

Still looking Sister of missing Vietnam GI hasn't given up hope

By JUDITH BERNE

LouAnn Ebejer is trying for the spotlight. The West Bloomfield resident was on radio earlier this week and is making a pitch to appear on local television shows.

She called The Eccentric twice to "sell" her story. But Mrs. Ebejer is not after fame and fortune.

Rather, she wants to reawaken public interest in the fate of Americans still missing in action or presumed dead in Vietnam — such as her brother, Gary LaBohn.

Mrs. Ebejer was the first member of her family to be notified that LaBohn, 26, had been shot down over Laos Nov. 30, 1968, while on a helicopter mission with seven other men.

Witnesses saw the helicopter take a hit, spin a few minutes, plummet to the ground and explode, recounts Mrs. Ebejer. The combination of dense jungle terrain and heavy groundfire made it impossible to either make a rescue attempt or determine survivors.

LaBohn was listed as missing in action for 10 years, she says. He was then re-classified as presumed dead. But his death has never been verified, she says.

A NEW ADMINISTRATION and the wave of patriotism fostered by the hostage crisis gives new hope to organizations such as the MIA Families of Michigan and the POW Committee of Michigan, both responsive to the Washington-based National League of Families.

Public pressure fostered by these organizations prompted the release of 566 American prisoners of war from Vietnam in 1973, in Mrs. Ebejer's opinion. But 51 Michigan men as well as hundreds nationwide are still unaccounted for, says Mrs. Ebejer.

Yet, unidentified Americans have been sighted working on road gangs and in prison by visitors to and refugees from North and South Vietnam and Laos, she claims.

The government doesn't pursue identification of the missing men because "Vietnam is very unpopular," Mrs. Ebejer says. It would also be expensive, time consuming and "to get an accounting we (the U.S.) would have to give them (the communist government) money," she states.

A U.S. DEFENSE Department spokesman confirms 1,039 second- and first-hand reports of sightings, generally of crash and grave sites, "all of which go back several years."

But Lt. Col. Jerry Grohowski denies Mrs. Ebejer's allegations. "I can match her up with a whole group of people for whom this investigation is their full-time job," he says.

"We are operating under the assumption that there are some live Americans (there). There's nothing to corroborate that. There are some good cases in terms of remains."

The official United States government position is there is an increasing number of reports that Americans may be held against their will in Indochina. The U.S. government has thus far been unable to substantiate this information. A priority effort will continue to be assigned to investigating those reports.

"I'm optimistic," Mrs. Ebejer says, "that Americans will again pressure the government to demand a release of any Americans who remain imprisoned and verification of others who died."

ONCE AGAIN she is wearing the silver bracelet listing her brother's name and date he was reportedly shot down. The identification bracelet and pins and bumper stickers pronouncing "Tell the world about us" are available.

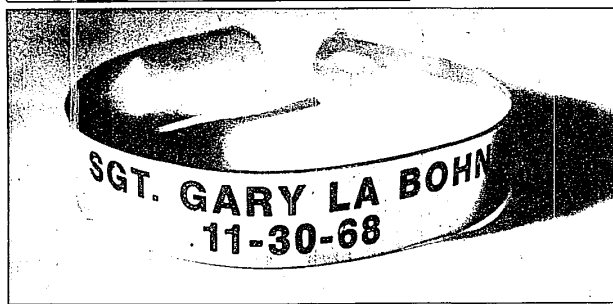
To obtain them or discover other ways to help, write MIA Families of Michigan, POW Committee of Michigan, P.O. Box 312, Union Lake, 48085.

"Something will happen," she predicts. "That's what makes this country so fantastic. People really do have a say. They don't in Russia."

A member of the prestigious Green Berets, her brother "couldn't wait to get over there," she reports. "He went over almost as a private crusade. He wanted to help the children."

"When you lose someone in a foreign country like that, you never know (whether they're dead) for sure. You grieve for years thinking maybe he's alive, maybe he's still suffering. "It's very, very hard to put those images to rest."

"I always thought the minute the hostages were taken, we (MIA-POW families) should be immediately involved. We could help them. Now they're home. We are still waiting after 15 years."



WHERE IS GARY LaBOHN?

Gary LaBohn has been missing in Laos since Nov. 30, 1968. He needs your help. We have reason to believe he may be alive.



Throughout the long years of the Vietnam war, the communist forces steadfastly refused to identify all of the Americans military or civilian that they took prisoner. Gary LaBohn one of 51 men from Michigan who has not been accounted for.

WHERE ARE THESE MEN TODAY? WHERE IS GARY LaBOHN?

ABOVE: A poster asks what ever happened to Gary LaBohn? LEFT: The government doesn't pursue identification of the missing men because "Vietnam is very unpopular," Mrs. Ebejer says. It would also be expensive, time consuming and "to get an accounting we (the U.S.) would have to give them (the communist government) money." BE-LOW: Once again Mrs. Ebejer is wearing the silver bracelet listing her brother's name and date he was reportedly shot down. (Staff photos by John Stano)

Millage election slated for Walled Lake schools

A four-mill renewal proposal for five years will be on the June 8 school election ballot in the Walled Lake School District.

The Walled Lake Board of Education voted unanimously last week to seek renewal of the millage which expired in December.

Although board members have expressed reluctance to ask voters to approve new millage, renewal of the four mills is considered a virtual necessity for the operation of the district.

Even if the renewal is approved, school officials are projecting a \$1.8 million deficit in the 1981-82 budget.

If voters reject the renewal proposal, the deficit could run as high as \$4.3 million next year.

Superintendent Don Sheldon presented the board

recently with proposals designed to cut the budget under either deficits.

The board will conduct a study session 7:30 to night at Walled Lake Junior High School to discuss Sheldon's proposals and the district's financial situation.

SHELDON'S PLAN for coping with the \$1.8 million deficit calls for cuts totalling \$1.9 million — \$100,000 more than is needed to cover the projected deficit.

Included in the plan is the proposed closing of one elementary school, elimination of 15 teaching positions, reducing roof repairs, maintenance and instructional supplies, not replacing worn out equipment and cutting back on community and special education.

In Genesee County

School chief looks for job

Walled Lake Superintendent Don Sheldon is one of seven candidates under consideration for superintendent of the Genesee County Intermediate School District.

Sheldon said he submitted his application after being asked to apply for the post.

"If it's offered to me, I very likely would accept it," he said, adding that he wants additional information about the post before reaching a decision.

Sheldon denied his interest in the Genesee County post is related to the financial difficulties currently being experienced by the Walled Lake School District.

"I don't believe there's a place in the country which is free of financial problems at this time," he said.

Two other Oakland County superintendents are among the seven finalists for the post — John Pagen of Waterford and Don Shader of the Troy district.

THE FIELD also includes Livonia public school Superintendent George Garver, a former Walled Lake superintendent; David Spithals of Alma; William Morris of Monroe Intermediate School District; and Robert Ackerman, deputy superintendent of the Genesee Intermediate District.

The seven were chosen from a field of 70 candidates. Erwin Davis plans to retire in June after 14 years as superintendent of the Genesee Intermediate District.

All finalists were interviewed by a search committee. A decision is expected by April 1. Salary is \$50,000 plus fringe benefits.

Sheldon currently makes \$52,000 plus fringe benefits in Walled Lake.

He has been Walled Lake superintendent since January 1971. Prior to that, he served 5½ years as deputy superintendent of Berkley schools.

Sheldon was among six finalists for superintendent of the Oakland Intermediate District last year. William Keane, superintendent of Berkley schools, was appointed to the post.



Trousseau
trimmings from
Gilligan & O'Malley

That special day is finally near. And for that special night, take along a romantic gown and robe trimmed with ribbon and lace as only GILLIGAN & O'MALLEY can bring together. Tempting V-neck gown with elasticized empire waist, \$25. And long sleeve robe with elasticized waist, tied at the side, \$35. A perfect match in pale peach polyester/cotton. Now in New Reflections Sleepwear, at Northland, Twelve Oaks only.

hudson's

County adds 38 miles to road system

The Board of Oakland County Road Commissioners is now responsible for 2,555.54 miles of highway following 1980's privately built 38 miles of road.

Road mileage is used as the basis for distribution of state highway gas tax and weight revenues, so more miles mean more dollars.

Some 799.22 miles of Oakland County road is defined as primary road and

are 100 percent reimbursable by the state for construction. The rest of the mileage is in local roads where only half the construction costs can come from state highway funds.

That's all academic, however, because it has been years since the road commission built any road. Developers do it now.