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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Ex-POWS and MIAs Honored in Recognition Ceremony at Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Coatesville, PA . September 19th, 2008 . In honor of National POW/MIA Recognition Day, which takes place every third Friday in September, Coatesville Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) held a ceremony to acknowledge and thank former prisoners of war as well as soldiers missing in action.

Since 1979, National POW/MIA Recognition Day has come to symbolize the steadfast resolve of the American people to not forget the men and women who gave up their freedom to protect ours, said Gary W. Devansky, Director of Coatesville VAMC, "These patriotic men and women risked capture, imprisonment, and their lives to protect our homeland . many are taking these same risks today."

Among the Ex-POWs honored at the ceremony was David H. Lewis, Founder and Past Commander of the Brandywine Chapter of Ex-POWs. Lewis served in World War II and was captured in January, 1945, in Anzio, Italy by German troops. From there, he was taken through Italy and Germany to Stalag II B, a German World War II POW Camp located in present-day Poland.

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While Lewis was being held as a POW, he thought often about the beauty of the American Flag and wished he could see it. The thought reminded him of his loved ones and the cause of freedom. Not a day went by that he didn't think about it and not a day that goes by now that the flag doesn't fly in front of his home in Exton.

Lewis was liberated on April 13th, 1945, more than 15 months after he was captured. He tears up when he thinks about the sacrifices that so many made in the name of freedom. "I ask that Americans never forget," said Lewis, "We fought and continue to fight so that ourselves and our children can enjoy the precious freedom we have."

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