



# GUARDMOUNT

VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION  
*"We Take Care of Our Own"*



Summer 2009

Volume 14, Issue No 3



*Gently down the stream*

Photo by: John Achecpohl

Composé by: Don Poss

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## Gently Down the Stream

by: Don Poss

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John Achecpohl submitted a photo of Phan Rang, common to Vietnam and Thailand, depicting a sight we all may remember: a stream meandering through a meadow, or paddies, with distant mountains...beautiful in daylight, threatening at night, and always burdened with untold mysteries of survival and sudden death. John's above photo is a composite rendered in to a threatening-night scene so common back then. It was easy for me to visualize drifting sampans ... and to feel the adrenalin rush as to whether those riding the gentle current were friends or foe....

## Gently Down the Stream...

By: Don Poss

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Papasan steered the small lead-sampan through the darkness over even darker waters, followed by family in two other small boats. The night was quiet and his mind drifted, fretting over family, as the war could be heard in the distance like the eternal hum of a fertile night.

He had hoped the family gathering would have gone better...a gathering, such as it was, considering what the war had left of his family. Three sons already lost to the war...and two surviving sons fighting on opposite sides. Still... at least we were all together tonight, however briefly, after a frightful night of paddling upstream.

There was no love lost between the brothers, and only duty toward their elder grandfather had compelled them to his side a final time. It pleased the father that both sons actually wanted to be there, and did so against their superior's wishes.

Grandfather had held both their hands as they knelt on either side of his deathbed. And at that moment, his joy soared and he was happy once more...even as his spirit left him. The priest was not happy, having advised against bringing the two brothers together and disrupting the tranquility of the dying process...he had prophesied the fate of the spirit could be harmed during departure from the body. None of that concerned the old man...only his village, family, son and grandsons mattered.

When grandfather's spirit finally whirled into the night...he could only hope the priest was wrong in his divining of the spirit's fate. Yet, for the briefest moment, it seemed the brothers had forgotten their differences, caring and remembering their childhood and a happy playful grandfather. Then the magic of that moment smoked away, leaving him as the families' elder.

A cloudy moonless night had given hope to a successful trip to and from the neutral meeting-village, and the few miles of paddling and drifting that required. Earlier that morning, he had reluctantly boated his father, priest, and some family to that village, and returned for wife and daughters and a risky night journey. He feared he would lose his two sons as he had their older brothers. He knew there was real danger in even bringing them together, with their nearby hothead young warrior friends ready to pounce. He had arranged to send both sides ample quantities of food, hoping to distract them from war-like thoughts.

Again his mind replayed the earlier evening, when the black clad younger son had fled the hut without parting words. His chilled heart feared they would never meet as a family again, and it struck him that could even be possible should both survive the war. Fear played a daily role in his song of life.

The oldest boy had joined the army and hated his brother with an equaled deadly passion. But at least this night, neither had exchanged harsh words as during their last meeting more than a year ago. Father forced himself to set aside the family pain the night had brought in fulfilling his own father's last wishes. Now it remained for him to skirt the gauntlet between warring-sides a second time this night, where danger lurked for his family in every direction. His thoughts drifted with the current. At any moment, he knew, the younger boy's Viet Cong friends could ambush and slay them all in seconds... or his brother's army comrades could shoot at them with giant rifles requiring several men just to fire it. Or the foreigners could breathe fire from the sky like a dragon...and they were mightier than a dragon. What did such mighty people want with his poor world? They didn't even need the moon...they had

chased away the darkness with fireballs, like Chinese fireworks, and were even now lighting the night sky with many suns, searching for whatever they searched for. Curfew, they had called it...his mind gave name to his transgression. The North had their rules. Saigon had their rules. The foreigners had their rules. No one ever asked him what rules he wanted.

What do I want...really want? he mused. His thoughts rambled a lifetime...peace from their rules, for his village...to be left alone...his village did not need the rules of foreigner's from Saigon, Hanoi, or the Chinese, Japanese, French, or Americans. In fact, his village needed nothing beyond the life-giving mountains on the horizon. Mostly, he yearned for the Quiet-Times of his father's youth... which few could now remember...and wondered if such times ever really existed.

For now he only wanted to lead his scared and hungry family safely home, and worried if their boats' flare-light reflections in the mirror like stream could be seen by the iron-bugs of the sky. He glanced back to the trailing sampans. The last boat was like a wisp of smoke as one of his daughters poled it forward. He could not quite make out which daughters steered or poled, but knew his wife would silence their prattling ...mostly about the bright lights of the city and the hovel of the village.

He glanced once more to the dark sky where danger often hovered. He feared those hovering-whirring monsters of the night more than anything, and knew they could easily slay his family, like a fire-tongue from a flying frog.

They drifted onward... gently down the stream ... as he thought of his father in happier times, and prayed his spirit would once more find the peace of the Quiet-Times.

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

**by VSPA President Newell Swartz**

As you may remember, in the Spring issue of Guardmount, I reported that issues involving the VSPA Articles of Incorporation and franchise taxes with the State of Texas have all been favorably resolved. One last issue is the filing of federal taxes for the years 2005 thru 2008. We have hired an accounting firm to assist us in documenting and presenting our financial status in a manner which is in accordance with acceptable business practices. We have also hired, on the advice of the accountants, a tax attorney to file for a Letter of Determination from the federal IRS. The distinction in having this letter of determination is to formalize our position with the IRS as a 501(c)(19) tax exempt organization as opposed to just filing the tax returns as a veteran's organization which has been incorporated and claims 501(c)(19)tax exempt status. Total cost for the accountants and attorney was quoted by them as being \$1,600. A request for an extension of time was requested to allow time for the processing of the paperwork. Was all of the mandatory, No. But as we continue to grow we want to set an example as a first class organization, not just in the quality of our membership but as an organization run by members but backed by professional advice worthy to serve that membership.

On a reflective note, as some of our members begin to succumb to the ravages of Agent Orange, time and other life taking reasons, let us remember them for the camaraderie and friendship they provided us. Our brothers have shown remarkable courage in the love, consideration and respect they give their family and the rest of us as they obviously try to spare our feelings at the end. Hopefully, with the Grace of God, we will show the same heart when our time comes. But for as long as there is a VSPA, let us all continue to remember their friendship and keep their memory alive.

Reunion plans are proceeding well and I hope to see many of you in Phoenix in October.  
Strength in Troubled Times

# Strength in Troubled Times

## VSPA Chaplain, Jim Stastny

Everyone has his share of troubles. Some may be facing unemployment in these difficult times, others economic losses of one sort or another. Then we must face health issues, both physical as well as mental. There are not only the ravages of normal life, but the effects of Agent Orange and PTSD. Then we all face the aches and pains of age, the death of loved ones, and of course the certainty of having to confront our own mortality. So where can one find the fortitude to face all of this with confidence and boldness?

One of my favorite Christian pieces of literature is the Heidelberg Catechism. It begins with the reader asking this simple question: "What is your only comfort in life and it death?" Before I disclose the answer I need to note a couple of things in the question. First, the idea of comfort, today we associate comfort with softness, ease, relaxation, etc. That's decidedly NOT the concept behind the word when men first wrote this catechism. Great upheaval and difficulty marked the time (1563) when this document was written. Thus the men who wrote it wanted to instill their readers with courage and fortitude to face the uncertainties of life. They wanted to impart true comfort. We see this when we understand the source or our English word comfort. It comes from the Latin, *comforte*. The prefix *com* mean with, the stem *forte* means brave, courageous, and steadfast. So you see the question really asks, what is the only thing that makes you morally brave, courageous, and steadfast in life and in death? The second thing needed to see is the word only. The catechism makes it clear that there's only one thing that will provide ultimate courage to tackle all the upheavals of life and to confront man's greatest enemy, death.

So once the reader asks this vital question the authors provide a fantastic answer, they say:

That I am not my own,  
but belong--  
body and soul,  
in life and in death--  
to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ.

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,  
and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.  
He also watches over me in such a way  
that not a hair can fall from my head  
without the will of my Father in heaven:  
in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.

Because I belong to him,  
Christ, by his Holy Spirit,  
assures me of eternal life  
and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready  
from now on to live for him.

Notice the completeness of the answer. It covers every aspect of existence and experience. Others may be strong and show courage, but all other sources of courage pall in comparison. So we must note that only those who belong to Jesus Christ can possess this unsurpassed strength. To possess this courage one needs to come to Jesus Christ believing in Him for the forgiveness of sins.

## VSPA MEMBER GARY STEELE HONORS NEW YORK SCHOOL TEACHER

Back in February, this year, VSPA Life Member Gary Steele asked if he could get some VSPA assistance in honoring a man who is dedicated to educating our current generation about the war in Vietnam. Gary said Erin Caretti teaches US History and coaches football at the Trinity-Pawling School, Pawling, NY. Every year for the past ten years, Mr Caretti has invited Gary and other veterans into his classroom to talk to the students about what their jobs were and how they did them in Vietnam. Gary said that as long as Mr Caretti teaches, our traditions will be passed on down to the younger generations. Sadly enough, Mr Caretti's own father, Michael A. Caretti, US Navy who served in the "Brown Water Navy" from the Mekong to DaNang, Vietnam, 1965-66, passed away from Agent Orange complications last week (Feb 09). He was laid to rest with full military honors.

The VSPA provided Gary with a Certificate of Appreciation, A VSPA Challenge Coin, and a VSPA hat pin to present to Mr Caretti. The below reply was an update from Gary and I am sending it to be published in Guardmount with Gary's permission.

"Newell, first of all, a big "Thank You" to you and the VSPA. I asked for a letter and I got the entire honor of our organization with it, wow!" "Erin and his family stopped by for that long awaited visit for him knowing that I was going to present the Silver Rose to him for his dad. As I started the ceremony, tears of sadness came from all of us because we now knew this was a very emotional event that most had never been part of. I must say that I did our organization proud and with a trembling voice at times we accomplished this wonderful mission."

"Erin was so taken as was his family not only by the fact of the Silver Rose but when I proceeded to open the case that held all the documents he broke into tears when presented the VSPA Appreciation Letters which I had framed and the pin along with the Challenge Coin. One letter will always be on his classroom wall and the VSPA pin will be placed on the Blue Beret from D.C. and the coin goes in his den on his desk at home. This old guy is one happy camper and one proud Sky Cop to know you and be part of this great group of brothers. I am forever thankful to all."

"Sincerely Gary Steele, LM323, BT, 68-69 Asian Vacation Tour"

For the new members who have recently joined the VSPA, a memorable experience occurred during our reunion in 2007 in Washington, D.C. The VSPA marched to the Vietnam War Memorial to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of "The Wall". We also visited the Arlington National Cemetery and as we were leaving a large group of school kids started applauding us and thanking us for our service. There were at least 100 middle school students and it was a spontaneous happening. I know there is not a man among us who was there that does not treasure that moment to this day. It certainly renewed my faith in the younger generation. Steve Gattis, out Past President did a little investigative work and found out that the group was from a New York State middle school. I know now there are many more Mr Carettis out there who do care. So our thanks to you Mr Caretti and to all the other teachers like you who insist on teaching first hand the truth of our history, which in turn instills respect and patriotism in our future leaders.

# Mission Statement:

“The Mission of Packages From Home is to send packages to deployed American military heroes in active duty theaters around the world as well as activities that elevate morale of all veterans”.

We have talked with them and they would love to have us (the VSPA) pack some boxes in their facility. It would consist of going to the shelves that they have with goodies and placing them in the boxes for mailing.....sometimes it may be food stuff and than it may be the day for personal items.

The time would be on the afternoon of October 8th after the Museum tour. If you are interested please note that on your registration. Also if you drive and do not use your shampoo etc that is provided in the hotel I will have a box to collect it.....they can use that too.....

Once again ....thank you for all your support for them from last year’s reunion.

When I took the check (\$1,000) down to them the cupboards were almost bare and your generosity really helped fill those shelves. In this trying time for all of us we can’t forget the sacrifices that these men and women are making.

Thanks....Missy Hamilton, member VSPA Sisterhood

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## POW/MIA Flag

A patriotic Harley Davidson dealer in Gladstone, Ore., recently unveiled the second largest POW/MIA flag in the country; it’s 30 feet by 50 feet. Latus Motors usually flies a equally large American flag, but flew this one from their mammoth flagpole right next to Interstate 205 (“Veterans Memorial Highway”) from noon Sept. 16th to noon the 17th. By law the POW/MIA flag can only replace the American flag for six days each year, plus one day at a given flag’s first showing, in places where both can’t be displayed together. The authorized days are Armed Forces Day, Memorial Day, Flag Day, Independence Day, National POW/MIA Recognition Day and Veterans Day.

The company hosted an impressive event, largely attended by Harley riders, including a good showing from local Patriot Guard chapters. A few Native American Indian tribes and veterans organizations participated in the flag raising ceremony, including a handful of ex-POWs from WW-II. Those guys had some fascinating stories to tell, and really added some historical depth to the ceremonies, which was dominated by Vietnam vets.

This powerful symbol got its start in 1971, when an MIA wife and member of the National League of Families recognized the need for a symbol. She contacted a design firm, Annin & Company, and an employee designed a flag to represent our missing men. He had sketched out the design in pencil, and intended to later add color, but production began before he was able to return to the project so the stark black and white image stood.

On August 10, 1990, Congress designated the flag “as the symbol of our Nation’s concern and commitment to resolving as fully as possible the fates of Americans still prisoner, missing and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, thus ending the uncertainty for their families and the Nation”.

Other than “Old Glory”, the POW/MIA flag is the only flag ever to fly over the White House, having been displayed in this place of honor on National POW/MIA Recognition Day since 1982.

# Airmen handle stress of base security

Don Poss,

By Erik Holmes - Staff writer  
Saturday Aug 1, 2009

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — The perimeter at Bagram Airfield is 111/2 miles of meandering fence line and dirt-filled Hesco barriers topped by razor wire.

Villages, agricultural fields, even derelict Soviet minefields are often no more than a stone's throw away.

Yet despite being so close to potential danger, Master Sgt. Scott Vesperman surveyed the scene outside a guard tower with confidence. He eyed a family of farmers working their fields in the distance but didn't seem concerned.

"This bad boy's secure," Vesperman said, clutching his M4 carbine. "This is what we do. ... We guard air bases."

Vesperman, a flight sergeant, and the several hundred other airmen with the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron took over base defense duties from the Army in April.

The unit now runs the base's five entry-control points, mans 40 or so guard towers on the perimeter, secures the flight line and provides a quick-reaction force to respond to security incidents on base. The Army does traditional on-base policing and secures the area outside the perimeter.

The airmen have beefed up security measures since taking over, adding more concrete barriers, more electronic measures, more checkpoints and more personnel. They also randomly change at which points they conduct searches and the ways they route traffic to throw off a would-be attacker.

"They're watching us. We know that," said Capt. Wade Wilmoth, the officer in charge of Entry Control Point 1 for pedestrians. "It's a cat-and-mouse game, and we like to think we're the cat and they're the mouse."

Squadron leaders believe their airmen's expertise also has improved the base's security; many of the soldiers came from nonsecurity career fields.

"The level of quality is probably a lot higher," said Capt. Amber Goodwin, who is in charge of perimeter security. "These airmen are trained to do this."

So far, the airmen have screened 500,000 pedestrians — almost all local Afghans who work on base — and tens of thousands of trucks and other vehicles entering the base, all without major incident.

Still, the airmen are in harm's way. A suicide bomber detonated a car bomb outside one of the gates in March — there were no coalition troops wounded — and mortar and rocket attacks have increased since the beginning of the year.

"We do have multiple threats of insurgents targeting [Bagram], and that is one of the things that is briefed every day to the defenders so they know what they should be looking for," squadron commander Lt. Col. Lee Curoe said.

The mortar and rocket attacks, also known as indirect fire, are the most acute threat. They've increased from almost none to as many as two a week, Curoe said. A rocket attack killed two soldiers in June, and a security forces airman received minor shrapnel wounds to his face when a rocket landed near the guard tower he was manning.

“The number of [attacks] has grown this calendar year,” Curoe said. “Compared to past history, it is on the rise, and that has been one of the things our airmen out there have had to respond to.”

Two pressure points

The two main gates — Entry Control Point 1 for pedestrians and Entry Control Point 3 for vehicles — are where the chaos of the world outside the wire collides with the rigor of U.S. military security.

ECP 3 is the least busy, but perhaps more dangerous.

Any one of the 300 to 500 vehicles a day that comes through ECP 3 could be carrying a bomb. Down a 600-yard corridor they all go, stopping several times to get checked.

Concrete barriers control traffic flow, and heavily armed airmen in guard towers and mine resistant ambush protected vehicle with a turret gun stand watch in case a vehicle tries to storm the gate.

Every vehicle — mainly trucks bringing goods — gets manually searched, electronically scanned and screened by drug- and bomb-sniffing dogs. Among the contraband found are grenades and other explosives, and drugs such as hashish and heroin.

Dozens of security forces airmen monitor the unrelenting flow of vehicles.

“It’s very stressful for these men and women,” said Capt. Ron Johnson, who runs ECP 3. “They’ve got to be on, and they are.”

The pedestrians coming onto base outnumber the vehicles 10 to 1.

Anywhere from 3,000 to 5,000 Afghans make the trek every day single-file through a 1,000-meter corridor to get to their jobs — from manning the laundry services to selling trinkets at the bazaars on base. Most arrive from 5 a.m. to 9 a.m. and leave in the afternoon.

The first check is at the edge of Bagram village at the so-called “Russian Gate,” where taxis wait to shuttle workers back and forth, and local vendors sell everything from produce to cell phones.

Then there are six more search posts. Afghan security guards run the outer ones, and airmen and Afghan guards jointly run the inner checkpoints.

Of the 40 or so towers, 20 to 30 are manned. Each has an airman and an Afghan guard, who not only helps his American counterpart keep watch but communicates with the locals who venture too close to the fence line.

“Every airman is a sensor,” said Vesperman, the flight sergeant.

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# FINANCIAL PLANNING MATTERS

David W. Hayes, CFP® VSPA Life Member #462

The Duties of an Executor/Personal Representative

This is the first of a series of articles written for Guardmount to help VSPA members think through financial decisions. My approach will be to give a working snapshot of each subject and enough information to decide whether you need to take any action. If you need to contact me, my e-mail address will appear at the bottom of each article.

One benchmark of any financial plan is your personal will. Everybody needs one. What happens to you and to your property after you die is set by the laws in the state where you live. You have the right to override these laws in most cases by writing a will of your own. In America, citizens own property outright and can say who controls it next. If you don’t have a will or it hasn’t been reviewed recently,

contact an attorney licensed to practice in your state and take care of this ASAP. If you'd like to have some information to read before you meet with your attorney, e-mail me and request it.

This article deals with the duties of one of the people you'll name in your will. This person may be known by any of several names. In the past, the most common was executor but now the gender-neutral personal representative is preferred in many states. You'll need to name one in your will, and the older we are the more likely it is that we will be called on to serve when a friend or family member dies. Let's look at the duties the personal representative may be called upon to perform. Consider this carefully when deciding whom to ask and whether you want to serve in this capacity. The following is a snapshot listing. If you would like to have the complete article, e-mail me and request it.

1. Find the latest will, read it thoroughly, and hire an attorney to represent the deceased. The attorney will file a petition with the court to probate the will. Many assets will transfer outside of the probate process as will benefits from life insurance, etc. (You may hear that a will need not be probated in certain cases. There are good reasons to probate it regardless, as I mention below.)

2. Assemble all of the deceased's personal assets and make a written inventory. Create a list of unpaid bills and review them to determine if they are indeed owed. Pay particular attention to any medical bills since they are subject to review by one or more insurance providers. Contest any bills that are not due. You want to clear these off so that the probate process can end and the deceased's heirs can know for sure they can use the remaining assets any way they wish.

3. Oversee the transfer of titles on real estate and securities. Even assets that are jointly owned may require a formal change of title. From my experience, homes that are jointly owned are often not retitled solely in the name of the surviving spouse. This can create a delay when he or she wishes to sell it or leaves it in their will to others.

4. Locate and safeguard all business interests and oversee their transfer to a new owner. This may be a business jointly owned with a spouse or other person, and the transfer may be contractual. It is your responsibility to make sure that any written agreements are followed. Verbal agreements may not be enforceable.

5. File all federal, state, and other tax forms which may be due and remit any taxes payable. In computing taxes, pay particular attention to the preferential treatment available for owners of farmland and small businesses. I strongly recommend you employ a CPA to advise you and prepare the tax forms. You do not want the liability that would come from making an error. Once the estate is settled and the property is disbursed, it will be difficult to collect money from the heirs to pay additional bills. Probate can put an end date on other debts but not on taxes. One more word on this: one of the most common misconceptions is how assets are valued and totaled to determine whether estate taxes are owed. I will write an article on this for a coming issue of Guardmount. It may surprise you how many of us might owe estate taxes, particularly at the state level.

6. Secure approval from the court to distribute the estate when probate is finished and you are satisfied. Do not distribute assets until allowed to do so. This can be done during the probate process with court approval.

The above article is provided to assist you in thinking through this very important area of financial planning. You should seek counsel concerning all legal, accounting, and other matters. IRS circular 230 requires me to advise you that "to the extent that this message or any attachment concerns tax matters, it is not intended to be used and cannot be used by a taxpayer for the purpose of avoiding penalties that may be imposed by law." David Hayes is a Certified Financial Planner™ and offers advice on a fee basis. This article and any subsequent conversation are not intended to be a solicitation for business. Information provided is furnished by the writer and is not the Vietnam Security Police Association or its related entities. Contact the writer at: davidwhayes@comcast.net.

## 8th ANNUAL AP/SP/SF REUNION SUCCEEDS IN TRUE REUNION BUDDIES



L-R: SHARON & BOB JOHNS/MARCIA & JOE PIZZIMENTI

Bob Johns and “Big Joe” Pizzimenti both served in Vietnam and each man, when they left the military put it behind them. Like a lot of veterans they tried to keep in touch but in a world before the internet that wasn’t so easy. In fact, they never did connect.

They first met in July, 1965 at Williams AFB near Chandler, Arizona. They, along with 21 other men had been plucked for training from their respective Air Force units to form a Security Police unit. When the training ended that September the unit loaded up and headed for a destination unknown.

The unknown shortly became an air base in Vietnam near Ben Hoa and the unit, the Security Police Detachment became part of the 4503rd Tactical Attack Fighter Squadron known as the Skoshi Tigers. Bob left the unit in April, 1966 and Joe followed that June.

After discharge each man sought employment in law enforcement.

“I was always proud to be a Vietnam vet,” says Pizzimenti. “But I put Nam out of my life. The only thing I ever joined was the Vietnam Security Police Association. I had contacted Ted Whitlock, also a life member of the VSPA as well as the Vietnam and all Veterans of Brevard (Brevard County, Florida). The VVB was hosting their 22d annual Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion, in April 09. Ted and the local VSPA and Air Force Security Police Association (Space Coast Chapter) members host an annual AP/SP/SF Rendezvous in conjunction with this VVB reunion. Ted invited me down to enjoy the reunion and rendezvous. I accepted and went down to their reunion.”

For a long time Bob Johns too, “wanted nothing to do with the military.” But six years ago he decided to see what the annual VVB reunion was all about. He knew the Wall was there and like a lot of his generation was reluctant to stand before it.

Johns had also met Ted Whitlock previous years and enjoyed the company of the old days shared by both men whose common draw was a stint in the Security Police. This year Whitlock’s colleagues were gathered in the campgrounds north of the Vietnam Memorial Grounds in Wickham Park, Melbourne, Fl. A sign at the entrance to Wickham Park directed all Air Force AP/SP/SF veterans to the campgrounds. Pizzimenti had arrived on Tuesday, the day after Reunion Opening Ceremonies from Ormond Beach, Fl.

Unknown to Johns, Whitlock was working the reunion, when Johns and his wife, Sharon arrived on Thursday. They were looking for Whitlock at their camp site when they were greeted by Big Joe. "Hi, guy," he said to the couple that had just arrived. Bob had to think for a second. Big Joe is not just a nickname, it's a description. Pizzimenti is also a proper fit, for even if he had been branded "Kensington" at birth, there's no taking the Italian stock out of Big Joe Pizzimenti. Therefore, it became Bob Johns' easy task to do the recognizing.

"Is that you, Joe?" Then Bob followed that with an assertion. "You were in Skoshi Tigers! I'm Bob." Now Big Joe did some recognizing of his own and the two men became reacquainted after a forty-three year blank spot. Their wives met knowingly for the first time only because Joe had lost his truck keys and his wife, Marcia had to drive down that Thursday to bring him another set. Perhaps they had already met at a grocery store or a bank. It's possible because both families lived off of Timber Creek Road in Ormond Beach from the mid seventies to the early eighties..

In addition, Big Joe served as a Daytona Beach cop while Bob served with the Florida Highway Patrol. The headquarters of each unit was located across the street from one another; about sixty feet or so. Did they work the same cases, did their kids attend the same schools? All of this has yet to be discovered because this story is written on the day it happened.

So far, Big Joe and Bob Johns are the only members of the Skoshi Tigers each has been able to find since April, 1966. Lucky for Pizzimenti because Bob has owed him fifty cents for all those years and the interest could be quite substantial.

Both men plan to stay in touch and perhaps send us an up date now and then if they do indeed find they had coached in the same league or fished the same charter.

As for the reunion? They'll both be back for sure. Bob Johns has still not been able to visit the Wall. But now that Big Joe is back, anything's possible when someone's watching out for you; just like it was with the Skoshi Tigers. Yes, VVB reunion #23 will be held next year as well as the rendezvous #9.

Photos with permission and courtesy of Dick Lancaster, VVB Perimeter Report Editor  
Story compiled by Dick Lancaster and Ted Whitlock



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Service Officer	Bud Owens	603-778-1990	betbudowens@comcast.net

## VSPA WEB SITE:

Web Master	Don Poss		DonPoss-LM37@vspa.com
K-9 Webmaster	Monty Moore		K-9@vspa.com
Bulletin Bd Flt Chief	Bill Marshall	949-361-1770	billmarshallsaceliteguard@gmail
QRT Flight Chief	Gary Jones	843-851-7427	GaryandJJ@hotmail.com

## VSPA SISTERHOOD ( AFFILIATED ASSOCIATION)

President	Sheila Gervase-Cain	smgervase@yahoo.com
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**Vietnam Security Police Association  
15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion  
Phoenix, Arizona – October 7-11, 2009  
Luke AFB – Home of the 56<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron**

The reunion will be held at the Crowne Plaza Phoenix Airport. Room Rates are \$109 a night, plus tax, and includes breakfast. The rate is good for three days before and three days after the reunion. Transportation from the airport is FREE. Parking at the hotel is FREE. When you check in at the VSPA Registration Area in the hotel, you will receive a welcome package with reunion security identification, a commemorative reunion pin, a detailed itinerary, a list of attendees and local information. The following itinerary and meals have been arranged for you and are included with your registration fee.

- ~ Reception Dinner buffet with entertainment Wednesday Evening, October 7<sup>th</sup>
- ~Optional Golf or Optional Museum of the Heard (see below), Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>
- ~ All day tour and lunch at Luke AFB Base, Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>
- ~ VSPA Business Meeting, Saturday Morning, October 10<sup>th</sup>
- ~ VSPA Sisterhood Gathering of wives and companions Saturday Morning
- ~ SAFESIDE Business Meeting Saturday Afternoon October 10<sup>th</sup>
- ~ Banquet Dinner with Guest Speaker, Saturday Evening, October 10<sup>th</sup>
- ~ Memorial Service, Sunday Morning, October 11<sup>th</sup>
- ~ Commemorating 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion Dinner
- ~ Complimentary Room stocked with snacks & beverages
- ~ All associated taxes and gratuities

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS:** Call the Crowne Plaza Phoenix Airport at 602-275-7779 no later than September 7, 2009 to make your hotel reservations.

**OPTIONAL GOLF AND STEAK LUNCH AT LUKE AFB THURSDAY:** If you love golf, you will be pleased to know that the Luke AFB Golf Course is rated as the best golf facility in the entire Department of Defense. The fee is \$80 for 18 holes of golf and includes transportation, all fees, golf cart, and the steak lunch. Members of the 56<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron have been invited to join us to help round out foursomes.

**OPTIONAL TOUR THURSDAY OF THE HEARD MUSEUM AND THE MILLS MALL:** 9am-3:30pm \$34 per person. The tour includes transportation and begins at the internationally renowned Heard Museum. A must see Arizona landmark, the Heard Museum is home to the world's largest collection of Native American cultural objects, fine art and history. Afterwards, we will visit the Mills Mall, a huge indoor facility with unique shops, stores and restaurants.

**COME JOIN US AS WE SHARE OLD MEMORIES AND MAKE NEW ONES!!  
PLEASE USE THE REGISTRATION FORM TO REGISTER FOR OUR REUNION.**

If you have questions, please call VSPA President Newell Swartz at  
(602) 437-1154 or send Email to [roaddog2007@yahoo.com](mailto:roaddog2007@yahoo.com)

Contact: The Reunion BRAT  
Phone: (566) 663-2521  
Email: [Info@TheReunionBRAT.com](mailto:Info@TheReunionBRAT.com)

“WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN.”



**VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION**



**REUNION REGISTRATION FORM**

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA  
OCTOBER 7 – 11, 2009**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

RVN or THAI BASE \_\_\_\_\_ SQUADRON \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS 19\_\_ to 19\_\_  
(Do not list bases outside of Vietnam or Thailand)

RVN or THAI BASE \_\_\_\_\_ SQUADRON \_\_\_\_\_ YEARS 19\_\_ to 19\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(s) of YOUR GUEST(s) \_\_\_\_\_

BANQUET MEAL SELECTION: BEEF \_\_\_\_\_ CHICKEN \_\_\_\_\_ VEGETARIAN \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

IS THIS YOUR FIRST REUNION? YES: \_\_\_\_\_ NO: \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATION FEES**

ARE YOUR ANNUAL DUES CURRENT? RENEWALS ONLY FOR \$ 15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Not for new members. To join the VSPA, please see the attached membership information).

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING REUNION # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$150 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OPTIONAL TOUR (Thurs): HEARD MUSEUM & MILLS MALL # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 34 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

OPTIONAL GOLF AT LUKE AFB (Thurs) WITH STEAK LUNCH # \_\_\_\_\_ x \$ 80 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 7, 2009**

**PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS AND MADE PAYABLE TO:**

**THE REUNION BRAT**  
50721 State Hwy 410 E  
Greenwater, WA 98022  
(360) 663-2521

# VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION APPLICATION/DATA SHEET

1. Please **PRINT** or **TYPE** clearly, especially your email address      **TODAY'S DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. Complete only the information that you want to share with fellow members.
3. List the names and addresses of SP's that you have kept in contact with and or those that you would like to locate.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  

Last
First
M.I.
Nickname

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  

Street (or P.O. Box) City
State
Zip Code

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_  

Home with area code
Work with area code (optional)

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_ **FAX#:** \_\_\_\_\_  

PLEASE PRINT VERY CAREFULLY
If Applicable

**Personal:** \_\_\_\_\_  

Occupation (or Retired)
Birth Date
Spouse's Name

**Dates of U.S.A.F. Service:** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_  

Month / Year
Month / Year
Highest Rank

**1st Tour in Vietnam/Thailand** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_  

Month / Year
Month / Year
Base (Not Squadron!)

**2nd Tour or TDY** \_\_\_\_\_ **to** \_\_\_\_\_  

Month / Year
Month / Year
Base

**SPECIALTY (K-9, Safeside, Heavy Weapons, etc.)** \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU WERE K-9:** \_\_\_\_\_  

Dog's Name
Tattoo #
Base
From Month / Year
To Month / Year

**Names and addresses of AP's or SP's you've kept in contact with:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Names and available info on AP's or SP's you would like to find:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Please use additional paper to list other tours, specialties, dogs, friends, etc. on the back of this form!**

**Where did you learn about VSPA?** (Please circle one of the sources below)

VSPA Web Site      Veteran Publications      Another SP      Veteran's Reunion      Other (explain)

**IMPORTANT:** If you are already a member of VSPA and need to change your address, please use the form on the previous page and mail it to Phil Carroll so that we can update our records. If you are a first time applicant, please complete this application and mail it with a **COPY of your DD214** (showing service in Southeast Asia - Vietnam or Thailand - and duty as an AP, SP or Augmentee) to the address below. **If you are not sure of your documentation, call or email Phil Carroll for assistance. Include a check made out to the VSPA for \$15 annual dues.** Life Memberships are also available. Rates, depending on your age, are on the following page and on the VSPA website.

**MAIL TO:**

**Phil Carroll**      **E-mail address: k9nightfighter@msn.com**  
**P.O. Box 8**  
**Gladstone, OR 97027**      **Phone: 503-975-8608**



1033 Dexter  
Clay Center, Ks 67432

**The other day, I (Swartz) came across a poem which did not have an author listed but it sure appears to ring true for certain times in our history:**

God and the soldier, we alike adore  
in times of danger, not before  
The danger past and all conflict righted  
God is forgotten, the soldier slighted.  
Author unknown

Then I ran across one version of the lyrics of Taps. Even the harshness of the military has a soft side. Lights out and military funerals are usually when we hear Taps, but how many of us know the lyrics.

Day is gone, done the sun,  
From the hills, from the lakes, from the sky  
All is well, safely rest, God is nigh

Go to sleep, peaceful sleep,  
May the soldier and the sailor God keep  
On the land or the deep, safe is sleep'

Love, good night, must thou go,  
When the day and the night need thee so?  
All is well, speedth all to their rest.

Fades the light; and afar,  
Goeth day, and the stars shineth bright,  
Fare thee well,; Day has gone, night is on.

Thanks and Praise, for our days,  
'Neath the sun, Neath the stars, Neath the sky,  
As we go, this we know, God is nigh.