

VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING
OCTOBER 7, 2006 - LAS VEGAS. NEVADA

AGENDA

1. 0900 hours gathering – Meeting call to order at 0918 hours by VSPA President Steve Gattis. Presentation of the new VSPA Flag that will be carried in the 2007 Veteran's Day Parade in Washington D.C.

2. Moment of Silence for those who did not come home and for our departed VSPA comrades listed at LM #111.

3. Invocation Chaplain Jim Stastny

4. Pledge of Allegiance Secretary Bruce Hadley

5. VSPA SISTERHOOD meeting started at the same time as our meeting. Their agenda included:

5.1 **Introductions**

5.2 Presentation of information regarding support of loved as we prepare for our visit to The Wall and when making claims with the Veteran's Administration.

5.3 Presentation by Associate Member Kim Bayes of the DVD Brats Our Journey Home narrated by Kris Kristoferson.

5.4 Discussion

6. VSPA Business meeting called to order again by Steve Gattis after family members left the room. A quorum was declared of the elected officers.

7. INTRODUCTION OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTED POSITIONS - Steve Gattis All officers are elected for two years. Elections will be held this year.

7.1 Founding President John Langley, Life Member #212, (Tan Son Nhut K-9 67 - 68) and Past President Kevin Fitzgerald, Life Member #41, (Tan Son Nhut 66 - 67) were both unable to attend the reunion. They sent their best wishes for a great reunion.

ELECTED POSITIONS

7.2 President Steve Gattis, Life Member #49, Glen Rose, Texas (Cam Ranh Bay 68 - 69)

7.3 Vice President Hector Ramos, Life Member #165, Carteret, New Jersey (Binh Thuy 69-70)

7.4 Secretary Bruce Hadley, Life Member #71, Forrest Hills, New York (Bien Hoa 61 - 62)

7.5 Treasurer Den Cook, Life Member #300, Lancaster, Pennsylvania (Tan Son Nhut 67 - 68). Den cannot attend due to business commitments.

7.6 Historian Don Graham, Life Member #7, Bethlehem, Pa. (Tuy Hoa 68 - 69)
Over 1,100 members! 450 Life Members!

APPOINTED POSITIONS - All positions appointed by the President with approval of the Board.

7.7 Web Master(s) Don Poss, Life Member #37, Corona, California (Da Nang K-9 65 - 66) Don appoints the K-9 Web Master, Monty Moore, and the Bulletin Board Flight Leader, Bill Marshall, Life Member #85. Bill is unable to attend due to his wife's serious illness.

7.8 Membership Chairman Phil Carroll, Life Member #336. Gladstone, Oregon (Takhli and NKP K-9 70 -71).

7.9 Guardmount Editor Larry Ernsting, Life Member #139, Clay Center, Kansas (Phan Rang-Safeside, Pleiku, Tuy Hoa, 68 - 70).

7.10 Chaplain Steve Janke, Carlstadt, New Jersey (Cam Ranh Bay K-9 69 -70). Steve is unable to attend, he sends his prayers for a great reunion.

7.11 Chaplain Jim Stastny, Gaithersburg, Maryland (Korat K-9 70 - 71).

7.12 Chaplain Bill Cooley, Canyon Lake, Texas (Cam Ranh Bay K-9 71 - 72) Bill was unable to attend.

7.13 Photographer Tony Morris, Life Member #70, Shererville, Indiana (Cam Ranh Bay 69 - 70)

7.14 BX Sales Manager Van Digby, Life Member #59, Bay City Michigan (Phan Rang 67 - 68)

7.15 VSPA Service Officer Bud Owens, Life Member #56, North Hampton, New Hampshire (Binh Thuy 66 - 67)

7.16 K-9 Kennel Master Bill Cummings, Life Member #173, Hollywood, Maryland (U-Tapao K-9 70 - 71). Bill will be moving to Tucson, Arizona in January, 2007 after he retires.

7.17 Safeside Liaison Pete Villarreal, Life Member #14, North Pole, Alaska (six months) and Corpus Christi, Texas (six months) (Phan Rang and Bien Hoa - Safeside 68 - 69, and NKP 73 - 74)

8. Approval of the 2005 Minutes Prior to the approval of the minutes, President Steve Gattis asked if there was anyone on the room who was not a current member of the VSPA. Two people raised their hand. They were advised that they could observe the meeting and were told that they could not vote in any of the VSPA issues that came up for a vote, including reunion site selection and the election of officers.

Secretary Bruce Hadley explained that the minutes of the 2005 Business Meeting were distributed ahead of time for reading and approval. The minutes were approved without change.

8.1 Member John Homa, on behalf of Thai vets, was recognized and reported that he was available to help with the claims process.

Bud continued his report with an overview of his activities to greet troops when they return to the United States after being deployed to Southwest Asia. A motion was made and seconded to cover the cost of a plaque that would be approximately \$150 to \$200 for a U.S. Air Force seal to be placed at Pease International Trade Airport, formerly Pease AFB, Portsmouth, New Hampshire to honor the troops returning from the Gulf Region. The motion was amended to make the plaque a VSPA plaque with our logo and the VSPA Security Police Shield. Motion passed. The President then reported that Ken Neal stepped up to the podium, presented \$200 in cash and said to him, "buy it!"

K-9 Report - Bill Cummings, Kennel Master, gave an update on the Nemo's War Dog Heroes Memorial at Lackland AFB, and the Old Dawgs and Pups Program. Phil Carroll reported the support of the Leatherman Company in donating several thousand dollars in equipment for K-9, and a wholesale price on the multipurpose tool that is being resold at retail to raise funds for the program. Phil also displayed the VSPA commemorative knife that was specially etched for us by Leatherman and was available for \$50 at the reunion, with proceeds to the Old Dawgs and Pups Program.

9. REPORTS

9.1 Treasurer's Report - Secretary Bruce Hadley for Treasurer Denis Cook who was unable to attend due to work commitments. To gain time in the meeting, the report was distributed ahead of time for reading and approval. There are no changes and the report was approved.

9.2 Historian's Report - VSPA Historian Don Graham. Copy of report distributed ahead of time and approved.

9.3
9.4
9.5
9.6
9.7
9.8
9.9

Web Site - VSPA.com - Web Master Don Poss gave an update on the web site and discussed planned upgrades with an easier set of menus.

Membership Report - Phil Carroll reported that there are 901 paid members for 2006 for a net gain of 97 members for the second year in a row. To date, there are 342 life members.

Guardmount Report - Our new Editor, Larry Ernsting, was introduced to our members by Steve Gattis. Den Cook will continue printing and mailing. We are seeking historical material and will be looking into a postage

Scholarship Committee - Committee Chairman Jim Lebowitz. Committee members are Vice President Hector Ramos, Albert Habercorn, Bud Owens and David Adams. Jim reported that two applications were received from students who were attending the University of Wisconsin.

One is the child of a VSPA member, the other is the grandchild. A motion was made and seconded that we award a \$500 scholarship to each student as they were our first successful applicants.

BX Sales Report - BX Sales Manager Van Digby. To gain time in the meeting, the report was distributed ahead of time for reading and approval. There were no changes to the report and it was approved. Van reported that there were several new items in the BX and that he could order medals if a member made a specific request.

VSPA Service Officer - Bud Owens reported that veterans who served in Thailand and were exposed to Agent Orange should submit an application to the VA for disability due to recent legal decisions that indicate possible approval in the future. Bud also reported that PTSD requires evaluation and testing and is difficult to get compensation on the first try. He added that this should be pursued based on medical documentation. Locations where Agent Orange was used included areas in the United States, Korea and Europe, in addition to Vietnam and Thailand.

9.10 Safeside Report - Pete Villarreal, Safeside Liaison, reported that a collection of several hundred pairs of tennis shoes were donated to children in Iraq through Operation Shoe Drop. Pete lives in North Pole, Alaska and reported that the "Letters from Santa" was available for Christmas.

10. OLD BUSINESS

10.1 VSPA Flag - Steve Gattis and Van Digby displayed the new VSPA flag. The flag is available in the BX in the following sizes: 3'x5', 12" x 18" and 4"x6".

10.2 VSPA History Book Update - Steve Gattis reported that Don Graham and some of his Veteran friends had gone to The Wall and obtained rubbings of the names of Air Policemen, Security Policemen and Augmentees who had died in service to our country. Other graphics for patches and crests were also being worked on to obtain the best possible resolution for publishing. Some members had submitted photos and materials that had been poorly scanned, or were in very bad condition as photocopies and could not be used. The history of our bases was also being researched to go along with our squadron histories.

10.3 Pins - Steve Gattis reported that we now had a silver VSPA pin with a wreath around the QC crossed pistols logo and an inscription of our motto "We take care of our own" as a tribute to our members who recruit someone into the VSPA. If you were recruited by someone, buying a pin for them would be a perfect way to honor them and say thank you. The VSPA Sisterhood has a new pin with their motto, "Taking care of those who take care of their own". The pin is white rather than black and has a red rose over a black star in place of the crossed pistols in our QC logo. We now have a gold Meritorious Service Pin that has a wreath around our crossed pistol QC logo and a banner above the wreath that says, "Meritorious Service". The pins will be given to those who have received Meritorious Service Awards and be controlled by a roster of those who have received the awards.

10.4 Challenge Coins - Steve Gattis reported that we now had specific challenge coins to honor our troops for outstanding service as Defenders of the Force. The coins are silver with a gold wreath around a Security Police Shield and have 21 stars as a tribute to those we lost in Vietnam and Thailand. Prior to those coins being produced, Steve had sent Captain Christopher Johnson (our 2004 host at Davis-Monthan) 12 VSPA challenge coins for troops in his unit. The Defender Coin was designed as a separate VSPA coin that would reward outstanding service.

Lastly, Steve reported that Life Member Ken Neal had donated the rights to his "Return to The Wall" challenge coin to the VSPA BX.

10.5 Commemorative Shield - Steve Gattis and Johnny Zolondz reported on the sale of the VSPA Commemorative Shield designed by Retired Security Forces Master Sergeant Tim Waage and his donation of 200 miniature commemorative shield lapel pins that would be available in the BX - one per member due to the limited quantity. Additional pins will be ordered.

10.6 Incorporation Update - Steve Gattis reported that we were incorporated as a 501(c)(19) Tax Exempt Veteran's Organization not required to pay Federal Taxes if we maintained our War Veteran membership level appropriately. Tax deductions by members are authorized providing that the funds benefit our members and programs. Dues are not deductible unless they are a gift to the association to buy a membership for someone other than the donor.

10.7 Donations for the Bayes Children - Steve Gattis and Hector Ramos reported that VSPA members had donated \$2,500 for Lydia and Ellie Bayes, the children of Kim Bayes. Ten \$500 US Savings Bonds with a value of \$5,000 were purchased - with five bonds going to each child for college as a memorial to their father who passed away in 2005 just prior to the reunion.

11.9 Reunion Site Selection for 2007 - Steve Gattis reported that Washington D.C. had been selected at our 2004 Reunion Business Meeting due to the Veteran's Day Parade and the 25th Anniversary of The Wall.

11.10 Selection of Reunion Site for 2008 - Steve Gattis reported that we have had reunions in the following cities and regions. Site selection must include an area where there is an active duty Air Force Base with a Security Forces squadron so that we can link with the troops.

Reunion sites - Places we have been REGION

10.1 Atlanta, Georgia 1995 East

10.2 San Antonio, Texas 1996 Central

10.3 Pensacola, Florida 1997 East

10.4 Washington D.C. 1998 East

10.5 Las Vegas, Nevada 1999 West

10.6 San Antonio, Texas 2000 Central

10.7 Hampton, Virginia 2001 East

10.8 Dayton, Ohio 2002 Central

10.9 San Antonio, Texas 2003 Central

10.10 Tucson, Arizona 2004 10th Anniversary West

10.11 Valdosta, Georgia 2005 East

10.12 Las Vegas, Nevada 2006 West

10.13 Washington DC 2007 East

13.1 Special Date Change to include November 11, Veteran's Day, for the 25th Anniversary of The Wall and the Veteran's Day Parade. The dates will be November 8 - 12.

10.14 Site to be selected for 2008 - Nominations/Suggestions/Presentations - Numerous sites were proposed and voted on until the top two choices were determined. The date will be October 15 - 18, 2008.

The final two were

14.2 Kirtland AFB - Albuquerque, New Mexico - Home of the 377th.

14.3 Barksdale AFB, Bossier City, Louisiana

NEW BUSINESS

10.8 Programs

8.1 Chaplain Program Expansion - Steve Gattis reported that due to the number of members in the association and the commitments of Chaplain Steve Janke in his home community that have precluded him from attending some of our reunions, that we would expand our Chaplain Program by adding two of our members who are ordained ministers. Jim Over 1,100 members! 450 Life Members!

Stastny and Bill Wheeler have agreed to extend their ministry to our members throughout the year. Chaplain Jim was present in the meeting.

8.2 Photographer Program Expansion - Steve Gattis reported that VSPA Photographer Tony Morris will be assisted by Steve Hall and Ken Neal who have agreed to use their extensive photographic skills to preserve the history of our reunions. Our reunions have become so large that it is impossible for one man to take enough photos to preserve our great memories. All are present at the reunion and have taken already taken several hundred photographs. Steve Hall is a professional photographer.

8.3 The Bulletin Boards and the Rules of Use - Steve Gattis and Don Poss explained that our use of the public bulletin board was controlled by VOY, the company that owns the bulletin board server. The bulletin board is a family rated public bulletin board and does not allow profanity or personal attacks. Users were reminded that the children and family members of our deceased often use the bulletin board to find someone who knew their father. The bulletin board is also there for former air policemen, security policemen and Augmentees who have just learned about the VSPA and want to connect with friends or find a lost buddy.

The rules of use are available online and must be followed. Violations of the rules will cause the violator to be blocked. This rule protects everyone, especially from the anti-war fanatics who still call us names and try to send hate mail or hack the bulletin board.

The VOY owned VSPA Free Fire Zone is in the Restricted Area and protected by a password. The intent of the Free Fire Zone is to allow more personal discussion of a nature that should not be open to the public due to the graphic nature of our war experiences. The same rules apply regarding profanity and personal attacks.

Violators will be blocked or have their messages removed from the bulletin board. There is also a VSPA Sisterhood bulletin board in the Restricted Area that is protected by password unique to the Sisterhood. Members will also find links to our Agent Orange Bulletin Board and the K-9 Bulletin Board on our web site.

10.9 Web Site Additions and Upgrades - Steve Gattis and Don Poss reported that there would be a Poet's Corner for members who have written poems that have healed wounds that cannot be seen. This will not be the same as the stories that have been posted on the web site. There will also be a Wall of Honor for members who have received awards for Meritorious Service to the VSPA. A specific page that will have a list by year and name, of VSPA members who have been honored for Meritorious Service to the association. The list will include a brief citation regarding the award. The list will also include the people that we have been honored with Associate Memberships over the years, including the citation for their Meritorious Service to the VSPA. There are currently nine Associate Members.

9.1 Links to Member Owned Services on the web page in the Restricted Area for Services or Items for Sale that the VSPA does not warrant, but provides links to as a service for our members. Policy change required with a vote due to our long-term mandate for noncommercial activity. A motion was made and seconded to move this item to a committee for further review due to the complexities and liabilities of managing the problems that the links would generate for our web master, Don Poss.

10.10 Membership

10.1 New Membership Cards - Phil Carroll presented information on the possibility of issuing new plastic membership cards. There was extended discussion regarding the cost or need for membership cards. A motion was made to eliminate membership cards and seconded. After some additional discussion, the motion was amended and approved to keep the newly designed cards currently being issued by Phil Carroll.

10.2 Member Updates on Web Site - Don Poss reported that the new web site and the online database would improve member ability to connect with each other and allow officers to have immediate updates regarding changes to address, telephone and emails for our members.

10.3 The Membership Application Process - Phil Carroll reported that we use a three-part membership process and that the new on-line database system planned by Don Poss would allow on-line tracking of the process that requires:

3.1 Application

3.2 DD Form 214

3.3 Payment of Dues

4.2 Payment of Dues will continue during the reunion registration process through the Reunion Brat. Dues can be paid online via PayPal. Dues reminders will also be sent to all members.

10.11 Plans for the 2007 Reunion were presented by Steve Gattis and Hector Ramos

11.1 Contract update - Steve Gattis reported that the contract with the Sheraton Hotel was in place.

11.2 Operations Plan for the Parade - Steve Gattis had a copy of the plan distributed ahead of the meeting to allow familiarization. The plan is detailed and has several action items for our Parade Planning Committee chaired by Hector Ramos.

11.3 The Status of Issues in Washington D.C was explained by Hector Ramos

11.4 Color Guard Presentation - Frank Ybarbo presented the proposed color guard uniforms. The members approved the uniforms modeled by the committee members.

11.5 Parade Formation - Tony Gonzales presented information on the proposed parade formation that consisted of the VSPA followed by Safeside with our perimeter protected by our K-9 Handlers. The members approved the formation, including the presence of wives or family members walking within the formation to support our members, especially those with medical or PTSD related issues.

11.6 Parade Dress Tony Morris presented information regarding the proposed clothing to be worn by members participating in the parade. Several versions were modeled by members of the committee. Members selected black shoes that would be selected by the wearer to ensure comfort and proper fit, black pants, black baseball hat with pins, and a BDU woodland camouflage shirt with the SP badge on the left breast pocket, the VSPA logo patch on the right breast pocket, the QC patch on the left shoulder and the 7th Air Force patch on the right shoulder. Members who did not wear the QC patch because of their assignment may substitute a squadron patch. The uniform was recommended only and not mandatory. The patches will be available in the BX.

12.4 Election of Officers - Two Year Term of Office - Conducted by Bud Owens due to Secretary Bruce Hadley running for office again.

Nominations were opened for President. Hector Ramos declined to move up to Vice President due to his personal and professional commitments. There were no other candidates for the office of President. A motion was made and seconded to amend the bylaws of the association, one-time only, to allow Steve Gattis to continue in office for two more years beyond the two-term limit. The motion was made due to no candidates and to maintain continuity for the 2007 reunion and parade planning for 2007 Veterans Day and the 25th Anniversary of the Wall, by allowing the current President, Steve Gattis, to run for another two year term as President, provided he will accept the nomination. Motion passed. Steve Gattis accepted the nomination.

The following members were reelected to office for a two year term. The next elections will be held in Albuquerque in 2008.

President Steve Gattis
Vice President Hector Ramos
Secretary Bruce Hadley
Treasurer Den Cook
Historian Don Graham

12.5 Appointed Positions - The following positions are appointed by the President of the Association to assist the elected officers with the management of the various functions of the VSPA.

5.1 Web Master - Don Poss, assisted by the Assistant Web Master for K-9 (Monty Moore), the Bulletin Board Flight Leader (Bill Marshall), and the Quick Reaction Team (Gary Jones) to assist members with computer problems

5.2 Membership Chairman - Phil Carroll, Assistant Janet Wise, Daughter of Life Member Al Matthews.

5.3 BX Sales Manager – Van Digby, Assistants Joyce and Kari Digby

5.4 Chaplains Steve Janke (New Jersey), Jim Stastny (Maryland), Bill Cooley (Texas)

5.5 Photographer(s) – Tony Morris, Steve Hall and Ken Neal

5.6 Guardmount Editor - Larry Ernsting

5.7 VSPA Service Officer - Bud Owens

5.8 VSPA Kennel Master - Bill Cummings

5.9 Safeside Liaison - Pete Villarreal

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

13.1 SAFESIDE Meeting following the VSPA meeting.

14. A MOMENT OF SILENCE WAS OBSERVED FOR ALL THOSE WHO DID NOT COME HOME, AND FOR OUR DEPARTED VSPA COMRADES LISTED AT LIFE MEMBER#111.

CLOSING PRAYER BY CHAPLAIN JIM STASTNY

15. Motion to adjourn, seconded and passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1315 hours by Steve Gattis.