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HONG KONG VETERANS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

MANITOBA BRANCH PO BOX 381 WINNIPEG, MB R3C 2H6

April, May, June 2003

We have had a number of comrades in the hospital lately. Roy Robinson is confined to bed in St. Boniface and waiting for an opening in Deer Lodge Centre. Fred Wright was in hospital but is recuperating at home now and I spoke to him this morning. Bill Maltman is at home and he told me this morning when I called that he was still hanging in there and fully intends to keep on trying. I heard from Tommy Dewar's wife who just returned my call to say he is quite ill and only allowed visits from immediate family. These are the comrades that I am aware of now. To all of our sick, known and unknown we wish you a speedy recovery, remember you are not alone as our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Our new luncheon meeting at St James
Legion was a great success as the variety of food was
excellent and the quantities sufficient. Julie supplied
us with menus and took the orders to the canteen to
be filled. When the food was ready Carol Hadley and
Lora Wachtendorf assisted Julie in bringing it to the
tables that were set up in the Quiet Room. Anyone
who wanted beer or liquor with their lunch were
served by the bar staff. Speaking for myself, I
thought the food and service was excellent and I
came away feeling that we were most welcome to
hold our meetings there.

Today is Wednesday and the men have come to renovate our garage and patio. My good wife and I have planned this for a year and all arrangements were finalize this past week. I won't be able to get into the basement where my computer is set up for a couple of days so I will close off now.

Wishing you all the best for a level road to travel with the wind always at your back.

In Comradeship, George N. Peterson

Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association

Hi to one and all,

I am just writing a few lines to let you know that Manitoba Region is doing very well.

Our Museum Project is progressing steadily with cataloguing the items that we have presently. People have been very good offering their time to help us with this project, and I would like to thank and acknowledge Gord Crossley, Neil Bardal and Lora Wachtendorf who have put time in on this project. The display at the museum is still "work in progress" but when completed we will notify you. If you would care to add to the display by loaning or donating any memorabilia please contact me, Juliet Lafortune at 338-3354 or 294-9335.

Pam Heinrichs, Patricia Bale along with Carol Hadley are working on several ideas for the education project. Material and resources are being

President's Report

March 17th St Patrick's Day – Today, everyone becomes Irish for the day. So I wish you all "Top of the Morning".

Spring is just about here and it looks like the weather has finally changed for the better. I for one don't like the cold and feel much happier when the temperature reaches well above the freezing mark. Hopefully now it has and my wish is for every one to enjoy it.

A general meeting was held for our branch on Saturday February 15th in the Quiet Room of St. James Legion of the Royal Canadian Legion just prior to the Commemorative meeting. Although the numbers were small, it was decided that I would attend the meeting of the advisory council to DVA in Calgary, Alberta on April 8th and our National Convention in Victoria later in August. To assist in these travels the sum of \$1800.00 was approved to cover the expenses.

I received a phone call from Gus Bitzer in Calgary who was told by Ed Shayler that I would be there April 8th for a meeting. I have been asked to chair a general meeting for their branch on the 9th of April. I have agreed to this request and Gus will call me later with more information.

Julie and I received and invitation to attend the St. Patrick's Day and the 75th Anniversary dinner and dance at the Fort Garry branch of the ANAF which took place at their branch Saturday March 15th. Unfortunately Julie became ill on Friday and was unable to go. I attended the celebration and had a very enjoyable evening. Julie is still under the weather.

gathered to possibly make a presentation in the fall to history teachers in a conference. We would like to acquire or have constructed a mobile display case to be used as a static display in various scenarios, like schools.

We understand that a Wall of Honour will be located in the True North area when it is completed. Soon we will be pursuing the process to have a plaque mounted on this wall with all the mens' names from Manitoba who served in Hong Kong.

Barry Mitchell has told us that the memberships are doing well but he would like to see more new members joining.

There will be a Memorial service for Emile Van Raes on May 9th at 11am St. Bernadette's Church on Cottonwood in St Vital.

There will also be a remembrance service for Bill Nicholson in Victoria, April13th 12-3 p.m. Prince Edward Branch#91 761Station Rd. Victoria BC.

The National Convention will be held in Victoria this year, and the registration packages have been sent out. If you have not received your registration package or know of others who have not received theirs, please contact me and we will notify the committee in BC. Hopefully some of you can attend.

The Annual Reunion Dinner is will be held October 25th, 2003. There are a few changes that we will be trying this year that hopefully will be a pleasant surprise. If you have any other ideas that you wish to share to enhance the Reunion please feel free to call me.

Hope you all keep well and we see you soon.

Remember the Luncheon location has been change to St. James Legion, Portage Avenue.

Bye for now,

Juliet Lafortune, Regional Director

Winnipeg Grenadier's Hong Kong Trust Fund

- Donna Remillard

We are seeking donations for the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong Trust Fund and cheques should be made out in that name (not HKVA). The Hong Kong Veterans' Association makes donations to this fund in memory of each deceased veteran member.

The monies in this fund are used for the issue of the Winnipeg Grenadiers Hong Kong veterans, for their higher education.

Contributions can be directed to: Donna Remillard at 303-740 Kenaston Boulevard, Winnipeg, MB R3N 1Y3 or phone her at 489-0008.

Website Updates

Don't forget to keep monitoring these websites as information is continually being added.

www.hkvca.ca - new info here, check it out.

www.geocities.com/rcwpca

www.cofepow.org.uk.

www.blackyvero.com

www.geocities.com/jeffyam/hongkong war

www.hongkongwardiary.com Tony Banham has written a book called "Not the Slightest Chance". Here is a copy of the announcement on the book

"Not the slightest chance" was Winston Churchill's April 1941 estimate of Hong Kong's prospects in the face of a Japanese assault. When in December the attack came, his prediction proved sadly accurate in just 18 days of brutal and confused fighting.

More than 10% of Hong Kong's defenders were killed in battle; a further 20% died in captivity. Those who survived seldom spoke of their experiences. Many died young. Yet with just 14,000 defending the Colony, it was possible to write from the individual's point of view rather than that of the Big Battalions so favoured by God (according to Napoleon) and most historians.

Tony Banham will tell the story of the battle at the level of the individual participants by naming individuals and describes their fates. He will present a uniquely human view of the fighting and gives a compelling sense of the chaos and cost of battle.

Tony Banham is a long-term resident of Hong Kong, having arrived in the 1980s. He has been studying the Battle of Hong Kong for well over a decade and has written on the subject, aided in the production of television documentaries, and helped many children of veterans in their researches into their fathers' war years. The book is available at www.hkupress.org/book/9622096158.htm There is a Canadian distributor as well to assist in ordering.

Last Post

William Fostey, H-17206 WG died July 27th, 2002 Coleman Pollock, E-30342, RRC, died Jan. 20th, 2003 Emile Van Raes, H-6149, WG died February 2, 2003 William Nicholson, H-6264 WG died Feb. 9th, 2003 Raymond Smith E-29841 RRC died March 5th, 2003

Our thoughts and prayers are extended to all the families and friends.

"We will remember them"

Notes from Barry Mitchell, Treasurer and Membership

Greetings once again to all the members of the HKVA and the HK Commemorative Association.

Spring is almost with us and that means that we Manitobans can start to think about putting away our long undies for another year. Yes, we choose to live here, but no scientist has yet been able to figure out a way of determining *why!*

I'm glad to report that all members of your executive are busy, busy, with a variety of projects but each of these efforts usually costs at least a little bit of money in the way of support documents, mailing, or the like. That means we continue to need your support, so let's keep all those little envelopes coming in to your humble treasurer.

I must admit that as a whole, you respond beautifully to a gentle reminder and the mailbox has been stuffed full of your responses for the last couple of weeks. I have tried to forward your cards and decals as soon as we receive your cheque but with the enthusiastic rush of mail lately, it has taken a few more days to complete my replies. In any event, we are a growing organization and I'm delighted that once again there are newcomers reading this newsletter for the first time. Welcome aboard to the new arrivals for we need your support now and in the years to come. We invite your comments on our association, and in fact would like to hear your ideas on possible future projects or on any matter which pertains to the Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association.

We received a terrific note from **Bill Muir** in **Courtnay**, **BC**, who admits that it's about time he paid a visit to his home town of Winnipeg, a place he hasn't seen for almost 10 years. It sounds like Bill is certainly a travellin' man as he mentions Alaska and Barbados in the same sentence. He passes along his best regards to all the Winnipeg gang and with all the geography he covers, I think we can assume that his health is pretty good. Thanks for your update, Bill, and on notepaper with a distinctive West Indian design!

We were pleased to receive a cheerful card from Gloria Sokalski of Winnipeg along with dues for herself and son Chris who lives in Edmonton, AB. We appreciate the good thoughts from Gloria and pass along her best wishes to all our members, for a happy and prosperous New Year. It was also nice to hear again from Blanche Younker of Winnipeg, daughter of the late Morris Peterson (WG). Blanche forwarded three years dues for herself, her mother, Doris Peterson of Winnipeg and Blanche's friend, Joe Levene. I'm glad they are all caught up with their memberships and in fact have looked after things for the years ahead. In doing so, they say "hello" to all the veterans and fellow Commemorative members.

You can tell **Tom Dewar** of **Winnipeg** is used to having his affairs in order when he offers an apology for sending in his dues "late" when we are only 30 days into the new year. Tom and I are almost neighbours since he moved into his very classy condominium on Pembina Highway. It was nice to hear from Tom and to receive his generous donation. **George Coutts** of **Melita**, **Manitoba**, sends us his most interesting comments, along with his dues and donation. George tells us he has had a pretty good

year--still on the farm but has finally sold his cattle. He tries a little golf and bowling but stiff fingers won't let him tie the line for fishing. He had a pleasant visit from a young man in his area who teaches in Hong Kong. They compared photos of Hong Kong from the present and from the war years. Also, George visited a doctor who had been in the army in Hong Kong and they were able to swap stories about their experiences there. George passes along his best wishes to all.

A very warm note arrived from **Sidney Vale** of **Vernon, BC**. Sid tells us that things are going well for him there. He's keeping fairly healthy and is getting around with the help of a three-wheeled electric scooter. He still has the urge to travel, in particular to the "'Peg" to attend functions with some of his old buddies, but fears that his travelling days are over. He passes along best regards to "the boys". We wish you well, Sid.

We received another nice note from **Pearl MacPherson** of **Richmond**, **BC**. On behalf of hubby **Don**, daughter **Heather** and son **John**, she sends best wishes from sunny British Columbia. Pearl says she is happy to report that they are all well and have just returned from a trip to South America where they cruised around Cape Horn with stops in Chile and Argentina. The MacPherson family is proud to say that Don was presented with the Queen's Jubilee medal for his contributions to the Sir Arthur Pearson Association of War Blinded. Thanks for your letter Pearl, and we hope to see you here again soon or perhaps at the convention in Victoria this summer.

John C. Norris, of Sacramento, California, son of John A. Norris (WG), was recently in Hawaii and took a tour of the Battleship Missouri where the Japanese surrender was signed on September 2, 1945. Every man on board that ship was issued a card certifying his presence on board and John was thoughtful enough to send me a plastic replica of that card. He also sent me a copy of the surrender document which was signed by, among others, a Canadian army colonel. Thank you very much for all this, John. I have a growing number of memorabilia related to the Hong Kong conflict and appreciate receiving any item such as these documents.

That's about it for this issue folks. Don't forget about our array of items for sale from Barry's Emporium. We promise quick delivery at record low prices on all our shirts, pins, ties, crest or whatever. As with your dues and donations, just make out your cheques to HKVCA and send to P.O. Box 381, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2H6. Everyone now pays membership fees of \$15.00 per year and they are all due right now!!

Best wishes to all for good health and happiness in 2003!!

Cheers, Barry Mitchell

Miscellaneous Items

I received an inquiry this week; please let me know if you can help:

Forgive me for contacting you, which I have to admit is more in desperation than any real hope

that you might be able to help me! I have contacted everyone else I can think of, over a three year period, but I came across your website and wonder if any of your members might know of a mystery book I am

My uncle, Robert (Bob) Newton was in the 5th/7th Rajput Regiment and was killed in Hong Kong in December 1941. He is buried in the Sai Wan military cemetery there. Some years ago (about 1986-7) I read a book about Tonga in the South Pacific (I was living there at the time) and, being a novel/thriller, I was absolutely astonished to find part of the book referred to the Defence of Hong Kong and there was a section about the 5th/7th Rajput regiment and, in particular, about my uncle Bob whose brave actions under fire were detailed.

The book was so good that I lent it to Princess Pilolevu (daughter of the King of Tonga) thinking she would enjoy it as much as I had. Maybe she did, but she never gave the book back to me. At the time I was not in a position to buy it in Tonga and thought that I must buy it again one day. When the day came that I could buy it again, I had gone and forgotten the name of the book and the author!

I have been searching for this mystery book ever since, and I was wondering whether you might know anything about it and in particular, might be able to tell me the title and author so that I could, at long last, buy it once more? The very few sketchy details I have are: 1) It is a NOVEL, not historical fact. 2) It is about TONGA in the South Pacific. 3) It refers to the Tonga Trench, the deepest sea in

- 4) Hong Kong somehow comes into the story because in this novel is mentioned my uncle, Captain Bob (Robert) Newton of the 5th/7th Rajput Regiment, Indian Army, who was killed in Hong Kong during the Japanese invasion of 1941. His heroic death, under fire, is chronicled in this book -strangely, since it is a novel. think the book is a 6) However, two books that it is NOT, are: "Tales of the Tikongs" and "Rascals in Paradise" - both are about Tonga but the former is satirical and latter is non-fiction. If anyone could possibly identify this book I would be enormously grateful. Please pass this email on to anybody at all who you think might be able to help!
 - Mrs Anne Ammundsen

Our website is so important for many families and friends who have lost track of one another over the years. They use the site to link to us in an attempt to fill the gap. This is why it is important for the veteran's stories to be captured in print before they are lost and an important part of Canadian History is gone.

I received a fax from Ross Purse in Victoria with an

inquiry from the son of Hugh Grant Stewart. I contacted Comendaor Arthur Gomes, MBE in

Hong Kong. Arthur is a great source of information from personal experience about the Battle of Hong Kong.

I wrote to Arthur:

I am contacting you to see if you might remember Mr. Hugh Grant Stewart. He was with the Texas Oil Company located in Hong Kong and was a member of the HKVDC during the hostilities in 1941. His assignment with the Corps was to man #3 Battery at where Stanley he was taken

Mr. Hugh Grant Stewart's son has asked our Association to see if we could find anyone who might remember his father. His parents were killed in an aircraft hijacking in Hong Kong in 1948 so he has not been able to talk to anyone about his father's experiences as a POW in Sham Shui Po or in Japan POW Osaka. camp near

I would appreciate any help that you might give in finding this information and I will forward it to him. If you wish to contact him directly, I will give you his address.

Dear Carol,

My data show that Gunner Stewart, H.G. No 3651, 2nd Battery, HKVDC, was in Shamshuipo and was drafted to Japan on 15/12/43. I will insert an INQUIRY in the next newsletter and feel sure that someone out there who was in that draft to Japan may details and communicate or the family. I know there are quite a few of these boys still around, one being Jan Solecki in Vancouver - and there are a few more in Vancouver too! With best wishes for the Year of the Ram. Arthur.

If there is anyone else who might have some information on this – please let me know.

▼ ▼ ▼ ▼ ADDRESS CHANGES???

Please, don't forget to let us know if you have any changes in phone number or address. It is very important to keep this current so that communication can be sent out without incurring extra charges for postage when we finally track you down or worse still if we lose you for a period of time.

Member Update:

Harry Gyselman has left for a trip to BC to visit his son and family out there. Have a great trip Harry, we'll miss you at the lunches until your return.

I am extremely happy to announce that Harry Atkinson has a new grandson! His daughter, Pat and Garry Melnyk are celebrating their new addition -Daniel William, born February 23, 2003 weighing 8 lbs 9 oz., just missing Harry's birthday of February 14. Harry's other daughter, Lori, was in attendance for this great event giving everyone terrific support. Sorry we missed you Lori but we will toast this little tyke in Victoria this summer.

From Colleen Stebbe and the Stebbe family – Congratulations to **Larry Stebbe** on his 80th birthday February 25th.

Colleen says: Mom and Dad are vacationing in Hawaii and celebrated the event there with my Mom's brother and sister-in-law, Hank and Gail Lewko and friends. The rest of us got to express our wishes by phone and hear about the wonderful weather - while we were trying to keep warm with

-30° C temperatures. I also wanted to mention that Dad was honoured as a recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002.

(Well-done Larry! A fitting tribute to all your efforts in the Associations)



** "Honour & Pride" is a CD produced by Cove Records Inc., with the assistance of our Padre - Rev. Gordon Shields, to assist anyone that is organizing a memorial or funeral service for veterans. At our VJ Day Memorial in August, we used excerpts of the CD. The CD has the correct order of service and music to enhance any event. There are 2 distributors for "Honour and Pride" now, Royal Canadian Legion – Dominion Command Kit-Shop, 359 Kent St., Ottawa, ON K2P 0R7 and McNally Robinson Booksellers at www.mcnallyrobinson.ca. The cost of the CD is \$25.00 plus taxes (and shipping and handling where applicable).

Humour

An old man decided his old wife was getting hard of hearing. So he called her doctor to make an appointment to have her hearing checked. The Doctor said he could see her in two weeks, and meanwhile there's a simple, informal test the husband could do to give the doctor some idea of the dimensions of the problem. "Here's what you do. Start about 40 feet away from her, and speak in a normal conversational tone and see if she hears you. If not, go to 30 feet, then 20 feet, and so on until you get a response." So that evening she's in the kitchen cooking dinner, and he's in the living room, and he says to himself,

"I'm about 40 feet away, let's see what happens."
"Honey, what's for supper?" No response. So he moves to the other end of the room, about 30 feet away. "Honey, what's for supper?" No response. So he moves into the dining room, about 20 feet away. "Honey, what's for supper?" No response. On to the kitchen door, only 10 feet away. "Honey, what's for supper?". No response. So he walks right up behind her. "Honey, what's for supper?"
"For the fifth time, CHICKEN!"

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A Japanese tourist hailed a taxi in downtown Chicago and asked to be taken out to O'Hare Airport. On the way, a car zoomed by and the tourist responded, "Ohhh!!! TOYOTA!!! Made in Japan!!! Very fast!!!" Not too long after, another car flew by the taxi. "Ohh!!! NISSAN!!! Made in Japan!!! Very fast!!!" Yet another zipped by, "Ohh!!! Mitsubishi!!! Made in Japan!!! Very fast!!!" The taxi driver, complete 100% American, was starting to get a little miffed that the Japanese made cars were passing his Chevy, when yet another car passed the taxi right as they were turning into the airport. "Ohh!!! Honda!!! Made in Japan!!! Very fast!!!" The taxi driver stopped the car, pointed to the meter, and said, "That'll \$150." be "\$150? It was so short a ride! Why so much?" "Taxi Meter. Made in Japan. Very fast."

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and his chauffeur are rolling down a country road at night when suddenly the limo hits a pig that has wandered onto the road. The pig is killed instantly. The Prime Minister instructs his driver, "Go up to da farm hover dere an' hexplain to da honer of da pig what 'appen."

An hour later, Chrétien sees his driver staggering back from the farm, his clothes wrinkled, lipstick on his face, a bottle of wine in one hand and a cigar in the other. What 'appen to you?" asks the P.M. "Well, Prime Minister, the farmer gave me a bottle of wine, his wife gave me a cigar, and their 19-year-old daughter made wild passionate love to me."

Tabarnak! What did you tell dem?" asks Chrétien. The driver answers, "Good evening, I am Jean Chrétien's chauffeur and I have just killed the pig."

Fairy Tale

Once upon a time, in a land far away, a beautiful, independent, self-assured princess happened upon a frog as she sat, contemplating ecological issues on the shores of an unpolluted pond in a verdant meadow near her castle. The frog hopped into the princess' lap and said: Elegant Lady, I was once a handsome prince, until an evil witch cast a spell upon me. One kiss from you, however, and I will turn back into the dapper, young prince that I am and then, my sweet, we can marry and set-up housekeeping in your castle with my mother, where you can prepare my meals, clean my clothes, bear my children, and forever feel grateful and happy doing so.

That night, as the princess dined sumptuously on a repast of lightly sautéed frog legs seasoned in a white wine and onion cream sauce, she chuckled and thought to herself:

I don't think so.

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Kindergarten pupil told his teacher he'd found a cat. She asked him if it was dead or alive. "Dead," she was informed. "How do you know?" she asked her pupil. "Because I pissed in its ear and it didn't move," answered the child innocently. "You did WHAT?!?" The teacher exclaimed in surprise. "You know," explained the boy, "I leaned over and went 'Psssst!' and it didn't move.

His father sends a small boy to bed. Five minutes later. "Daaa-ad...." "What? "I'm thirsty. Can you bring me a drink of water?" "No. You had your chance. Lights out." Five minutes later: "Daaaaad....." "WHAT?" "I'm THIRSTY. Can I have a drink of water??" "I told you NO!" If you ask again, I'll have to spank you!!" Five minutes later...... "Daaaa-aaaad....." "WHAT!" "When you come in to spank me, can you bring a drink of water?"

An exasperated mother, whose son was always getting into mischief, finally asked him, "How do you expect to get into Heaven?" The boy thought it over and said, "Well, I'll run in and out and in and out and keep slamming the door until St. Peter says, 'For Heaven's sake, Dylan, come in or stay out.

One summer evening during a violent thunderstorm a mother was tucking her son into bed. She was about to turn off the light when he asked with a tremor in his voice, "Mommy, will you sleep with me tonight?"

The mother smiled and gave him a reassuring hug. "I can't dear," she said. "I have to sleep in Daddy's room." A long silence was broken at last by his shaky little voice: "The big sissy."

A little boy was doing his math homework. He said to himself, "Two plus five, that son of a bitch is seven.

Three plus six, that son of a bitch is nine...." His mother heard what he was saying and gasped, "What are you doing?" The little boy answered, "I'm doing my math homework, Mom." "And this is how your teacher taught you to do it?" the mother asked. "Yes," he answered. Infuriated, the mother asked the teacher the next day, "What are you teaching my son in math?" The teacher replied, "Right now, we are learning addition." The mother asked, "And are you teaching them to say two plus two, that son of a bitch is four?" After the teacher stopped laughing, she answered, "What I taught them was, two plus two, THE SUM OF WHICH, is four."

One day the first grade teacher was reading the story of Chicken Little to her class. She came to the part of the story where Chicken Little tried to warn the farmer. She read, ".... and so Chicken Little went up to the farmer and said, "The sky is falling, the sky is falling!" The teacher paused then asked the class, "And what do you think that farmer said?" One little girl raised her hand and said, "I think he said: 'Holy Shit! A talking chicken!" The teacher was unable to teach for the next 10 minutes.

Thank you, to all of you who send me the jokes. The jokes serve a dual purpose as they brighten my day and I appreciate the contributions to share with the rest of the members. Keep up the good work!

Reminders

Monthly lunches have changed location to St. James Legion on Portage Ave. at NOON every 2nd Thursday of the month.

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The National Convention will be held August 13 - 17, 2003 in Victoria, BC, please refer to your registration package for further information.

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The Annual Reunion Dinner will be held October 25th, 2003 – information will be sent out later, please keep the date open.

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** PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

The Hong Kong Veterans' Commemorative Association address in Ottawa is: 1 Stafford Road, Ste.164, Nepean, ON, K2H 1B9. This new address should be noted by anyone who purchased one of the earlier grave markers, as it will have the old address on the sheet to send in to register the location of the grave.

Your Branch Council Phone Numbers - Keep Them Handy:

George Peterson, President	256-7174
Bill Maltman,1st Vice	669-4941
Carol Hadley, Secrtry/Newsletter	837-6754
Barry Mitchell,	
Treasurer/Membership	269-1497
Juliet Lafortune, Social	338-3354
Terence Jackson, Memorials	452-1460
Phil Doddridge, Nat'l President	418-392-5838

DON'T FORGET TO SEND IN ANY ADDRESS CHANGES – WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU