



BACK TO VIETNAM

Earlier this month, former Vietnam War prisoner of war **Capt. Charlie Plumb** (left) returned to southeast Asia and to the city and places where he was held captive for nearly six years. South Dakota filmmaker **John Mollison** accompanied Plumb on his journey as part of a documentary that is being produced on Plumb's return to Vietnam.

PHOTO LEFT: Courtesy of Charlie Plumb; ALL OTHER PHOTOS: John Mollison



RIGHT: Vietnam POW, U.S. Navy fighter pilot Captain "Charlie" Plumb comes face to face with the director of the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison system, Mr. Tran Trong Duyet at his Haiphong, Vietnam residence. The meeting was arranged as part of an upcoming episode of "Old Guys and Their Airplanes" featuring the return of Plumb to meet former foes. The photo in the foreground shows Duyet addressing a group of POWs on their release some time in 1973. "It took a long time to come back, but I am glad I did," said Plumb. **ABOVE:** The POW bracelet of Capt. Charlie Plumb, U.S. Navy. Millions of these bracelets were produced during the Vietnam War to help Americans remember the POW plight, each one representing a particular serviceman. The date below the name indicates the date of capture; Plumb was shot down on May 19, 1967.



Plumb presents artwork of the two aircraft that mark his wartime service to the Hoa Lo Prison Museum in Hanoi. The artwork, created by aviation artist and historian John Mollison, shows the F-4B Phantom he was flying when shot down on May 19, 1967 as well as the C-141 Starlifter that he rode upon his release from prison Feb. 18, 1973.



Plumb walks to the spot where he left Hanoi after nearly six years of captivity. Released by the North Vietnamese, Plumb and 19 other American POWs were driven by the North Vietnamese to Gia Lam Airport where they boarded C-141 Starlifter aircraft on Feb. 18, 1973 and flew to Clark, AFB. Nearly 600 POWs were released from February through the end of March in order of their capture. The first flight out of Hanoi took place on Feb. 12 and the last on March 29. "It was good to leave then," Plumb stated. "But it is also good to return today under these better circumstances and friendship." Plumb's return to Vietnam will be documented in a future episode of "Old Guys and Their Airplanes."



LEFT: Plumb visits an all-too-familiar cell block at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton" prison, now the Hoa Lo Prison Museum in Hanoi, Vietnam. Plumb had vivid memories of the hardships he and nearly 600 fellow American prisoners endured throughout the Vietnam War. **ABOVE:** Plumb talks to an unidentified woman who claimed to have lost her leg as a girl during the December bombing of Ha Noi, 1972. Plumb was impressed with the woman's intelligence and desire for peace and friendship. Later, he remarked that they had both endured excessive hardship during the war and looked forward to better days for future generations.

Farm

From Page 1

to come out and work on the farm," says Heike in reference to this imbalance. Sam Heikes said, "We have the capacity to feed somewhere between 500 and 750 families on a good year." Many of the Vermillion residents have yet to recognize the opportunity growing before their very eyes, but the word is spreading. The Heikes family frequently donates to food pantries and view it as, "[their] way of tithing." When it comes to local grocery stores, the red tape involved with sharing local produce with a local, yet corporate, grocery chain becomes difficult. The Heikes family has sold some food to HyVee, but overall local representation of their product in stores is minimal. Thankfully, with word of mouth spreading and a consistent growth in shareholders, the Heikes Family Farm will not be needing to find themselves as commercial grocers anytime soon. The demand for organic and locally produced food is

gaining nationwide traction. Sam Heikes mentions that we, as a country, are moving toward a becoming a "food hub". He went on to say, "Let's say we specialize in fruits and vegetables. Now, let's say someone else specializes in grass fed beef and someone else has non-GMO fed swine...We'd like to get to the point where we're not just hosting our own food production, but other people's. That is a trend that is growing dramatically, nationwide." The Heikes family, while invested in providing healthy food to the entire community, is also dedicated to the education of future buyers, growers, and citizens. They see a growing number of young people who want to know

more about agriculture and food production, but "don't have a clue" They strongly encourage working on the farm to learn about food production and are happy to see shareholders bring their families in order to better educate them on what it is they do. By employing older farming techniques reminiscent of the days before GMO's, pesticides, herbicides, and mass production on a commercial scale, the Heikes family chooses to utilize natural pollinators. Their use of bees and other insects by way of beehives and a well-placed and maintained shelterbelt, led to their 2014 U.S.A Pollinator protector Farmer-Rancher Conservation Award, through

the North American Pollinator Protection Campaign (NACCP). Sam Heike said, "We don't live in a perfect world. Not everything is the same; the same shape, the same color, the same size..." With this in mind, it is easy to conceive that as the Heikes Family Farm grows, the Vermillion community will become healthier, happier, and smarter as we head toward the future.

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