



Spring 2010 Issue

The Waving Nurses of Tan Son Nhut

The Rest of the Story

We've closed a loop on a piece of the past. In the photo at right, Bryan Lighthouse is presenting a "thank-you" plaque to Maj. Ruth Sidisin at Tan Son Nhut Air Base RVN in 1968. Maj. Sidisin was the famous nurse who started a tradition of standing on the second floor balcony of a female BOQ and waving at the SPs who passed, late in the afternoon, for shift change. They were headed for Bravo Sector, Charlie Sector, Delta Sector, or Base Police guard posts. (VSPA LM 229 Ray Rash is the guy behind the .50 Cal. in this photo.)



In April 2010, LM 205 Bill Paddock presented now-retired Lt .Col. Ruth Sidisin (left) and retired Maj. Dee Reiter, who continued the waving tradition, honorary membership into the VSPA Sisterhood by joint Proclamations signed by Newell Swartz and Sheila Gervase-Cain. Don Poss had VSPA Sisterhood caps made up with the two nurses names monogrammed on the back, and we gave them two VSPA Sisterhood pins each.

Bill says, "I want to say thank you to Steve, Newell and everyone else for selecting me to fulfill this task. It was an honor to present these lovely ladies with this recognition from the VSPA."



Bill Paddock, LM #205,NKP, 56th SPS, 68-69, presents the joint proclamations to the Waving Nurses; Ruth Sidisin (left) and Dee Reiter (right).



In the last issue of *Guardmount* we printed a copy of the VSPA Joint Proclamation that Bill Paddock presented to Ruth Sidisin on behalf of VSPA - and especially on behalf of our members who served at Tan Son Nhut and had the pleasure of that daily wave from the nurses. On the next page of this issue is a copy of the similar VSPA Joint Proclamation that Bill presented to Dee Corbett-Reiter.



Below is a copy of the note that Dee sent to VSPA Past President Steve Gattis to thank us all for this special recognition, and for keeping all the nurses safe during their tours at Tan Son Nhut.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm betting that Steve's the one who received this note personally because he's the guy who did the police work to track down the waving nurses so VSPA could reconnect with them.)

A handwritten note on a white piece of paper, pinned to a page with two red pushpins in the top right corner. The note is written in cursive and reads:

Dear Steve Gattis -
Please extend my extreme
thanks to all Security Police for the
beautiful citation, hat and sister-
hood pins. Ruth Sidisin and myself
were truly surprised and humbled
by such an honor. We appreciate all
you did in VN in keeping us safe.
Again Thank you
Dee Reiter



VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION

NEWELL SWARTZ, PRESIDENT
6408 S. 39th Pl, Phoenix AZ 85042
(602) 437-1154



LETTER OF PROCLAMATION

The Sisterhood of the Vietnam Security Police Association has conferred upon Major (Ret) Dee Corbett-Reiter an Associate Membership. Her demonstrated moral support and encouragement to the men of the 377th Security Police Squadron in Vietnam exemplifies the motto of the Sisterhood "Taking Care of Those Who Take Care of Their Own"

In Vietnam, then Lieutenant, Dee Reiter's first duty was to save the lives of men wounded in battle. But her second calling at the end of a long day of healing broken bodies was to offer encouragement and moral support to the men of the 377th SPS. Every evening as they drove past the nurse's quarters en route to isolated guard posts, the 377th was greeted by hand waves and cheers of encouragement, by the "Waving Nurses". To some people these simple gestures would appear inconsequential in a world of tragedy and death.

However, contrast the camaraderie and support from the "Waving Nurses" to the scornful actions of war protestors of that era and one can understand why those "simple gestures" were so heartfelt forty plus years ago that many of the men today still recall "the Waving Nurses".

As nurses came and went, Major Dee Corbett-Reiter ensured the tradition continued: that the last thing the men of the 377th going into harm's way saw was a smiling face and a show of support from one or more of the "Waving Nurses".

In observing our motto "We Take Care of Our Own", the Vietnam Security Police Association is honored to be associated with Major Dee Corbett-Reiter, a gallant nurse and a friend when we needed a friend the most.

Newell M. Swartz, President
Vietnam Security Police Association

Sheila Gervase-Cain, President
VSPA Sisterhood

President's Corner

We are finalizing our reunion plans for San Antonio and the information is all in this issue of *Guardmount*. The hotel is located right on the Riverwalk and close to The Alamo.

Larry Poss has taken charge of our BX store and has produced some terrific innovative ideas in personalized merchandise for members. VSPA had some outlay for equipment like the press and printer for the mugs, caps and t-shirts, but all of this should be paid for by the end of this year. Prices include replacement costs as well as a small profit so the BX will become fully self-sustaining. At the Reunion, the BX will be next to the Hospitality Room and will be open longer hours than in the past. Larry plans to bring equipment with him to produce mugs, caps, and t-shirts personalized for each member with unit patches, photos and other items of memorabilia.

All of our tax returns from years past have now been filed with the IRS and Texas. The *VSPA History Book* has been completed. Steve Gattis writes about both of these subjects in more detail elsewhere in this issue. Completing these tasks has required a tremendous amount of work from Steve. As much as others of us would have assisted, these were issues which required Steve's extensive background and historical knowledge to figure out.

Elections for President, Vice President, Second Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and Historian will take place at the Reunion. My sincere hope is that Treasurer Richard Garcia and Historian Kelly Bateman will seek re-election. Both of these men are in vital positions and have demonstrated superior skills and knowledge in their elected duties, as well as making timely decisions that come before the board.

Second Vice President Don Hamilton resigned from his position due to health issues which he felt hampered him in devoting the time he thought necessary to fulfill his duties. We sincerely thank Don for his service, and hope for the very best outcome with his health. The Board appointed Phil Carroll, our current Membership Chairman, to fill the vacancy left by Don's resignation. Phil also edited and produced both this issue and the previous issue of *Guardmount*. That's a lot on one man's plate, so we actively recruited for a new *Guardmount* editor. Lucky for us, Erlyce Pekas has volunteered to take over the job.

Several members recently requested that VSPA coordinate more closely with other organizations to avoid having our reunions conflict with theirs, as frequently happens. As VSPA continues to grow in membership, and more of our members also join other associations, this is more and more likely to happen. I'll place the issue on the agenda for the Business Meeting, so if you have an idea try to work it up with some thought. You can send your proposal to me if you're not coming to the reunion, and I'll present it to the members. But VSPA has a long history of announcing our reunion locations two years in advance, and of scheduling our reunion the same week every year to coincide with Columbus Day. I'm not sure what we could change that wouldn't make our schedule less predictable and therefore less accommodating for the majority of our members. Personally, I think the solution will turn out to be a matter of each member's year-to-year personal choice.

Respectfully,

Newell Swartz, President

VSPA Officers and Appointed Staff, 2009-2010

All officers and staff are unpaid VSPA members who volunteer to serve their brothers in the association. Officers were elected in 2008 for a two-year term. Staff members were appointed to assist and advise the officers of the association as needed.

Board of Directors

PRESIDENT	Newell Swartz; Phan Rang, Phu Cat 66-67; roaddog2007@yahoo.com ; 602-437-2677
VICE PRESIDENT	Hector Ramos; Binh Thuy 69-70; hramos926@comcast.net ; 973-430-1577
SECOND VICE PRESIDENT	Phil Carroll; Takhli, Nakhon Phanom 70-71; Tina X768, Charlie 2M45; k9nightfighter@msn.com ; 503-353-0443
SECRETARY	Bruce Hadley; Bien Hoa 61 - 62; brunole@juno.com ; 718-896-1954
TREASURER	Richard Garcia; Phan Rang 69-70; cal400@optonline.net ; 516-799-9205
HISTORIAN	Kelly Bateman; Ubon K-9 70-71; Baron 279M; texask-9@swbell.net ; 512-847-9805
PAST PRESIDENT	Steve Gattis; Cam Ranh Bay 68-69; SGattis-LM49@vspa.com ; 254-898-2647

Appointed Staff

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN	Phil Carroll; Takhli, Nakhon Phanom 70-71; Tina X768, Charlie 2M45; k9nightfighter@msn.com ; 503-353-0443
MEMBERSHIP ASSISTANT	Janet Matthews-Wise; Sisterhood; sparkplug_vspa@charter.net ; 205-663-7662
K-9 KENNEL MASTER	Jim Stastny; Korat 70-71; Boots 645M; jimstastny@verizon.net ; 301-482-2659
SERGEANT-AT-ARMS	Keith Young; Binh Thuy, Phu Cat 70-71; kcy9540@aol.com ; 716-549-0715
SERVICE OFFICER	Bud Owens; Binh Thuy 66-67; betbudowe@comcast.net ; 603-778-1990
BX STORE MANAGER	Larry Poss; Associate Member; larry@larryposs.com ; 702-501-7677
CHAPLAIN	Steve Janke; Cam Ranh Bay 69-70; Kobuc X448; Jank953208@aol.com ; 201-507-9038
CHAPLAIN	Jim Stastny; Korat 70-71; Boots 645M; jimstastny@verizon.net ; 301-482-2659
CHAPLAIN	Bill Cooley; Cam Ranh Bay 71-72; Mingo 30A0 BCAJ@gvtc.com ; 830-899-7542
CHAPLAIN	Jeff Kerkhoff; Tan Son Nhut 72-73; (no email); 626-338-6846
"GUARDMOUNT" EDITOR	Erlyce Pekas; erlyce@msn.com ; 602-574-7089
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K-9 WEB MASTER	Monty Moore; Da Nang, Phu Cat 68-70; Kobuc X448, Giant A905, Blackie 129X k-9@vspa.com ; 512-639-0005
WEB QRTROUBLESHOOTER	Gary Jones; Udorn, Phan Rang, Da Nang, Tan Son Nhut; 1965; 68-69; 71-72; gjones003@sc.rr.com ; 843-851-7427
WEB ADOBE PDF TECH	Greg Dunlap; Da Nang 68-69; Blackie 129X; blackey@sonic.net ; 707.576.9683
BB FLIGHT LEADER	Bill Marshall; Phu Cat 68-69; billmarshallsaceliteguard@gmail.com ; 949-388-5664
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PHOTOGRAPHER	Steve Hall; Binh Thuy 68-69; hallstudio@att.net ; 714-634-1132

PHOTOGRAPHER Lou Reda; Phan Rang 68-69; loureda202@gmail.com; 419-668-7591
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REUNION HOSPITALITY Sheila Gervase-Cain; Sisterhood; smgervase@yahoo.com; 716-771-1157
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CAM RANH BAY LIAISON Trent Nentrup; Cam Ranh Bay 68-69; trent.nentrup@gmail.com; 812-341-2235
PHU CAT LIAISON Ron Arthur; Phu Cat 67-68; cobranam68@aol.com; 660-678-3501
PLEIKU LIAISON Pat Dunne (Hawk); Pleiku 1968; hawk51044@aol.com; 954-923-9001
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423-245-6863
UBON LIAISON Jim Watson; Ubon 68-69; Fritz X704; jimwatk9@ca.rr.com; 626-806-8463

Sisterhood

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VICE PRESIDENT Janet Matthews-Wise; sparkplug_vspa@charter.net; 205-663-7662
SECRETARY Erlyce Pekas; erlyce@msn.com; 602-574-7089
CHAPLAIN Roberta Smith; lizianthus1@yahoo.com; 614-879-6835
CORRESPONDENCE SEC. Pam Talbot; lilacroller1@comcast.net; 815-935-2139

2010 Election of VSPA Officers

VSPA members who attended our 2007 reunion in Washington D.C. voted to modify the VSPA By-Laws so that all current members would have the opportunity to vote for the officers who manage the association. This will be done in 2010 similarly to how it was done in 2008, by mail-in ballot or personal vote while in attendance at the 2010 reunion - with every current member being able to vote one way or the other but not more than once.

There are six positions up for election: President, Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Historian. All other positions in the VSPA are staff positions appointed by the president and board based upon their expertise and willingness to serve the members of the VSPA. Elected officers will be confirmed and installed after the voting is completed at the reunion in October. The term of office for all positions is two years. The positions do not receive a salary and are entirely on a volunteer basis.

VSPA members have until July 31 to declare their intention to run for an elected VSPA position. Each person who runs must have been a regular member or life member in good standing for at least two years prior to the election. Board members must have the ability to attend future business meetings that are held at our annual reunions. They must communicate via the Internet and by phone on a regular basis, and must make the commitment to provide the time necessary to serve in the position - none of these are ceremonial positions.

If you want to run for an office on the VSPA Board of Directors you'll need to submit a photo and biography similar to those which were published in the Fall 2008 issue of Guardmount by the guys seeking election at that time. Send your materials to VSPA Past President Steve Gattis electronically or by surface mail soon enough that he receives your information by July

31, 2010. These materials and a ballot will be made available, or mailed, to all current VSPA members in time to allow everybody to chose their favorite candidates and submit votes.

The following list of duties of elected VSPA board members is from the VSPA By-Laws, and prospective officers must agree to and be able to perform all the duties of the position they seek.

The duties of the President shall include, but not be limited to:

- Act as Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Directors.
- Cause to be called all regular and special meetings of the organization.
- Preside over all regular and special meetings of the organization.
- Enforce the Constitution and By-Laws.
- Direct and supervise the operation of the organization.
- Prepare and present the Board of Directors Annual Report at the annual business meeting
- Coordinate the confirmation of all appointed staff members with the Board of Directors.
- Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to his care and turn over the folder to his successor.
- Be an ex-officio member of all committees, except the “Nominations Committee.”

The duties of the Vice President and the Second Vice President shall include, but not be limited to:

- Assist the President in the discharge of his duties.
- Assume the duties of the President in the event of his absence, illness, or call to eternal Guardmount.
- Execute the powers and authority of the President, when required, in the absence of the President.
- Serve as elected members of the Board of Directors.
- Serve as Chairman and member of the Public Relations Committee.
- Serve as a member of the Scholarship Committee.
- Prepare and present annual reports relative to the operation of their respective office at the annual business meeting.
- Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to their care and turn over the folder to his successor.
- The Second Vice President shall provide oversight for all record keeping activities and assist the President by maintaining hard copy records.

The duties of the Secretary shall include, but not be limited to:

- Officiate when required in the absence of the President and Vice President
- Serve as an elected member of the Board of Directors.
- Serve as a member of the Membership Committee.
- Be the clerk of the organization.
- Be the custodian of all business-related non-financial records and materials, which shall remain property of the organization.
- Keep permanent records of the proceedings of all annual meetings and meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Prepare and distribute election ballots, if necessary and as required.
- Ensure that only members in good standing vote on organizational business.
- The Secretary will be assisted by the Membership Chairman and the Sergeant-at-Arms.

- Serve as official organization correspondent.
- Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to his care and turn over the folder to his successor.

The duties of the Treasurer shall include, but not be limited to:

- Serve as an elected member of the Board of Directors.
- Act as Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee if the committee is necessary.
- Be the Chief Financial Officer of the organization.
- Be the custodian of all financial records of the organization.
- Receive and be responsible for the collection of all monies due and payable to the organization.
- Have custody of all organization funds, and shall provide for the safekeeping, retention, disbursement, and investment in a manner acceptable to the Board of Directors.
- Receive donations on behalf of the organization.
- Issue letters in acknowledgement of all donations as required by tax codes.
- To work with the President to make such reports and returns as are required by Federal, State and local governments, the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and these By-Laws, including the disbursement of appropriate taxes and fees.
- Maintain accounts appropriate to the structure and activities of the organization and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and principles.
- Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to his care and turn over the folder to his successor.

The duties of the Historian shall include, but not be limited to:

- Serve as an elected member of the Board of Directors.
- Serve as Chairman of the Historical Committee if a committee is necessary.
- Prepare and present a report at the annual business meeting regarding the history projects completed during the preceding year.
- Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to his care and turn over the folder to his successor.

The “VSPA History Book” Update

By VSPA Past-President Steve Gattis

The book proof updates are complete and in the final phase for printing. Newell Swartz, Phil Carroll and I each have a proof copy of the book. The purpose of the final proof review was supposed to be quality control rather than editing; however, we still had to do a lot of editing to ensure that our research and updated information, along with all previous editing had been completed properly and in accordance with our directions. The three of us conducted a review of the book independently then all notes were consolidated and returned to the book designer.

This is an outstanding book and we hope you will be proud of it. Newell, Phil and I are very happy with the work by Turner.

The publication date is based upon the publisher’s printing and binding schedule which is

subject to all book contracts and book orders that they have. We are one book among many from several organizations and will send an email to everyone when we know the release date which should be by our reunion.

I have also received copies of all book orders to make certain that addresses are correct for mailing. For those of you who have moved since you ordered the book, if you notified the VSPA of your change of address, we will advise the publisher to ensure that the correct addresses are matched to each book ordered. If you have moved since you ordered the book, go to our Restricted Area, login and make sure that your address has been updated. We will be using the addresses in the VSPA on-line database to verify the orders. If you cannot update your address, call or email Membership Chairman Phil Carroll with your new address. Phil will update the database and notify me.

Thank you for your patience. There will be copies of the book available in the BX.

VSPA Mug

I woke up feeling listless
My spirits kind of low
I knew I couldn't face the day
Without a cup of Jo.

I moseyed to the kitchen
Still in a sleepy mode
And there upon the counter top
Was something to behold

My brand new "Bien Hoa" coffee mug
Was standing at attention
And waiting very patiently
To pass its first inspection

I inspected up and down
Admiring its lines
And then it all came back to me
Like going back in time.

The night, the names and selfless acts
The heroes standing tall
The images that burned so deep
This cup recalled them all.

So when I have my morning Jo
I never sit alone
But with an honored brotherhood
Who bid me "Welcome Home".

© Howard G. Yates (Bien Hoa, 3rd SPS, 67-68) 5/25/10



(EDITOR'S NOTE: [Click Here](#) to see the full line of VSPA Custom Coffee Mugs at the online VSPA BX Store, including the one with Howard's great poem on it!)



Vietnam Security Police Association
16th Anniversary Reunion
San Antonio, Texas – October 6-10, 2010
Lackland AFB and Camp Bullis

The reunion will be held at the **Holiday Inn Riverwalk**. Room Rates are **\$125** a night, plus tax, and **include breakfast for two each morning**. The rate is good for three days before and three days after the reunion. Transportation from the airport is approximately **\$25** in a Taxi. Parking at the hotel is reduced to **\$8**. 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 **\$138** basic registration fee:

- ~ *Reception dinner buffet with beer and wine, Wednesday Evening, October 6th*
- ~ *Optional Base Tour with lunch at the Gateway Club (see below for details,) Thursday, October 7th*
- Or, *Optional City Tour and Mexican Marketplace Shopping (see details below), Thursday, October 7th*
- ~ *Morning tour and lunch with SF troops at Lackland Air Force Base, Friday, October 8th*
- ~ *Afternoon tour at Camp Bullis, Friday, October 8th*
- ~ *VSPA Business Meeting, Saturday Morning, October 9th*
- ~ *VSPA Sisterhood Gathering of wives and companions Saturday Morning*
- ~ *SAFESIDE Business Meeting Saturday Afternoon October 9th*
- ~ *Banquet Dinner with Guest Speaker, Saturday Evening, October 9th*
- ~ *Memorial Service, Sunday Morning, October 10th*
- ~ *Commemorative 16th Anniversary Reunion QC Pin*
- ~ *Hospitality Room stocked with snacks & beverages ~ All associated taxes and gratuities*

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: Call the Holiday Inn Riverwalk at 210-224-2500 no later than **September 5** to make your hotel reservations.

OPTIONAL Tour of Lackland AFB with lunch at the Lackland Gateway Club on Thursday: The fee is **\$39** in addition to your registration fee and includes bus transportation, the Security Police Museum, K-9 Demonstrations, Clothing Sales, the BX and lunch at the Lackland AFB Gateway Officer's Club. This tour has been arranged separately so that you can choose between the tours on Thursday. **0815 to 1530 hours**.

OPTIONAL City Tour and Shopping in the Mexican Marketplace on Thursday: The fee is **\$22** and includes bus transportation. You will begin with a guided tour of the city of San Antonio where you will discover how the city captures the spirit of Texas. Now the eighth largest city in the United States, San Antonio has retained its sense of history and tradition, while carefully blending in cosmopolitan progress. Afterwards you will proceed to Market Square, which from early morning until late at night is alive with activity. "El Mercado" has 32 shops and is patterned after an authentic Mexican market. There are an additional 80 specialty shops in Farmers Market Plaza! **0900 to 1500 hours**.

PLEASE USE THE REGISTRATION FORM TO REGISTER FOR OUR REUNION.

If you have questions, please call VSPA Life Member Dennis Evans toll-free at
1-866-672-6533 or send Email to DennisEEvans@aol.com

Contact: The Reunion BRAT

Phone: (360) 663-2521

Email: Info@TheReunionBRAT.com

“WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN.”



VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION

REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS
OCTOBER 6 – 10, 2010**



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 \$138 = \$ _____

OPTIONAL TOUR (Thurs): Lackland AFB with lunch # _____ x \$ 39 = \$ _____

OPTIONAL City Tour and Marketplace Shopping (Thurs) # _____ x \$ 22 = \$ _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED = \$ _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 5, 2010

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

PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED LACKLAND AFB SECURITY FORM

A Confirmation of Registration and an Itinerary will be mailed to you by September 15, 2010. A \$20 per person cancellation fee will apply to all cancellations received within 30 days of the event. Cancellations received within 10 days of the event will be non-refundable. Call the Holiday Inn Riverwalk at 210-224-2500 no later than September 5, 2010 to make your hotel reservations. Be sure to mention that you are with the Vietnam Security Police Association Reunion to receive your group rate of \$125 a night, plus tax which includes breakfast. These prices are available 3 days before and after the reunion should you choose to extend your stay. Parking is \$8.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE REGISTRATION FORM

1. The information that you provide on this form is critical for a successful reunion. All name and base information will be placed on your reunion identification badge. Guests will also receive reunion identification. The reunion ID will serve as your identification throughout the reunion and must be worn, especially while we are in all military or government facilities.
2. **PLEASE PRINT** or type all information **clearly**. Do not use abbreviations on any portion of the registration form. Your cooperation will make the processing of reunion identification badges and all security rosters a much more accurate process.
3. **RVN OR THAI BASE INFORMATION:** Please list only those bases where you served in Vietnam or Thailand. When listing bases, **do not abbreviate**. When listing squadrons, please indicate Air Police, Security Police, or specific detachments. The information will be used on your reunion ID.
4. **HOME ADDRESS and MAILING ADDRESS:** We will mail your reunion confirmation to the mailing address listed on this form.
5. **LACKLAND AFB SECURITY FORM:** Please complete the attached Lackland AFB Security Form. This information is essential for access to the air force base due to the enhanced security requirements. **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED ON BASE IF YOU DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM.**
6. **TELEPHONE AND EMAIL ADDRESS:** Your contact information is vital to a successful reunion. The information will be part of our security roster that we must provide to the local Security Forces Squadron. You will also receive a copy of this roster upon arrival at the hotel.
7. **NAMES OF YOUR GUESTS:** Please provide the first name, middle initial and last name of your guest(s) on the Registration Form as well as the Lackland AFB Security Form.
8. **RENEWAL OF ANNUAL DUES:** This item is a reminder for VSPA members only so that they can renew their dues at the time of registration if they are not current. VSPA membership must be current in order to attend the reunion or bring a guest.
9. **VSPA MEMBERSHIP:** If you are not a member of the Vietnam Security Police Association, please do not send \$15 with this registration form. The VSPA uses a three-step membership application process for approving membership. To be eligible for membership, you must complete the following three steps: 1. Submit a completed application. 2. Document your service in the United States Air Force as an Air Policeman, Security Policeman or an Augmentee in Vietnam or Thailand during the years 1958 to 1975, and a discharge under honorable conditions. Your documentation of service must be a DD Form 214. Additional documents may in some cases be necessary. If you do not have a DD Form 214, you may submit alternate substantial proof of service for consideration until you are able to obtain your DD Form 214. Please remove your Social Security Account Number (SSAN) from the DD Form 214. 3. Submit \$15 in annual dues with your application and DD Form 214. The DD Form 214 is required for two reasons: 1. To prevent stolen valor. 2. Because we are a tax-exempt, incorporated organization of war veterans as defined by the IRS in Section 501(c)(19).
10. **REUNION COST:** The basic registration fee of \$138 is the cost per person plus any tours. If you bring a guest, their registration fee is also \$138 and will cover transportation, several meals and our Hospitality Room.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMAND

SUBJECT: Request for Visitor Access

1. Request a Visitor Access Pass for the following individual(s) for entry to the installation: The Vietnam Security Police Association will be visiting Security Forces facilities and Military Working Dog (MWD) training areas from October 6 – 10, 2010.

Please follow the example below:

<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
Doe, John D	(210) XXX-XXXX	TX./00000000	01/15/65

<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
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<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
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<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
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<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
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2. I will inform my visitors that they must have current proof of insurance, proof of registration and a current/valid driver's license. Additionally, they were briefed that while on this installation all personnel and the property under their control is subject to search.

3. I understand that failure to provide any of the information requested may result in denial of installation access pass. Disclosure of information is voluntary, however; this information is necessary for validation of identity and may result in a non-issuance determination by the issuing authority.

Warrior's Medal of Valor

By Janet Matthews-Wise ("Sparkplug")

As has become our tradition, we will present the Warrior's Medal of Valor at the Vietnam Security Police Association's 16th annual reunion in San Antonio. Please submit your written nominations no later than July 31, 2010 via email to the committee for review. We ask that you include as much information as possible in support of the nomination.

The tradition of presenting the Warrior's Medal of Valor was introduced and nurtured by VSPA Life Member #127, MSgt Alvin W. Matthews (Ret), CRB RVN 1971 – 1972, 483rd SPS, Tiger Flight.

Sarge learned of this medal through his cousin and tribal elder Rowland Matthews. The medal was designed by Chief Marshall Tall Eagle, a Vietnam veteran who served a total of 14 years in the Army and Air Force. The Chief designed the medal in 2002. Soon after, it was approved as the official medal for presentation to all tribes desiring to use this medal to pay tribute and honor to all veterans and military personnel regardless of their cultural background.

At the 2004 reunion in Tucson, when he learned of Rex Hare's condition, he wanted to honor his Brother. With the help of Joyce and Van Digby after the reunion, Rex Hare was awarded the Warrior's Medal of Valor.

Our beloved Sarge was recognized and awarded his Warrior's Medal of Valor in October 2004 at the Cherokee Nation's Powwow in our home town of Scottsboro,

Alabama. He was one of several veterans who received this recognition from the Tribal Elders in a ceremony honoring those who served our country. He proudly wore his medal at every VSPA reunion he attended thereafter.

Sarge was determined to see his VSPA Brothers honored as well. To make that possible, he established the criteria he believed represented the VSPA best, and funded the purchase of the medals and participated in their presentation in 2005, 2006, and 2007.

The criteria are that nominees must be current members of the VSPA; and the Warrior's Medal is awarded for valor, for an action or actions in Vietnam or Thailand that were never recognized by the Air Force, for outstanding service to the VSPA, or for outstanding and consistent or ongoing service to or for deployed troops or veterans.

Sarge posted his final guardmount on January 4, 2008. We made sure the he had his life member pin, a VSPA flag, and the Warrior's Medal that he cherished.

In honoring other of our VSPA Brothers, so we continue to Honor Sarge, our Warrior, our Friend, our Brother.

Past recipients of this medal from the VSPA are: Rex Hare, Steve Gattis, Jackie Kays, Don Poss, Kent Miller, Greg Cain, Jack Roberts, John Risse, Pete Villarreal, Helen "Mom" Lehman, Richard Holstein, Darrell Schlotterback, Al Handy, Jim Randall and Pete Piazza.



MSgt Al Matthews with Tribal Chief Gina Williams the day he was presented his Warrior's Medal of Valor by his Tribe in 2004.

Luther Wade Young Receives Bronze Star w/ "V"

by Pat Houseworth, LM #575, Nha Trang, 14th SPS; Tan Son Nhut, 377th SPS, 69-70

On Wednesday May 26, 2010, 42 years after his heroic work, Sgt Luther Wade Young of Independence, Missouri, was awarded the Bronze Star with attached "V" for Valor. Major General Mary Kay Hertog presented the award with a crowd of family, friends, former commanders of the 3rd SPS at Ben Hoa AB, RVN, and a handful of VSPA members on hand.

From November 1967 through March of 1968, Young worked "C" Flight Security at Ben Hoa as a Tower/Spotter Guard assigned to the Bomb and Munitions Area. Luther Young displayed disregard for his own personal safety in order to locate and identify enemy launch positions, and on more than one occasion exposed himself to deadly 122mm Rocket Attacks.

In 2008 his former Commanders, Col



Maj Gen Mary Kay Hertog addressing the presentation, at the Defender Statue at Wright Patterson AFB.



VSPA member Luther Wade Young with his just-presented Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device (earned 42 years ago).

(Ret) Marvin Strones and Lt Col (Ret) Kent Miller began the process to find Sgt Young and give him his just reward for his actions so many years ago with the 3rd Security Police Squadron. Col Strones enlisted the help of Major General Mary Kay Hertog, who at that time was the Director of Security Forces HQ in Washington, D.C.

Luther Young was located in his Missouri home, and with Col Strones work, he was finally awarded his Bronze Star with "V" for Valor at the Security Police/Air Police/Security Forces Statue on the grounds of the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, in Dayton, Ohio. On hand were his wife Nancy, his 2 daughters and son, along with grandchildren. Colonels Strones and Miller were also on hand and made remarks to the large crowd at the ceremony.

On hand from the VSPA were Dave Maltzen, Mike Tillman, Tommy Webb, Bob Griffith, Jack and Roberta Smith, and Pat Houseworth.

Important Herbicide News for Thailand Veterans

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm just a Guardmount Editor, not a Veterans Service Officer, and I've been very lucky with my health, so I don't personally know much about the VA claims process. However, I believe this news from the VA's May 2010 "Compensation and Pension Service Bulletin" is hugely important for anybody who worked on a base perimeter in Thailand and has herbicide-related medical problems. I'll quote the relevant portion here, and take the liberty to highlight what I think is the Blockbuster part of it. I'll also pass along a few hints that I gleaned from Kurt Priessman, a retired SkyCop who served in Thailand and has successfully dug out a lot of the information that forced VA to change its mind about Thailand veterans. The whole May 2010 issue of the bulletin is downloadable from the VSPA website, at: <http://www.vspa.com/aspprotect/pdf/compensation-pension-sevice-bulletin-may-2010.pdf>)

You have to have been diagnosed with one of the herbicide-related diseases to file for VA compensation; you won't be compensated just for being exposed. If you're healthy, thank your higher power. If you're not, you can take the list of the diseases to your family doc when you go in for your next checkup or physical. The VA's list of diseases associated with Agent Orange is available at: www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/diseases.asp.

Tell your doc that you've been exposed to Agent Orange and you need to watch for any early signs. Your doc should be able to help you figure out if any problems or symptoms you're having might be related to one of these, or tell you what symptoms to watch for in the future.

However, as Kurt Priessman pointed out to me, each one of us is our own best advocate. So, if you don't get enough information from your doctor, or don't feel your questions were fully answered, start doing some investigating on your own. You can go to the internet search engines like Google and read volumes about all of the diseases on the VA list. If your doctor gives you a little information, you can google that and learn more. You may have to ask your doc to refer you to specialists to get more in-depth information if that seems necessary.

Whether you have one of the diseases or not, Kurt recommends that you immediately file a request for a full copy of all your military records. You can file electronically for this, or get the form and instructions at:

www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/get-service-records.html#required

You're going to need your records to submit with your VA claim, because you'll have to show that you had a job in Thailand that required you to work on the perimeter. Something as specific as an Airman Performance Report, saying you did a great job of perimeter patrol at your Thailand base, is ideal. You may also need your military medical records to document prior treatment for the disease. If you've already filed a VA claim, your personnel file might not be at the records center; it may have been sent to the VA so ask the VA for a copy of your "C-File."

If you have already submitted a claim for problems caused by herbicide exposure in Thailand, you can submit a VA Form 21-4138, "Statement in Support of Claim," with a copy of the Compensation & Pension Service Bulletin and your proof of perimeter duty in Thailand. If you haven't yet submitted a claim, check out the VA's "Veteran's Online Application Website," at: <http://vabenefits.vba.va.gov/vonapp/main.asp> You can apply for benefits there.

Kurt's reminder that we're each our own best advocate applies to Veterans Service Officers as well as doctors. Some are very well trained, some maybe not so much. Not one of them has the time to care about your case as much as you do, so get to work and learn, learn, learn. The information is out there.

Think about every physical issue you have. If you have something like diabetes-mellitus type

II, and have had it for a while, you probably have peripheral neuropathy secondary to diabetes. You may have high cholesterol or high blood pressure which means you are a candidate for arteriosclerotic and ischemic heart disease. Learn about these as they may start with PAD, PVD, or diastolic valve problems - and this is just one example.

Good luck. We were working in some nasty stuff, but a lot of us stand to benefit from the big change in policy described in this VA bulletin.

Phil Carroll, VSPA LM #336



Compensation & Pension Service Bulletin

(verbatim excerpt, emphasis added)

Herbicide related claims from Veterans with Thailand service

After reviewing documents related to herbicide use in Vietnam and Thailand, C&P Service has determined that there was significant use of herbicides on the fenced in perimeters of military bases in Thailand intended to eliminate vegetation and ground cover for base security purposes. Evidence of this can be found in a declassified Vietnam era Department of Defense (DoD) document titled Project CHECO Southeast Asia Report: Base Defense in Thailand. Therefore, when herbicide related claims from Veterans with Thailand service are received, RO personnel should now evaluate the treatment and personnel records to determine whether the Veteran's service activities involved duty on or near the perimeter of the military base where the Veteran was stationed.

DoD has provided information that commercial herbicides, rather than tactical herbicides, were used within the confines of Thailand bases to control weeds. These commercial herbicides have been, and continue to be, used on all military bases worldwide. They do not fall under the VA regulations governing exposure to tactical herbicides such as Agent Orange. However, there is some evidence that the herbicides used on the Thailand base perimeters may have been either tactical, procured from Vietnam, or a commercial variant of much greater strength and with characteristics of tactical herbicides. **Therefore, C&P Service has determined that a special consideration of herbicide exposure on a facts found or direct basis should be extended to those Veterans whose duties placed them on or near the perimeters of Thailand military bases. This allows for presumptive service connection of the diseases associated with herbicide exposure.**

The majority of troops in Thailand during the Vietnam era were stationed at the Royal Thai Air Force Bases of U-Tapao, Ubon, Nakhon Phanom, Udorn, Takhli, Korat, and Don Muang. If a US Air Force Veteran served on one of these air bases as a security policeman, security patrol dog handler, member of a security police squadron, or otherwise served near the air base perimeter, as shown by MOS (military occupational specialty), performance evaluations, or other credible evidence, then herbicide exposure should be acknowledged on a facts found or direct basis. However, this applies only during the Vietnam era, from February 28, 1961 to May 7, 1975.

Donation Fundraiser to Help Active-Duty Handlers

To Be Held By VSPA Member Thailand Dog Handlers

You can win this unique collection of USAF Air Police, Security Police and K-9 badges, and brassards and patch memorabilia from Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. This donation fundraiser will be held in October 2010 in San Antonio, TX during the VSPA reunion. This amazing collection could sell for more than \$750. You do not have to be present to win!

For a \$10 donation you will receive three chances to win one of the prizes. We are encouraging members to donate \$25 and receive nine chances to win and to support this project. If you will not be attending in October, you can donate and receive a chance to win the by sending your check or money order donation (PLEASE, NO CASH!) made out to:

John Homa, 151 CR 556, Athens, TN 37303

First Prize:

- Prototype Air Police shield with blue and white enamel Air Force crest.
- Air Police Security Police 50th Anniversary Commemorative shield with blue and white enamel crest.
- K-9 Commemorative Feed the Dawgs Military Dog Team shield gold in color.
- Security Police SP Brassard Iraq
- USCENTAF patch.
- 384th Expeditionary SFS patch.
- Desert camouflage Sgt. stripes.
- Desert camouflage cloth Shield.
- Desert camouflage Qualification cloth badge.
- Two early Green Zone US Central Command badges.



Second Prize:

- Prototype Air Police shield with blue and white enamel Air Force crest.
- Air Police Security Police 50th Anniversary Commemorative shield with blue and white enamel crest.
- K-9 Commemorative Feed the Dawgs Military Dog Team shield, gold in color
- SP 4409 OSG Brassard Desert Storm.
- Desert camouflage Sgt. stripes
- Desert camouflage cloth Shield.
- Desert camouflage Qualification cloth badge.
- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Sergeant rank and insignia badge.



K-9 Veterans Day - Knoxville Tennessee

By John Homa, LM #599, Korat, 388th SPS K-9, 68-69; U-Tapao, 635th SPS K-9, 70-72

The idea for K-9 Veterans Day originated with Vietnam veteran Joseph J. White, 47th Infantry Platoon, Scout Dogs. Unfortunately, Joe passed away unexpectedly in October 2009 without seeing his dream fully realized, but his widow and innumerable other dedicated volunteers continue to work towards his goal. Additional background about this endeavor can be found at: www.k9veteransday.org

The German Shepherd Dog Club of East Tennessee, together with the University Of Tennessee College Of Veterinary Medicine, hosted a “K-9 Veterans Day” observance on March 13, 2010. The event took place at the UT Vet Clinic, site of the replica WWII Guam 25 Marine War Dog Memorial. This event honored all dogs from all wars, including past and present military working dogs, police dogs, search and rescue dogs, dogs used by the Secret Service and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, dogs used by other agencies, and even the therapy dogs and assistance dogs who comfort and help our wounded veterans. This event was an opportunity to recognize and pay tribute to those dogs that selflessly serve humanity and make our world a better place - one of the many benefits derived from the human/dog connection

Five dog handlers attend the Knoxville event, Perry Money, Carl Hartman, Tom DeHoog, John Ammons, and John Homa. There was good turnout from the public for a first-time event. Knoxville Police Department K-9 Officers accepted a K-9 Veterans Day proclamation from the City Mayor and handlers from the Knox County Sheriff’s Department accepted a similar proclamation from the Knox County Mayor.

Other handlers from nearby Loudon County also attended. The Vietnam Dog Handlers Association provided certificates of appreciation for the event hosts as well as Vietnam Dog Handlers Association challenge coins and pins given out to military troops and law enforcement handlers. The ceremonies included a Marine color guard, an Air Force singer for the National Anthem and a bugler for Taps. There were speakers from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, City of Knoxville, Knox County and, John Homa representing The Vietnam Dog Handlers Association and the Vietnam Security Police Association.

There was some great air time dedicated to the event from a local TV which could still be found at: <http://www.wbir.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=115840&catid=2> as of this printing. There was a display table with information about the Vietnam Dog Handlers Association, “Feed the Dawgs,” and the “Old Dawgs and Pups” programs.

Four veteran dog handlers lead by Perry Money placed a wreath at the Guam K-9 memorial.

Not that they all aren’t, but today was an excellent day to be a dog handler. The Vietnam Dog Handlers Association celebrates memorials with events throughout the country and at times they seem to be enclosed around us but this day it felt good to be reaching out to a greater audience. Joe White would be proud of Donna Fefee with the German Shepherd Club of East Tennessee and the UT College of Veterinary Medicine for their involvement and hosting the event for all types of service dogs.

The text of VSPA LM #599 John Homa’s speech follows on the next page:

Speech to K-9 Veteran's Day Gathering -

Imagine - Back in the mid sixties to mid seventies if you were not a volunteer but served somewhat willingly, it usually meant you were drafted.

Imagine - Being in a foreign country in tall grass at just about eye level and you hear gunfire going off in front of you. All of a sudden something hot slams into your left shoulder. Next thing you know you're in a helicopter heading for a medical unit to get patched up.

Imagine - Being on post all night and being awakened just two hours after you fell asleep by your buddies and being dragged down to the beach for a swim and a few beers. But you go. Could be fun!

Imagine - Being in the jungle on night patrol and looking out for booby traps and land mines. Heck it's hard enough doing it during the day let alone at night and in monsoon season!

Imagine - Being on post for eight hours, hopefully in mid shift, and if you're lucky someone brings out the box lunches or you eat out of a can.

Imagine -Being on a scouting patrol in the jungle and feeling a sting on your leg and then you start to lose consciousness. Next thing you see are bright surgery lights in the medical unit and some happy faces. Someone says "same thing happened to another in the unit two weeks ago. Snake got him too but he didn't make it."

Imagine -Talking trash with the other guys on the back of a truck going out to post and maybe getting into a fight or two. But all is cool out on patrol, everyone watches out for each other's backs.

Imagine -Your best buddy coming up to you and saying, man I zeroed out today on my short timer days and I'm leaving on that jet plane. My tour is up today pal I am going home! I am sorry you cannot go with me.

Imagine -For years being in a concrete room with a wooden pallet for a bed and you sleep on the concrete because you get tired of the pallet. Or, you are chained up to a wooden looking bird house structure on stilts with some poorly made bedding. You are given the same old food to eat every day. And what about all those mosquitoes and bug bites.

Imagine -Today's forces doing three and four tours of duty. Can you envision doing seven and eight tours back in the sixties?

Imagine -One day you are declared surplus. Surplus?

Imagine -Being lead back into that medical unit and looking up at a few grim faces and feeling a pin prick in your arm and going to sleep for the last time.

Over 4000 military working dogs served in Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia during the Vietnam era and are estimated to have saved 10,000 lives. All experienced many of the things I have just mentioned and more. Very few returned back to the states. Some were sent to the Philippines or Korea. Some lived out their lives where they were stationed in country. Many, many more went into that medical unit for the last time. I have been told stories about handlers letting their dogs go free in the jungle to fend for themselves rather than bring them into the kennels for the last time. They could have been just that, just stories but, I wish, with my three dogs, I had done that! They were drafted and served more than willingly and gave their lives for this country.

By John Homa, LM #599, Korat, 388th SPS K-9, 68-69; U-Tapao, 635th SPS K-9, 70-72

2010 Dayton Mini-Reunion

by Pat Houseworth, LM #575, Nha Trang, 14th SPS; Tan Son Nhut, 377th SPS, 69-70

For the third time in the past four years a group of VSPA Members and former Air Force Security Police from Vietnam and Thailand gathered at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB, in Dayton, Ohio.

Back on a cold snowy day in February 2007, a group of six, the Late Larry Dotson, Wayne DeZarn, Mike Tillman, Rick Adams, and Pat Houseworth, along with Pat's oldest son, Sam Houseworth, gathered for a few hours at the AF Museum to meet for the first time and exchange 'War Stories' over coffee. Little did we know at that time, that Larry would pass away within two years, and that the other four, with help of Jack "Old Cowboy" Smith, and Sam Lewis, would lead a group of over 50 Sky Cops and family members back to the Museum for an afternoon get together in a frozen January day in 2009.

With that huge success, the gang decided to extend our one-day at a time event to a three-day weekend get together at the Hope Hotel and Conference Center at WP AFB on March 5th through 7th of this year. We were hopeful that our luck with snow and cold would be better if we waited until March, and it worked like a charm. With sunshine and temperatures in the 50s and 60s, we could not have asked for better weather in Western Ohio in the month of March, as winter was turning to Spring.

Over 30 old-time Security and Air Police from the Southeast Asia conflict along with wives and family members gathered at the Hope, then spent the day on Saturday for lunch and guided tour of the Museum. Many spent the night Saturday, and those still there Sunday morning were treated to an inside tour of a active C-5 that was stopped at WP AFB. After a large breakfast buffet at the Hope on Sunday, we said our farewells, and headed out for home locations in Ohio,



The gathering of the men of the VSPA on March 6, 2010 at the Defender Statue on the grounds of the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Kentucky, Virginia, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, New York, and our long distant travelers, Dennis Evans and Angie Shanahan, from Cedar Park, Texas...topping Howard Yates, who traveled from Orlando, Florida, in 2009. A special salute to VSPA Member Bob Griffith, and the Museum Coordinator Jane Leach, for their assistance in making our weekend an outstanding success again this year.”



Dennis Evans and Jack the Old Cowboy Smith apparently about to fly a C-5 Galaxy. Let us pray.



SSgt Gene MeHaffy (445th Air Lift Wing, Wright-Patterson AFB), Rick Holstein, Jack the Old Cowboy Smith and Dennis Evans in front of the C-5 Galaxy they toured.



The original coordinators of the VSPA Mini Reunion in Dayton. Left to right: Wayne DeZarn, Rick Adams, Mike Tillman, Sam Lewis, Jack Smith, and Pat Houseworth.



The ladies of the Sisterhood at the Mini Reunion in Dayton are, left to right, standing: Brenda Ramey, Martha Workman, Patricia Houseworth, Sheila Gervase-Cain, Angela Shanahan, Mary Gearig, Pam Davis. Left to right, seated: Ruth Lewis, LaDonna Gerhardt, Roberta Smith and Judy Gianelos.

“Profound Description of Our Soldierly Bonds”

Bud Owens, LM #56, Binh Thuy 66-67, received the following very eloquent essay from Lt. Col Eric Furey, who was welcomed home at Pease AFB by Bud’s group of greeters a couple of years ago (www.peasegreeters.org). It’s a blog written by Army Captain Kyle A. Comfort, who was KIA in Afghanistan May 8, 2010. The introductory email from General Thomas speaks for itself.

I wanted to take the opportunity to give you a report from the funeral for one of our warriors where I was your General Officer representative. Captain Kyle A. Comfort was buried on MON, 17 May, in Jacksonville, Alabama. Kyle was assigned to D COMPANY 3rd/75th Ranger Regiment and was killed approximately two weeks ago in combat in Afghanistan. He was survived by his wife of 5 years, and their 6 month old daughter.

The turnout/support for his wake and funeral was simply amazing...1000+ folks at the church and lining the approximately 3 mile route through town to his final resting place (accompanied by 300+ motorcycle riders from the various support riding groups).

What I wanted to provide for your personal SA is the following BLOG that was read at his eulogy and was written by him as a young 2LT serving with 2nd BDE of the 101st in Iraq about two years ago. I found it to be one of the most profound descriptions of our soldierly bonds that I’ve ever heard.

Brigadier General Raymond “Tony” Thomas

Thursday, January 31, 2008

Distance means nothing

Current mood: grateful

To All,

Im not really a blog kind of person but I figured I would give it a shot. There are a few things that run across my mind regularly while serving in Iraq, and oddly enough I just happened to have a way to put it down in “writing”.

You can read it in books, you can see it on tv, you can see it in the newspapers, but unless you have actually been here to watch these few, these happy few, who day after day put themselves at risk to complete the mission then you could never truly understand their sacrifices. Some dont know what the mission is in the grand scheme, some dont even care, but regardless they will complete it with honor. Everyday I wake up to see these men of Bravo company take another step closer towards freedom.

Not just freedom for themselves, for you or for me, but for the people of Iraq.

They have left it all behind, some for a 2nd and 3rd time, and they conduct each day with nothing more than a guarantee that tomorrow is one day closer to home. They complain not about being here, not about why we’re here, not even about how many times they have been here. Their complaints are usually that the water they shaved with this morning, assuming they were given the opportunity.

I can stare any one of these men in the face and read the story of what it is to serve honorably. Missing my incredibly supportive wife I can handle but waking up each day to see these heroes driving on as if this day was the greatest day I find hard to hold in. They ask nothing of their leaders except the truth. Listening to encouraging words will no longer be necessary for me when it gets hard in life for I have the experiences of Bravo company to help me drive on. I did not KNOW honor until I served with these Soldiers. I am truly a blessed man who has been given all that I have ever asked. My reward is to have this opportunity to serve along side them. Some of these men are no more then 17-18 years of age but make no mistake for they are as much a man as any one person you know. Words can never convey what these men do each day. I did not know what to expect when I came to Iraq. I did not understand my place on the battlefield in the current fight and I certainly did not understand entirely what it would mean to serve along side Americas finest. I believe I now know my role and it is a role I take very seriously. I will do whatever it takes to get all these men home safely and back to their families. Everytime I leave the wire I know they are watching out for me. Sometimes I can tell they are watching out for me more so than they are themselves. At first I thought it was because I was a Lieutenant, and maybe so at first, but not anymore. Now they do it because Im one of them.....Bravo Company.

To all who know me, you know that I love my wife, my family, and my soldiers more than anything. If you have never had the opportunity to serve alongside them I implore you to speak with them. He is not a robot anymore than anyone else, but if you attack him, his instincts will seem almost reflexive in nature.

America, sleep sound tonight. The Soldiers of Bravo Company will tuck you in with the power of freedom and all that it offers. They will ask nothing of you and it is likely they never will.

When you see these few, these happy few, tell them you love them for their sacrifice and that you slept well tonight.

Kyle A. Comfort, 2LT FA Bravo Co FSO 2-502D IN REGT

What's With the Blue Helmet?

By B. Steven Rivers; Tan Son Nhut, 377th SPS, 67-68; Bangkok 73-75

I was asked by Tim Waage, why a Security Troop was wearing a BLUE Law Enforcement Troops blue helmet at TSN:

Here is the story on that one. At Tan Son Nhut, you had two separate units, the LE Side which did the typical base patrol and functions and the Security side. The two outfits didn't mix. The LE side wore the pretty blue helmets and looked down on Security. Of course Security looked down on LE.

I was in LE before I came to TSN. I was accidentally assigned to a Security billet when I was assigned to the 377th. I should have come in as Law Enforcement; my AFSC was LE, not Security. While I was stationed at Moody AFB, all my buddies were getting orders to Nam. Pretty much everyone that got there before me and some after me were getting orders. I came

to find out my records were stamped "P.I." Political Influential! So I wasn't going anywhere. When I complained and said I wanted to go! Then they panicked and gave me the first available slot, which was a security AFSC, not LE.

Course then the Captain in charge of the security side (Carl Denisio) at TSN, had to decide what he was going to do with an LE troop. He couldn't really stick me in harms way, so had the bright idea to make me a roving LE patrol in the security areas, issuing tickets to speeders on the ramps and parking areas. Plus I was running coffee and water to the standing posts. I became Mobile 51. I went to the Helicopter Sq and scrounged up a revolving red light that they were removing off the choppers. They rigged it into a red light for me, and mounted it on a tube that fit into the M-60 pipe stand on the jeeps. I could throw a switch and bang - got a Kojak light! Capt D made me get a blue AP helmet from LE since I was writing tickets and then later the Security Police Blue when they came in.

I would escort the Freedom Birds in and out from the runways, in case a ZAPPER got in the grass and tried to attack the contract flights. I had sent you a couple of shots of the Stewardess from a Continental flight. I would always beg for fresh milk (the thing I missed the most in country), blankets and food off the planes. The girls had to come down and sit in the jeep and put on the hard helmet and get their pictures taken holding the M-16. It was really a great job to have. Nothing but Day Shifts and got to visit all the posts and bring things to the guys that needed something at their post.

Then one day I was on CHARLIE Row where all the C-123s were parked. An area where we always had problems with speeders! An unmarked car went flying down the parking row and I gave chase, my little red ball just a shining! The car refuses to yield. I blew my little jeep horn and pulled up beside some guy in civvies! All he does is glare and says, "get the (BEEP) away from me!" He pulls up in front of the terminal area, jumps out, tells me he doesn't have time for me and takes off inside. So I pull out my trusty little ticket book and begin to write! Speeding, failure to stop for emergency vehicle, illegal parking on the terminal and anything else I can think of. Stick the tickets under the windshield and off I go having done my duty!

Later I get a call from Capt "D" to report to CSC. Come to find out the fine gentlemen I chased down the parking row and to the terminal was the Wing Commander. He wanted my (BEEP) reprimanded, busted, tickets tore up and pretty much me buried at the end of the flight line. Reportedly Capt "D" told him he could do all these things but he would be the one to explain it all to Washington! That is when Capt "D" informed the Wing Commander that my Uncle is Congressman L. Mendel Rivers, Chairman of the Armed Services Committee and that he recommended he should just accept the tickets. He did!

Capt "D" then recommended I might want to pick another job off the flight line. When I made runs to various posts, I was always intrigued with Tango One. Nobody ever climbed up to bother you up there, great view of everything and seemed like a good spot out of the line of fire. So I said, "How about Tango One?" He said, excellent idea and the next day I retired the blue helmet and started working Tango One.

Military Working Dogs Adopted at Luke AFB



Left are three of the Military Working Dogs that VSPA members saw in action at last year's reunion. Roc, Kisma and Jampy were with the 56th SFS at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona. Our reunion featured two outstanding K-9 demonstrations, and these were three of the dogs we watched. All three retired from active duty on April 7, and were adopted by active-duty dog handlers.



(Left to right) MWD Jampy was adopted by SSgt John Pillarella; MWD Roc was adopted by SSgt Kyle Alltop, and MWD Kisma was adopted by SSgt Phillip Kittelson. We were also fortunate to meet all three of these handlers during our reunion last October, and have stayed in touch with them.



VSPA's former Kennel Master Bill Cummings shows off the shadow boxes, proclamations, and "retirement bones" for the three retiring Military Working Dogs. "It was the most impressive military ceremony that I have ever attended," Bill said. "Squadron Commander Major Michael Borders made the official presentations and he did a great job." SSgt Justin Kitts was the Master of Ceremonies for the event and SSgt Charles Wilder assisted. It should be noted that Phillip Kittelson, John Pillarella, Justin Kitts, and Charles Wilder all were supported by the Old Dawgs & Pups program during their tours in the war zone.

The Star Spangled Banner Flag

By Bud Owens, LM #56, Binh Thuy, 632nd SPS, 66-67

The Star Spangled Banner Flag, recently unveiled at the Pease International Tradeport by Captain Richard Phillips of the M/V Maersk Alabama, was at Fenway Park in Boston on May 23. The Flag was flown to help honor all the participating runners in the Run To Home Base 9K Race, a fund raiser to help New England service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan who suffer from combat stress disorders. This flag is the only flag to have flown over the decks of the USS Constitution, USS Bainbridge, and M/V Maersk Alabama. These three ships represent over two hundred thirty years of American history, battling pirates and other enemies of this great nation. It is only right that it help fight other more personal enemies as well. The Pease Greeters are proud to help this worthy cause in any way possible.

The flag also is scheduled to be raised at Ground Zero, NYC, on June 7. A color guard from West Point will be there, as well as some troops who have come through Pease. There's more on the Star Spangled Banner Flag, Captain Phillips and the Pease Greeters in a story published in the Foster's Daily Democrat of Dover, New Hampshire, at:

www.fosters.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100516/GJNEWS_01/705169868

We Watched the Wire

We were hardly more than kids when we went off to war.
Far away to Vietnam, we scarcely knew what for.
Some of us still in our teens, as we faced the baptism of fire.
With all the strength and pride we had, each night we watched the wire.

Often through the night alone, we waited for the worst.
Wrestling fear and shadows, beneath our breath we cursed.
And oft' as not when daylight came, to break the night so dire.
Not ere' an enemy was seen, but we still watched the wire.

There were times when hell broke forth, and fire fell all around.
And Charlie pressed the fight all night, as rockets shook the ground.
The night aglow from east to west with the battle's fire,
Then we stood and we gave our best, as we fought and watched the wire.

So many years have passed, scarcely can we now recall,
Those nights, those friends, those names, written now upon a wall.
At night when we lay down to sleep, as our minds search through the mire,
Our thoughts are colored with the din, and still we watch the wire.

© Randy "Ramps" Stutler (LM #420, Tan Son Nhut, 6250th APS, 377th APS, 67-68) 5/30/10

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USAF Security Police Vietnam Veterans - Welcome Home!

If you served in USAF Air Police, Security Police, K-9, Safeside or as a Security Police Augmentee in Vietnam or Thailand between 1958 and 1975, there's a great brotherhood looking for you. With more than 1,200 currently active members, the Vietnam Security Police Association is where you belong.

VSPA was formed for many reasons: to reunite friends, to preserve the memory of our fallen brothers and the history of our service in Vietnam and Thailand, and to ensure that the hard lessons learned in that war would not be forgotten. Lessons of life and death, forged in war, tempered in battle, that when remembered provide inspiration to Airmen who are yet to taste combat defending the fortress, and pride for those of us who have fought and bled together.

If you're qualified and interested in membership, read more about VSPA and how to join at our website: www.vspa.com Welcome Home to VSPA!