

April 9 is a day to honor ex-POWs

by **Patt Pearson Shrout**
for the **Tundra Times**

ALLYN, WASH. — April 9 is "American Ex-Prisoners of War Recognition Day," a day set aside so that we all may honor our ex-POWs.

Many of you may be unaware that there are Native American ex-POWs in your community. They originate from the Alaska Natives; the Yakima Nation, the Colville Federation and various other nations or tribes, through the United States.

Some of these Native Americans survived "The Bataan Death March," "The Fall of Corregidor," "The Battle of the Bulge" or one of the many other actions. Some were on the crews of U.S. submarines which were sunk or damaged and captured on the high seas, while others were on airplanes shot down over Europe or Asia.

Let's not forget our ex-POWs or Korea or Vietnam. Some were prisoners for more than seven years in Vietnam: longer than any other ser-

vice personnel in American history.

These military personnel had no other options. They were captured while fighting under adverse circumstances. The Native American and other ex-POWs were fighting to keep our homeland free.

Honor our ex-POWs by helping them receive the respect and aid they have so honorably earned.

There is an American Ex-Prisoners of War Organization, and the Veterans Administration has staff and programs

to aid the ex-POWs. There is also a Native American ex-POW in Yakima who is the service officer for both "The Disabled American Veterans and the ex-POWs."

Many Native American veterans have not applied for their benefits or their ex-POW campaign service medal.

You are also welcome to write to ex-POWs, c/o Native American Studies, The Evergreen State College, Olympia, Wash. 98505 for further information or assistance.