



With deep sadness we note the passing of Sunny Lee last week. Sunny was the one person most responsible for giving life to the Revisit Korea Program for the Families of Korean War MIA/KIA Servicemen. To date, over 220 relatives and friends have honored 124 loved ones who perished on the Korean Peninsula or at sea from 1950 to 1953. One of these relatives, Jorja Elliott-Reyburn, daughter of 1 LT James H. Elliott, MIA/Korean War 8/27/50, went on the Revisit journey in 2015, and, as for most participants, the experience changed her life. She writes:

“Little did I know the person I met on the phone in January of 2015 would become a person I would call my Little Sis or Little One and become a Big Sister to her. I admire Sunny Lee more than anybody I know. If you were to look up multi-tasking in the dictionary, you would certainly find Sunny’s picture. She had a special place in her heart for Korean War Veterans and their families. She worked tirelessly for Veterans in Utah, where Sunny and her husband resided, she worked for Veterans/families all over the U.S. to ensure they were properly honored for their service and sacrifices. She was instrumental in working with the Korean government to fund trips for Veterans and POW/MIA families to visit Korea to see, first hand, how their country had progressed since the devastating war and how much the Korean people appreciated the sacrifices of those Americans for their freedom.

“That is just part of what Sunny accomplished. She also worked directly with the MPVA (Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs) in South Korea to send Korean Army Academy Cadets (equivalent to our West Point) to America to stay with a MIA family to learn about their missing loved one and the hardships encountered growing up as a result. Sunny felt this would personalize the Korean War for the cadets, hearing first hand stories. My husband and I had the honor to host the first two cadets. It was an honor for us and a rewarding experience for the cadets. One of Sunny’s most recent projects was to bring a MPVA (female) Director to America (Utah) for a one year fellowship program. This director would work closely with the Southern Utah VA Home to learn all about our Veterans programs and to become acquainted with our Veterans. It would involve a considerable amount of Sunny’s time to travel Utah and surrounding states to visit VA Homes and hospitals with the director as well.

“This is just a part of what Sunny was all about. Another one of her passions was volunteering for Zion State Park. It was nothing for Sunny to host a dinner for 50 plein air artists traveling to Zion to capture the beauty or volunteer her own time to work at Zion. She also loved gardening and her farm animals. Sunny’s favorite phrase was “*Just do it*”, and that she did. She was loved beyond measure and will be missed more than words can describe. Until we meet again, little Sister.....”



Jorja

In my case, the Revisit Korea trip to Seoul in 2015 was an absolute life changer for my wife, Sheila, the daughter of a USAF serviceman who became MIA on Oct 23, 1951. Before meeting Sunny and the Korean people, no one had really understood what it meant to have to grow up without a father nor even thanked her for doing it. I am so appreciative that she was able to experience this before her death the following year. Sunny changed many lives with her unqualified love for everyone she met. May she rest in peace with the other angels.

Present at her death August 7, 2020, were her husband, John, daughter, Sarah, and son, Will.

A published obituary with recent photos can be found at: <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2020/08/13/sunny-lee-who-ensured/>

Sunny’s email address, sjzion@gmail.com, is being monitored by her daughter, Sarah, for those who wish to express condolences. Her postal address is PO Box 28, Springdale, UT 84767.

In Peace and Hope,

Mike

