7.

CSM Myrick has served in many leadership positions in most veterans organizations in Louisiana. He is a Patriot Past Department of Louisiana Commander of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, and a current Silver-Haired Senator for Louisiana.

Jim was a survivor of TASK FORCE FAITH, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> US Infantry Division, in the Chosin Reservoir "Retreat Hell" fame of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division in Korea. The 31<sup>st</sup> Regimental Recon Platoon, including Jim Myrick, actually reached the Yalu River in North Korea, in late October 1950. Shortly thereafter, over a four day period, 3000 men of the TF perished, most of them unarmed wounded men who were slaughtered by Chinese Communists in vehicle convoys attempting to evacuate them to a link up with the withdrawing 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division south of the US Army units. The Marines had aerial evacuation capabilities. Many men were burned alive in their vehicles, an atrocity in terms of the Geneva Conventions.

The father of LTG Dan Bolger, former CG at Ft Polk and later CG, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Ft Hood-IRAQ-AFGHANISTAN, then G3 of the US Army, and now Commanding General of the NATO Training Assistance Command in Afghanistan, was a MSGT in the same unit as Myrick and like him a severely frozen and frost-bitten survivor.

CSM Myrick has suffered health problems due to Korea duty for several years. He was recently diagnosed with cancer and is combating that health problem. We pray for Jim and his health and thank him for the outstanding significant accomplishments he has engineered in our ranks of veterans. CSM Myrick does not have email. His telephone number is 337-383-7898.

I have also requested Col Byrd to take on the duties of LVC Legislative Officer. He is admirably prepared for these duties. He may be reached by email [barettbyrd@yahoo.com](mailto:barettbyrd@yahoo.com), telephone 318.880.5759.

## Louis T Dechert

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Chairman, Louisiana Veterans Coalition, 2011-2012

Chairman, Combined KOREAN-US Veterans Association, CKVA (Prov)

*[SUCCESSFUL SOLE VETERANS ORGANIZATION SUPPORTING KOREA-US FTA, 2008-2011]*

National President and Chairman of the Board, KWVA/USA, 2004-2008

Founder and Co-Chairman, US Federation of Korea Veterans Organizations, USFKVO

*[SUCCESSFUL SOLE VETERANS SPONSOR OF MEDAL OF HONOR RESOLUTION FOR FATHER EMIL KAPAUN, CHAPLAIN, 8<sup>TH</sup> CAVALRY REGIMENT, DIED IN CAPTIVITY, KOREA, 1951]*

Chairman, US-Korea Allies Council, UKAC, 2005-2011

