

Vietnam War Poems of the Night!



Poetry: Vietnam War

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Terry Austin (RIP)... Submitted and © 1997

Vietnam War Poem

April 3 and 10

Submitted and © 1997, by Terry Austin (RIP)

377th SPS, Tan Son Nhut AB, 1965-1966

35th SPS, Phan Rang AB: 1970

(Sung to the tune of Sink the Bismarck)

The following poem/song was written by six Air Policemen after Tan Son Nhut Air Base was attacked on April 13, 1966. I was one of the writers.

I never will forget the night that Tan Son Nhut was hit---"C" Flight was on duty then, we knew this was it.

We hit the dirt and looked around with anxious waiting eyes, and said a prayer as mortars came raining from the skies.

The Virgin boys of "C" Flight had never been to war, the thoughts of seeing action here, was very, very far.

But on that night of April, April 3 and 10,

The Virgin Boys of "C" Flight deserved to be called men.

The Mortars kept falling for what seemed an eternity, smoke and fire began to raise as far as the eye could see.

But the men of "C" Flight held their ground, and tried with all their will to hold their weapons steady and their shaking hands still.

Everyone was hoping that "Charlie" would be seen, but we all knew that the chance for this was mighty, mighty lean.

For we knew that we were ready now, and feeling pretty mean, and our shaking nerves by now had grown a little more secure.

And when it was all over and everything was calm, we realized that war here for us, had just began.

For on that night in April, April 3 and 10, the Virgin Boy's of "C" Flight deserved to be called men.

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Vietnam War Poem

April 3 and 10

Poem

Submitted and © 1997, by Terry Austin (RIP)

377th SPS, Tan Son Nhut AB, 1965-1966

35th SPS, Phan Rang AB: 1970

(Sung to the tune of Sink the Bismarck)

The following poem/song was written by six Air Policemen after Tan Son Nhut Air Base was attacked on April 13, 1966. I was one of the writers.

Tan Son Nhut 1963



An unknown escort for the mailbox



Tan Son Nhut main gate in 1963



Guardmount, participants unknown, maybe you recognize someone



Home sweet Home: the latest accommodations



The Amos Drain



F-102 Aircraft on the flightline



Bob Amos in the "mess hall"

Amador Garcia Jr. ... Vietnam Veteran (c) 1995

35th SPS, Da Nang AB 1965-1966;
Phan Rang AB 1969-1970

Vietnam Veteran

Its been so long that we have answered our Nation's call,
From all walks of life we came,
Rich, Poor, Foolish and Young,
For all 'the Glory and Fame'.

We served our time in the hell called Vietnam,
Then came home and saw Saigon Fall,
The war has been over for many years,
But not in our Dreams and Fears,
Some call us cry babies and say it was not a war,
But we know it was, and what we did it for,
We have our Memorials and the "Wall".

But we fought with them one and all,
We still have problems with Agent Orange and PTSD,
In this great nation of Liberty?

Our government still neglects our POW/MIAs.
And we still have problems with the VA,
We were known as America's best,

"WELCOME HOME" to all VIETNAM VETS

Douglas Gorski, Sgt.... Vietnam Brotherhood 1970

483RD SPS,
Cam Ranh Bay AB
1970

Vietnam Brotherhood

We would not have gone
if not for our Brothers

We would not have fought
if not for our Brothers

We would not have killed
if not for our Brothers

We would not have died
if not for our Brothers

We would not have to remember
if not...

for our Brothers

John Irving... The Map © 1998
(ex-CW2), Alpha Troop, 7/17th Cav

Time passes,
Wounds close,
pain dulls,
As scars heal.

Once again
I'm tricked
Into believing
It's Finally Over.

Then my eyes, unbidden,
Grasp that 'J' shaped
Coastline in Asia,
On a map of the world.

Where were you
when the first man died?
Where were you
when his family cried?

Once again these names
Draw me closer, ever closer,
So close I can't see them
Without my glasses.

Once again these places,
That time, jump out
Clutching my back
Thrilling my neck.

Whoa ! Stop ! Once again,
again the room spins
as I flash back anew to that huge airport
where I first came to the Nam.

Senses assaulted, hot Hot
HOT, burned dung smell.
Humid as a steam bath,
Fetid as a swamp.

Where were you,
when an 18 year old boy left for Vietnam
and returned with eyes 10 years older
than his 19 year old body?

Can you understand
what those eyes reveal
about places and things
you who are protected
never have to know?

CRACK ! 'Incoming!' Sonic boom
122 mike mike Katushkas
streak inches overhead, 50 pound warheads
explode so hard my soul is shaken.

Where were you
when we began taking rocket fire
casualties just 10 minutes
after arriving in South Vietnam?

Where were you
when one of my men
on his second day in-country
was killed on his 18th Birthday?

An Kke, Quin Nhon
First fire fight.
Top says 'Your buddy's dead !'
That can't be right !

Where were you
when my best friend
triggered a landmine
then died in my arms,

with body parts,
and bone fragments?

Where were you
when I arrived
in that war torn land,
age just twenty-one?

Doing what my government
asked me to do
and what my fellow Americans
expected me to do.

Pleiku, Kontum,
'Enemy in the Wire !!'
Outgoing, incoming,
'The Nam's on fire !'

There! on the map
The A Shau Valley ! GOD!
Grunts're dead at A Shau,
We fought all week.

Where were you those long,
dark, and frightening nights
when we sat in the mud and the rain
waiting for the enemy?

Ban Me Thuot, Nha Trang,
Got shot down,
I flew again that afternoon,
Got shot down again !

Where were you when our men
turned up missing, became P-Oh-Ws?
Seventy-nine Prisoners of War
have been seen in Asia since 1972.

**2,096 Americans
are still missing, un-account-ed for.
Why aren't you there now, searching,
while our men are STILL missing?**

**Khe Sanh, Quang Tri,
Hue, Phu Bai.
Marble Mountain, Da Nang
Nui Ba Dinh.**

**Vinh Long, My Tho,
'He's shot through the head !'
Rach Gia, Chi Lang,
So Many Friends Dead !**

**Where were you when we arrived
back on American soil?
Did you curse and throw
rotten eggs at us?**

**Why aren't you at the funerals
we go to for our comrades
who poisoned, continue to fall
to dioxin and Agent Orange?**

**58,229 Americans died in Vietnam.
Since the war ended 150,000 vets
have committed suicide.
Why aren't you howling in pain?**

**Why do starving homeless Vets
leep in cardboard boxes,
while criminals get free medical care,
wholesome food and shelter?**

**Why do prisoners have huge law libraries
and get to sue the government?
Why do we spend billions on foreign aid while
denying Vets adequate medical care?**

Where are you as Veterans' rights
are threatened every day?
Where are you when the V.A. man
denies our benefits and claims?

I held myself together and kept
the wolf so far from your door,
that you and others can pretend
that the wolf never existed.

Where are you now when a sound,
or a smell, or a dream
touches that part of me buried so deep
that I wake up screaming?

Whoa ! Stop !

They're just names
On a stupid map and
It was so long ago....

Why can't I stop crying?

John Irving ex-CW2, Alpha Troop, 7/17th Cav

Chaplain Steve Janke... 30 Years Ago Today © 1992

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

Seattle to Alaska on our Vietnam hop.

We got to Anchorage but had to stop.
One last night in America as our plane needs repairs.
Hey, we're put up in a hotel and free food so who cares.
One more day of FREEDOM
one more day of fun.
At least we're not walking around in the Asian sun.
It's freezing cold as the news is told.
We're gonna miss this old U.S.A.
But we'll try to be back somehow...someday.



Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971



I'll run to you, Lord. I'll run to you, Lord.
Seeing weeping faces,
Living in dark places,
Feeling life's disgraces,
I will run.
I'll run to you, Lord. I'll run to you, Lord.
Seeing mean faces,
Escaping dark places,
Feeling Heavenly graces,
I will run.
I'll run to you, Lord. I'll run to you, Lord
Seeing kind faces,
Living in light places,
Hearing Heavenly praises.
I will run.
I'll run to you, Lord. I'll run to you, Lord.
Finishing the final races,
I will run.
I'll run to you, Lord. I'll run to you, Lord.
Reaching the finishing line to see, Heavenly faces.
Seeing your radiant, loving face,
I will run.

Patricia Kelley
February 07, 2013

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*



At last the objective is again in sight.
Nothing has changed since the other night.

Now all is left is to slip through and plant our package
Then retreat quickly and view the carnage.

The sentries and dogs are not where they were before.
It seems we've been detected and danger is at the door.

We must shoot it out while others go another way.
It looks like this may be our final day.

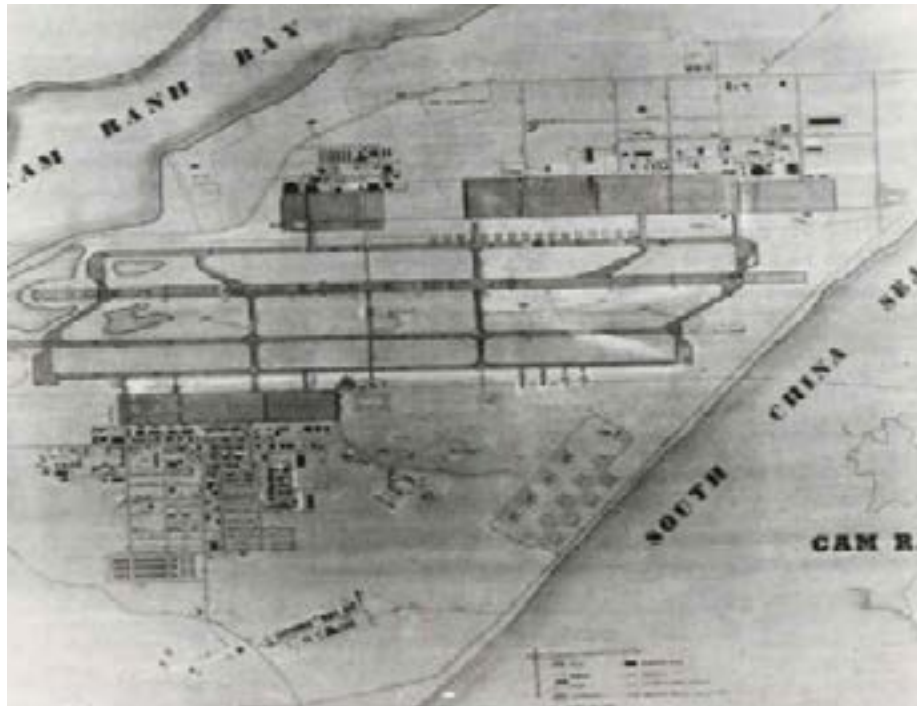
I worked my way around the hill.
I tried to be so quiet and still.

I stood up suddenly to get a look.
And for just a second was all it took.

I saw his face as he saw mine.
And shots rang out.
And shots rang out....

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**

We're undermanned...no time for fun,
Yellow alert's expecting attack
Every day and night watching your back.
Rockets and sappers again tonight.
There's not enough men for the fight.
We ask a nearby base for extra troops with their dogs.
Somehow they arrive in the fog.
Steve, go to the armory and get some stuff,
go pick up new troops, it might get rough.
Shotgun, M-16, .38, with radio I find.
Got plenty of stuff in case I get in a bind.
They're sweeping the road,
we are in Red Option One.
Is it possible to drive and shoot a gun.
I get to the terminal...
No problem yet.
We're taking rockets as the new teams I get.
Then we're back to the kennels...Mission is done.
New K-9 teams are posted and Charlie's on the run.



*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

There are many anxious moments in a war that is fought at night (mostly).
Most of the time, you are not involved
but intently listen to them that are in the fight.
Your buddies call in movement...or a K-9 alerts nearby.
They are told to go in alone...
You can almost hear them sigh.
(Their night is extremely long
and you listen to the radio and
Wonder if they'll be ok)
You try to remember who is on those posts,
who just called in...
As you listen to the radio
and whisper a prayer for them to win.



Chaplain Steve Janke... Attempted Rape © 1992

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

I had just turned twenty when I saw a young soldier hold a gun
On a Vietnamese teen girl, to satisfy his desires and have some fun.

He pulled the hammer back on his pistol--it was a 38.
I walked into the room--it must have been fate.

She was crying and begging him to let her be.
Without thinking I drew my weapon and said let her go free.

Steve, you would shoot me? he said,
as he drunkenly pointed his gun to my head.
No I wouldn't...but you heard what I said.

Another voice from behind said yeah...let her alone.
Now others began to yell as we heard a ring on the phone.
All at once it was over, this new Sgt. backed away,

And lowered his gun.
This was not my idea of a man having fun.

Vietnam was a strange and dangerous place.
You could see teenage soldiers age overnight
just by looking at their face.

It brought out the worst and best of us all.
At least this time I was able to stand tall.

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971

In 1970 boys were training how to Kill
Crawling under wire and over Hill.
Weapons here, weapons There.
Learning of weapons Everywhere
Somewhere the boy got left Behind
And are just snapshots of the Mind.
His voice still calls out so I turn and Stare
To look for the boy but he's never There.
I miss that boy that left so long Ago.
He left without ever saying Goodbye.

***Advance Combat Training:** Do you remember they had a simulated air base with posts and wire? Did anyone get attacked on their training nights or have a standoff?*

Edwin J. Smith

Rest in peace now John...this poem is for you. Jack
377th SPSD 68-69 LM 453
The Old Cowboy Poet

I was in contact with John Galinac by email for over a year. We were able to meet at the 2012 Mini reunion in Dayton Ohio. I was so impressed with just how strong John was. He proved the doctors wrong for years. During the 3 days that we were together at the reunion, he would come up to me each day, 2 or 3 times, and say I am sorry I cannot remember your name forgive me. We had a great weekend and his wife Brenda was and is one strong woman. Rest in peace now John...this poem is for you. Jack

I Can't Remember Your Name....

I stand before you looking into your eyes
My mindless stare is not my fault
A face I can't remember though I try
My memory locked like a bank's vault

Agent Orange took so much from me
Through all the years enduring the pain
Images floating before me that I cannot see
Sometime slipping, believing I am insane

To be lost in dreams that I cannot recall
When morning breaks and I awake
Trying so hard to remember what my mind saw
Knowing that I cause my family so much heartache

I can't remember your name from one day to another
How frustrating it is for me not knowing who you are
But I know from the look on your face that we are brothers
And that we share a bond that came from a faraway war

Please do not look at me with eyes filled with pity
See me for what I was not what I have become
You see it has been a very long, long, journey
Soon the Lord will open his hand and grant me freedom

Chaplain Steve Janke... Beach Run © 1992

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

War Dogs use to love to go to the Beach
When it was their turn.
It was one of their few rewards we did learn.
To run on the Beach off leash and play...
No commands, watch'em, heel or stay.
They seemed like pups again
In the South China Sea...
Romping and Roaming forever free.
But soon...all to soon...it's time again to go
Back to the kennels just me and my K-9 friend.
For a little while we both escaped in the water
And in the sun.
And the war had turned to
Fonder memories of other times and fun.
I've been to the Beach many times since then.
And each time it makes me think of my old
War Dog
WHEN
We were both young.

Chaplain Steve Janke... Bill © 1992

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*



We trained together from day number one.
We went through a lot of hardships but we also had a lot of fun.
Bill, from PA, even came to my wedding before we left for the war.
He was with me on the plane after saying goodbye and they closed the door.

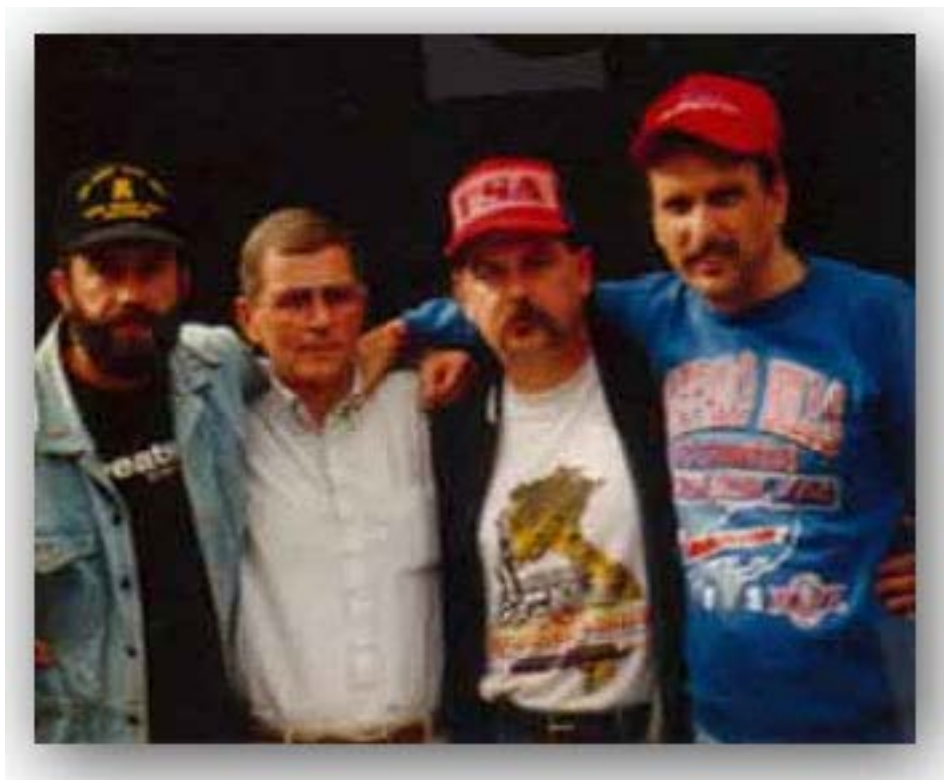
Over twenty years have passed and we still call and write.
On occasion we even drop in to say hi,
seeing him (and his family)
is always a pleasant sight.

Bingo was Bill's war dog in Vietnam in 1970-71.
Yes, Bill went to Vietnam and not Canada on the run.
They gave him a medal even though he was young.
The Air Force Commendation Medal for a job well done.

Bill Klinger will always be a part of me. A great guy

***Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971***

Friends made in a combat zone are friends whose souls are knit.
People whose metal was tested and whose lives flowed together every bit.
Time and space do not separate those who fought and tasted fate.
God above knows this bond of soldier, this bond of men.
It is sometimes the only good we can see of war...
when we can make this kind of friend



Chaplain Steve Janke... Chopper © 1992

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

I was out in the open that night...
Pinned down by both sides when a chopper had me in his sight.

Down he came after raining down lead on a nearby hill.
Quickly he came and put a light in my face.
If I die tonight it will be by God's will.

He hovers over me and I hold my breath and pray.
To the Lord up above and think what ever happened to this
Once peaceful place called Cam Ranh Bay?

He stops shooting and talks on his radio to our side.
When you are in K-9 and walking point there is no place to hide.

Soon the chopper turns and moves out of sight.
And you count your blessings while waiting for dawn's early light.

May 23, 1971

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*



*E*ach night another part of the outer base we take.
And watch for Charlie and simply wait.
Your mind can play tricks when you're 'in such a state.
You're alone, afraid, far from home and it's late.

Shadows seem like men and movement coming my way.
Does the next battle include me at Cam Ranh North Bay?

It's silly, it's nothing at all you see.
It's only my imagination, my fear, it's just me.

I've never seen a snorkel tube in the water...what's this?
How long should I watch, or just fire at will?
That tube is now blocked by a tree, now a hill.

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971

Does he get away, are there many or just a few.
I wonder, what, just exactly what should I do?
A platoon now may be forming, out of the water and ready to fight.
Any moment now they all could be 'in my sight.
What to do...I know. I'll pop a flare in the direction.
I do and the man at (radio) control asks what is your location.

All secure I routinely say as many a time before,
But I'm wondering if soon fighting will be at the door.
Was it a shadow or really a sighting,
Was it the wire or only the lighting?

Maybe somewhere an old Vietnamese soldier reflects and
is writing about me,
When he probed the American base in his country,
And a flare was sent up that changed his direction,
As he writes his war journal and shares his reflections.
They walked the path, as Warriors do.

The voices return, -- carry on, carry on ...
You have Battles on ahead,
These you must win.
The Battles of Happiness -- Trust ...
These causes you must win, must win.

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

Each night another part of the base we take
And watch for Charlie and simply wait.
Your mind can play tricks when you're in such a state.
You're alone, afraid, far from home and it's late.
Shadows seem like men and movement coming my way.
Does the next battle include me at Cam Ranh North Bay?
It's silly, it's nothing at all you see.
It's only my imagination, my fear, it's just me.

I've never seen a snorkel tube in the water...what's this..
How long should I watch, or just fire at will.
That tube now is being blocked by a tree now a hill.
Does he get away, are there many or just a few.
I wander, what, just exactly what should I do?

A platoon now may be forming, out of the water and ready to fight.
Any moment now they all could be in my sight.
What to do...I know...I'll pop a flare in the direction.
I do.. and The Man at radio control asks, what is my location?

All secure I routinely say as many a time before.
But I'm wondering if soon fighting will be at the door.
Was it a shadow or really a sighting.
Was it the wire or only the lighting?

Maybe somewhere an old Vietnamese soldier reflects
and is writing about me..
When he probed the American base in his own country.
And a Flare was sent up that changed his direction...
As he writes his war journal and shares his Reflection

Chaplain Steve Janke... First Firefight © 1992

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

I caught him in the lights...
the whole war seemed to stop
As I aimed and put him in my sights.

I could stop him but would I give my position away?
Should I squeeze a few off or should I wait here and stay?
Are there others I do not see listening for noise so they can overrun me?
How long do I wait...has someone got me in his sights?
This is the part of war that I hate.
He looks to the right...spots me, and dives behind some bushes and hits
the ground.

The next morning a huge pool of blood
at that exact spot was found.
I can still see his face...he looked so very young.
Sometimes I wonder if he knows that his side won,
And does it matter to him



*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

They say I'm short and homeward bound.
Then why is there no happiness found?
One year here will soon be ore.
And I'll walk to that Freedom Bird door.
But I can't relax, no letting down.. why?
Because to let down may mean to die.
It's like a dream, can it really be.
Everyone cheers as we fly by..

But thinking of Friends below just makes me sigh.
God be with you, I know your fears.
I didn't know it then, but the next time I'd see
some Of you would be twenty years.

The plane gets me home and I kiss the ground.
The family I left is the same one I found.
We embrace and hug and cannot separate.
The difference in life and death is only fate.

When I was there I dreamed of home.
Now I am here but how my mind does roam.

When I was young I was taught at school.
That freedom wasn't free and about the Golden Rule.

I know them both but one came hard:
To learn it I had to leave my own back yard.

...God's peace to all this Sept 11th...

Chaplain Steve Janke... Getting Backup From God

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



Chaplain 's Corner



Getting Backup From God “THE LORD SHALL GUIDE THEE CONTINUALLY.” Isaha.58: 11

Sometimes Vietnam Vets isolate themselves from others wither intentionally or without knowledge. We all remember bow important BACKUP was to us in Vietnam and bow important “What is your location?” was. Every day brings its own challenges and perplexities. When we lose our way and can't find the path Hew will direct every step of the path, every hour of the day, every day of the year of our life if we will but be guided. This promise however is made to only those who inverse ten are helping those around them. If we show concern for them, God promises His care and guidance to us.

Jesus is not the “BACKUP” for misers, or those who oppress the less fortunate, or those entrusted to us (family). So let us all endeavor to care for those around us (not isolate) so our backup (Jesus)can get to us... What is your location?

Our hopes and prayers are for a speedy recovery for Danny Williams and Howard Pough... Both have had surgery.

A Chapel Service is being planned for the Sunday morning of our next reunion in Washington D.C. We encourage your attendance if you are planning to make the reunion, During the service we will also be remembering our fellow comrades that were killed in action. If anyone plays a musical instrument and would like to help in planning the service please call me. (201-507-9038)

Chaplain Steve Janke
2Cor 1:8-10

Chaplain Steve Janke... Getting Over Vietnam

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



Chaplain 's Corner



The war in Vietnam ended 24 years ago [April 15, 1975]. Many vets still suffer from their experiences. Many secular psychiatrists by their nature have chosen to ignore the reality of the spiritual dimension of man and by doing this they overlook the only resource that can achieve lasting results. The traumatic experiences of Job and King David are classic examples of how a man, with the help of God, can survive horrible trauma. David was a warrior who's "hands were stained with the blood of war", who was guilty of murder, conspiracy to commit murder, adultery and many other crimes, yet he was later declared to be, "a man after God's own heart." War experiences vary and impact the conscience and spirit of man and need a spiritual healing. Peace, which is so illusive to men of war, can only be achieved through knowing the Prince of Peace, Jesus the Messiah. Knowing the Lord can help us gain a new identity which helps us to be at peace with our Vietnam experience, there will still be tough times, but with His sustaining grace. The same peace is available to the many women who have known Vietnam vets. The time for tearing is past, the time for mending is now.

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven a time to tear and a time to mend." (Eccies.3: 1,7)

(Portions of this article were written by Larry Haworth, Pointman Ministries)

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

The world gave me a look as
My uniform I wore.
I was feeling patriotic as
I entered Freedom's Door.

The stewardesses were talking and
Laughing behind my seat.
This is not the kind of treatment
That I expected then to meet.

If they only knew the struggles
I had faced the past year through.
They'd be ashamed and much embarrassed
Of the things they say and do.

It added to the burden
I was feeling deep inside.
My anger and disappointment
I would have to start to hide.

For many years my uniform
Was safely put away.
Along with all my medals
In a hidden box to stay.

As my generation grew up
They had learned about the war,
Of the pain and many struggles
That each young soldier indeed did bore.

Once again I have the pride
That I did when I was young
After fighting in the war
And turning in my gun.

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

Hopelessness Overcome
Day after day death in the air.
Night after night the 1000 yard stare.
No way around it. It must get done. Yellow alert no time for fun.

Guardmount is quiet no joking each night.
Briefings are tense bout enemies sights.
Hope is lost except for one thing.
The war dog is our courage and what he brings

W/o him we're all alone out there,
Alone to fear, alone to stare.
With him we have a weapon unseen.
His sights are sharp his senses are keen.

He brought us confidence and company to boot.
He brought us a smile and courage to shoot.
He is our hero so long as stories are told.
He deserves all the praise he was so bold.

He gave us hope, joy and laughter.
His life has given us many years here after.
Salute with me his glory and honor
Certain times of the year his greatness we ponder.

He was our hope, companion and friend.
If we had to go with him we'd do it all again.

Chaplain Steve Janke... How Do I Get Free From Fear? PTSD

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

How Do I Get Free From Fear?

There are a lot of symptoms of PTSD: depression, anger, guilt, hyper alertness, fear and many others. Fear can be a powerful emotion. The Apostle John wrote, "Perfect love casts out fear, for fear has torment." The main cause of fear is an excessive concern about one's self: self preservation, self image, what the future holds for one's self. Those feelings may not hit the surface, but they are the real cause of fear. If a person is filled with love for someone else, then the focus is away from self and on the other person. The perfect love that comes from Christ should fill our lives. As it does it crowds out all the fear. Knowledge and experience can help us crowd out fear. We fear the unknown and are comfortable with the familiar. Even as fear tends to inhibit action and bring paralysis, in like manner, action tends to dispel fear.

King David the warrior wrote, "The Lord is my shepherd... I will fear no evil." We should remind ourselves over and over that God is all-powerful and that His protection is sufficient for any need. Some fear is healthy. We should fear or respect fire, electricity, bullets, bankruptcy, and God Himself. Some fears are totally false and inflicted. God's Word brings peace and casts out fear. The Psalmist said God inhabits the praises of His people.

I had a good feeling coming home from California and the Dedication of the War Dog Memorial. I felt honored to be one of the speakers. Truly those dogs were a gift from God to help many feel safe and to bring many home safe. It was good to see many from our VSPA there. Thanks for being there and for all your support. Having good friends drives away fear too.

Sincerely Yours,

Steve Janke, Chaplain VSPA

Chaplain Steve Janke... Incoming © 2011

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

Sometimes rockets hit the base
And I'm far away...
On the other side when they come in from the Bay.
You hear the Thud of them hit..
And your throat gets so dry you can hardly spit.

Those near the Thud must quarter their post.
One of the guys gets an alert and you're scared as a ghost.
Then a voice from CSC says we are in Red Option One.
You take a deep breath and chamber a round in your gun.

You wonder all night if your friends are OK ..
The ones that quartered their posts by the Bay.
Sometimes you're too far away and can't hear..
The war on the radio and for your friends you Fear.
You wait anxiously to find out that all is well,
But as far as the next time, well who can tell.

Remember your first Incoming? Where were you when it happened? I was just in country a couple days and in an isolated building that should have been condemned. We were waiting for paperwork to get us into K9 Row and the hooches. They came in in the afternoon late. I heard the thud and dove under a nearby table until the all clear sound was done. I heard footsteps and scrambled to my feet so no one would see me under the table. That was my welcome to Vietnam. Later it got more personal

*Chaplain Steve Janke... Chaplain's Corner:
I've Learned to Respect Every Veteran © 1997*

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*



**Chaplain 's
Corner**



Firstly let me apologize for not being at the reunion in Texas through my thoughts were with all of you and thanks for the privilege of allowing me to be your Chaplain. I've enjoyed being Chaplain for the K-9 Association as well and look forward to serving you. I have to say that my first duty station was Vietnam and I admired all you guys as soon as I arrived and saw you working. I have always wanted to be able to express my feelings to you all, especially those of you that manned a tower or a bunker or a listening post. When Charlie tried to go around us if he could. I've always admired you guys and your doing your job kept us safe also. Thanks Guys.

I've learned to respect every veteran who went there or served off the coast, perhaps in a ship or those standing by in Thailand. Our war was different and of course brought different problems to deal with as you know. Let me say as your Chaplain that God Almighty saved us from that place for a reason and He wants to use that experience to make us better, not bitter. He can use even bad things in our life for our good and His glory. I plan to write articles on PTSD and would also like to encourage you to write me for information to help your PTSD, and also your prayer requests, or just write if you want, or call.

Let me close my first article by quoting a Bible selection from 2 Corinthians 1:8-10 that I like to share at my church every chance I get or opportunity because it talks about us:

“We brethren would not have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life. But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead. Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.”

Chaplain Steve Janke... Chaplain's Corner:
I've Learned to Respect Every Veteran © 1997
Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971



**Chaplain 's
Corner**



This organization also gives us a chance to inform people around us of what it was like to be there and why it was so different. When we came home no one wanted to know and it was painful but now many want to know, and there is a need to express it that helps us. May God and His richest Blessings be yours during the coming holiday season.

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*



Our Journey

How long has it been now
That time can't erase now
Those faded pictures of war and of friends?

How great are the feelings of our stressful time there
The time since that now really helps us to mend.

How deep the impressions
That are etched in our memory
That helped to forge us
To be who we are?

How wide and how vivid our journey has brought us
For truly we've come very far.

Yet many wonders await us who've trusted His mercy
As he calls us soon home one by one.
And says welcome home son....

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



**Chaplain 's
Corner**



At some point, a combat vet with PTSD symptoms will give a godlike status to friends who died in the war. Whether they were good men or not, the dead will suddenly be raised to a much higher esteem than the veteran gives himself. They were better men; they would have made more of their lives if given a chance. Why am I still here and they are gone? What is my purpose? They could have done it better. If I would have done something different, they might be alive.... This is natural. PTSD leads to depression, and depression leads to low self-esteem, which leads to making everyone, especially dead war friends, seem bigger than life. For many veterans, this can also, whether they know it or not, be the time to resolve their feelings about letting dead friends go.

Most combat vets did not have time to grieve during the war. When someone died they accepted it, and pushed back sorrow or any emotional reaction. But those emotions remained inside all those years... and then they are released, veterans suddenly hit the low point of their lives. A veteran needs to learn at how to look at the positive side of surviving instead of the negative. This can be hard when times are rough and the future seems bleak. Maybe you survived so your children can grow up to do great things. Maybe you will do great things. If the country collapsed next week, you wouldn't run around in a panic. You would be able to protect your family, and hope. You would be a survivor, just like you were in the war. When dealing with PTSD, the veteran can work through guilt feelings to a realization that surviving war is something that can be turned into positive feelings.

It takes time.

(Portion of an article taken with per mission from S-2 Report, Latham Press)

John Janke... Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep © 2011

(my son the poet)

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**

Now I lay me down to sleep...
One less terrorist this world does keep..

With all my heart I give my thanks..
To those in uniform regardless of rank..

You serve our country and serve it well..
With humble hearts your stories tell..

So as I rest my weary eyes..
While freedom rings our flag still flies..

You give your all, do what you must...
With God we live and in God we trust....Amen

*My oldest son John posted and wrote this poem on Facebook.
I wanted to share it here*

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*



Little-little orphan child
Hurt because of war.
Hiding very safely there
Behind your heart's door.

Little-little orphan child
Staring at the ground.
Don't know what I expected today
But this is what I found.

Please let me sit down next to you
And help you grieve today.
Our silence doesn't matter.
There are no words to say.

Let us come on back again.
Our time we gladly lend.
Let us come on back sometime.
We just want to be your friend.

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**

There was a home for orphans up the road
So we took supplies there by truck load.
There is a war so we take our gun.
But somehow we thought it could still be fun.
The ride was nice and the view was grand.
It was really great to get away from the sand.
So many children each one here alone.
So many children here who do not have a home.
They loved to be held and flocked to you by the bunch.
So many crowded us we forgot about lunch.
One large room had just infants so tiny and small,

They filled up the room and lined up the hall.
After some chores it was back in the truck,
And home for dinner with just a little luck.
The VC hit that orphanage later that year.
I never found out what happened to all the children dear.

(We were never told and we never asked.)

Chaplain Steve Janke... Osama Bin Laden, Your Time Is Short

© Sep 11, 2006

In memory: September 11, 2001

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

We'd rather you die, than come to court.
Why are you hiding if it was in God's name?
Your just a punk with a turban; a pathetic shame.

I have a question, about your theory and laws;
"How come YOU never die for the cause?"

Is it because you're a coward who counts on others?
Well, here in America, we stand by our brothers.

As is usual, you failed in your mission;
If you expected pure chaos, you can keep on wishing

Americans are now focused and stronger than ever;
Your death has become our next endeavor.

What you tried to kill doesn't live in our walls;

It's not in buildings or shopping malls.

If all of our structures came crashing down;
It would still be there, safe and sound.

Because pride and courage can't be destroyed;
Even if the towers leave a deep void.
We'll band together and fill the holes
We'll bury our dead and bless their souls.

But then our energy will focus on you;
And you'll feel the wrath of the
Red White and Blue.

Chaplain Steve Janke... Osama Bin Laden, Your Time Is Short

© Sep 11, 2006

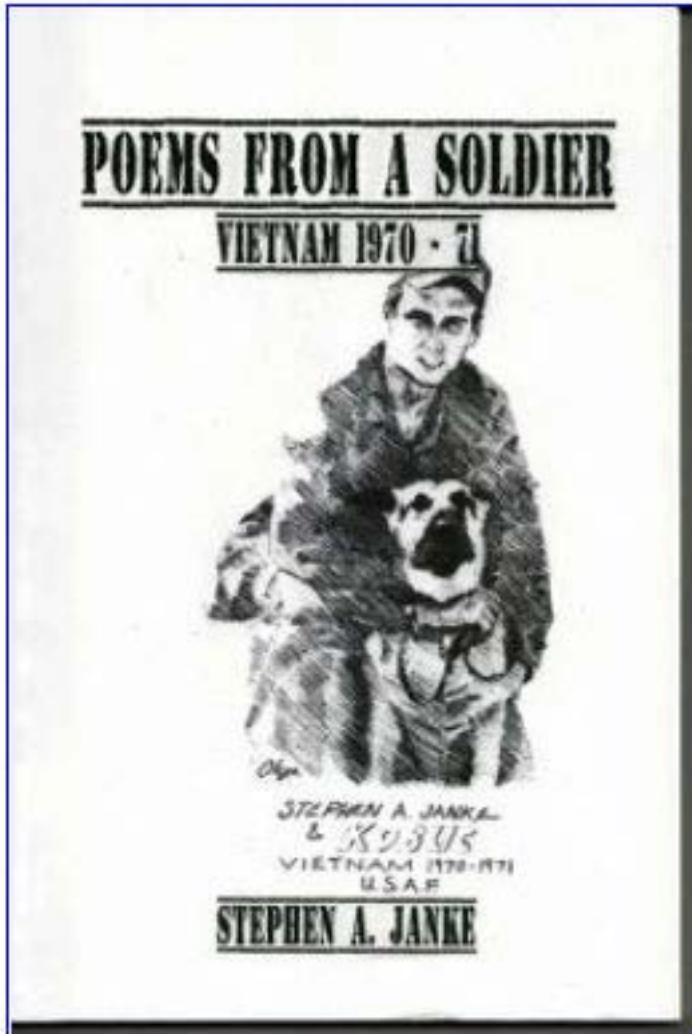
In memory: September 11, 2001

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971

So slither and hide like a snake in the grass;
Because America's coming to
Kick your _____!!!

Chaplain Steve Janke... Poems From A Soldier Vietnam 1970 - 71

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



Poems From A Soldier
Vietnam 1970 - 71
by Stephen A. Janke

A Book Review by
Don Poss, War-Stories.com Webmaster
Four Star Review!

Order Poems From A Soldier
at Xlibris.com

ISBN: 978-1-49317-094-4

“We each carried a letter just in case...”

Poems From A Soldier, is an outstanding collection of poems that will touch dog handlers who served in war and peace ... and also friends and family who want to understand why Vietnam War veterans

came home forever changed.

Poems From A Soldier is like a veteran's heart laid bare. I feel as if author Stephen Janke has drawn words from my own K-9 tour in Vietnam. Most every poem tugs a memory from decades past ... some good and some not.

Military War Dog handlers will feel the bond and remember the padding of their own K-9. Sentry Dog handlers will remember their K-9 who was a cunning and vicious killer whose

Stephen A. Janke... Poems From A Soldier Vietnam 1970 - 71

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971

only friend was his handler. Family and friends may for the first time have a better understanding of what their veteran experienced at war.

Stephen Janke's poem, The Dogs of War in Vietnam, says it best:

You who have walked with your War Dogs beside you.
You who have lived to go on.
You who remember his courage and bravery.
You who still talk of his love.

...Dogs of war gave it all.
Dogs of war still stand tall.

Although many Vietnam Veterans have journeyed back to that land, I had sworn I would never return. Page by page, Stephen Janke's Poems From A Soldier took me back to Nam. It is a book of poetry I will keep with a photo of my K-9, Blackie, and recommend to all as inspired poetry that portrays why America celebrates Veterans Day.

Don Poss,
1965-66, Đà Nẵng AB, SVN, K-9 Blackie X129.
War-Stories.com Webmaster and VSPA.com

Chaplain Steve Janke... Posting Truck

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

To some post-time means a night at the races and
some fun...
To teenage kids in Vietnam it meant going to work in
a war we could not have won.
You think of many things when you're on a truck in
the night.
Heading out to a new post
And wondering if this night you may have to fight.
You think of what is wrong and what is right.
You think of a lot of things as the safety of the base
fades slowly out of sight.
(The wind blows in your face and war dog's eager to get started.)

Going out was different than coming back.
When going out there was the anxiety and worry of
what was ahead.
When coming back, about all you could think of was
maybe some breakfast and the sack.
Alone going out, alone while dropped of, and
alone coming back home.
I guess that's why many ex K-9 men still prefer to be
alone.
The good thing in looking back is that with God there
we're never alone
Then or now.

Chaplain Steve Janke... PTSD and The Holidays Christmas

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**

PTSD and The Holidays

Christmas should be a time of celebration and forming good memories. To many it's a time of getting together with family, remembering past holidays, and acknowledging God's goodness to us. For some veterans the holidays may be a painful and difficult time. It may be hard for them to "act" like everyone else. This family may want to think of new ways to celebrate or start new family traditions. Some vets won't participate in lighting up the tree or putting up the lights on the family house. They remember times that it was a threat to life to be caught out in the lights, out in the open. Since they feel a need to protect their family from danger, just can't enjoy getting into this type of activity either knowingly or unknowingly. Forming new family traditions might be a good way to accomplish the same mission. Some suggestions are: visit a VA hospital together and give out homemade Christmas cards or candy, or visit a homeless shelter and help serve food. Some war vets do not feel comfortable in a crowd, so why plan going out to a public activity if it brings discontentment and perhaps anger? Perhaps limiting visitors to the house, and instead have a small gathering is an alternative. Some vets do not enjoy having unexpected CO drop in. You are limited in ideas only by your imagination. However you choose to observe the holidays, you are forming memories.

May God be with all of you and your families at this special time and throughout the New Year.

Proverbs 3: 5,6. Trust in the Lord with all thy heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy path.

Sincerely Yours,

Steve Janke, Chaplain VSPA

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971



**Chaplain 's
Corner**



To laugh is risk appearing the fool.
To weep is to risk appearing sentimental.
To reach out to another is to risk involvement.
To expose feeling is to risk exposing your true self.
To place your ideas, your dreams before the crowd is to risk their loss.
To love is to risk not being loved in return.
To live is to risk dying.
To hope is to risk despair.
To try is to risk failure.
But, the risk must be taken,
Because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing.
The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, and is nothing.
He may avoid feelings and sorrow, but he simply cannot learn, feel, change,
grow, love, or live.
Chained by his certitudes, he is a slave, he has forfeited freedom.
ONLY A PERSON WHO RISKS --IS FREE.

by Chaplain Steve Janke.

(portions taken by Pointman Ministries by permission)

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



When Saigon fell I watched in unbelief.
When Saigon fell my heart was filled with grief.
When Saigon fell I wondered why
So many brave men there had to die.

When Russia came and took our old Base.
When Russia came I thought my God 'twas a waste.
When Russia came I wondered why
So many brave men there had to die.

When politics left our war dogs there
When politics left their graves so bare.
When politics left I wondered why
So many brave war dogs there had to die.

When a soldier goes off and fights.
When a soldier gives up his rights.
When a soldier goes he wonders why
So many brave men may have to die.

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



**Chaplain 's
Corner**



No matter where or when you served incountry, if you went to Vietnam, you dealt with many dangers and discomforts. Because of that fact and range of your experience, you were a prime candidate for post traumatic stress disorder (P.T.S.D.). This affects many Vietnam veterans and their families, even twenty-five years later.

Some of us still wonder why? We question authority and find it hard to work for or with people. We want to be alone or find ourselves alienated for others--even in a crowded house. Still others of us have problems with intimate relationships and keep an emotional distance from our wife or children, or we punish ourselves in other ways.

There are many symptoms of P.T.S.D. including depression, anger, sleep disorders, reacting under stress with survival tactics, survivors' guilt, hyper alertness, suicidal thoughts and or flashbacks (vivid recall of events or places in Vietnam or Thailand).

We have learned that there are certain triggers that cause these feelings. Triggers of smells, sounds, certain events, or times of the year, or sights around us bring certain feelings on. For example the smell of urine, gun powder, Asian food, fumes of diesel or jet fuel can send the mind to the past and perhaps to an unpleasant or traumatic experience. It could be the sound of a chopper, a truck a backfire from a car, corn popper, fireworks, or musical oldies. For me, rain or bright lights can bring it back.

Certain events, or dates make us act "strange." Things don't seem to come together. Everything is off the tract, It may be an argument with your wife or just unlocked doors at night, unexpected CO dropping in, being criticized by someone or a family member's delay in carrying out an order. At these times we can't seem to handle the small things. PTSD has many sides and many faces. It is as varied as the experiences of the vet. The V.A. can help to identify it but I think misses the mark in overcoming it.

Chaplain Steve Janke... Some Wonder Why © 1997

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971



**Chaplain 's
Corner**



If you feel I have described you to a tee, then you probably have PT SD to some degree. It is a NORMAL reaction to a life threatening situations. Hey, the next time I go on a tour anywhere it will be to a place like Disneyland. There are many things practical in helping with the healing process. Romans 8: 28 says: 'For we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to My purpose.' All things are not good but all things can work together for good; yes, even Vietnam. If you need help in starting a PTSD claim drop me a line or call. We also offer helpful books and tapes.

Hey guys, "WELCOME HOME!"

"IT IS THE SOLDIER, NOT THE POET, WHO GIVES US FREEDOM OF SPEECH. IT IS THE SOLDIER , NOT THE REPORTER, WHO GIVES US FREEDOM OF PRESS. IT IS THE SOLDIER, NOT THE CAMPUS ORGANIZER, WHO GIVES US FREEDOM TO PROTEST. IT IS THE SOLDIER WHO SERVES BENEATH THE FLAG, WHO SALUTES THE FLAG, AND WHOSE COFFIN IS DRAPPED BY THE FLAG, WHO GIVES THE DEMONSTRATOR THE right To BURN THE FLAG."

FATHER D.E. O'BRIAN

Chaplain Steve Janke... Take Time To Live

Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971



Chaplain 's
Corner



It's hard to believe the holidays will soon be upon us. This issue I'd like to share a few thoughts from the Bible with you.

TAKE TIME TO LIVE

What is our life? It is like a vapor, that appears for a short time (a term we can identify with) and then vanishes away. (James 4: 14) In being so busy, sometimes we fail to enjoy the things that are most rewarding.

I. TAKE TIME TO LISTEN (Isa 55: 3) - Listen to others, everyone needs a listening ear at time. Listening encourages, solves problems, brings comfort and healing to those in grief or sadness.

II. LISTEN TO GOD - We receive help from Him when we hear and heed his words, we get comfort and council when we take time to listen.

III. TAKE TIME TO LAUGH (Prov 17: 22) - We can laugh at ourselves, enjoy others, rejoice in God's blessings.

IV. TAKE TIME TO LIFT (Mark 9: 27) - Christ wasn't too busy to lift'taking time for others helps us as well.

V. TAKE TIME TO LOVE (I John 4: 16) - Share a smile, kind word, helping hand, and if you know him, share Christ.

VI. TAKE TIME TO LEARN (Psalms 119: 105) - Learn from God, reading and meditating on his work and faith, we get wisdom from above. Learn from people.

***Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971***

Show up for duty and know where to go.
Be alert for your buddies all in a row.
Trust your k9. He's been there before.
Make sure he has clean food and water at his kennel door.

Get on the right truck with all your gear.
Try not to show your innermost fear.
Know your drop-off place and the lonely walk to your post.
And try to forget all the stories of French soldier ghosts.

Quarter that post and report to CSC and the man.
Then look for some cover in the lay of the land.
Help the new guys as much as you can.

Your bacon may depend on them somewhere just beyond the bend.
Your grade for the exam is left up to you.
Remember you were very young and willing and that should count a lot
too.

So don't judge yourself too hard. We did the best we could.
We showed up for duty as every soldier should

**Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971**



I thought I knew Anxiety during childhood days in the Past.
But Anxious had a new meaning when we had to grow up Fast.

I thought knowing when we became short Anxiety would go Away.
Yet the shorter I became the more Anxiety would Stay.
I thought turning in my weapon would certainly bring relief Then.
But it only made me one of the many unarmed Men.

I thought going to the airport is when peace at last would Come.
Yet it only made me think of snipers and their Guns.
Maybe walking up the steps of the Freedom Bird would finally bring Relief
Yet the Anxiety was still way beyond my Belief.

An eternity seemed to pass until we pierced the blue, blue Sky.
Each and every moment I felt we all might surely Die.

One statement from the plane captain caused an eruption of Cheer.
We are now leaving Vietnamese airspace and you have nothing now to Fear.

A glass of Champaign was given out Suddenly.
In my mind still I recall it Vividly.

A congratulations toast was given to All
As I thought of my good fortune and those left behind still standing Tall.

So today when I am anxious I talk to the one thou I knew Him not that was with
me back Then.

This one that says Follow me and I will make you a fisher of Men. Matt 4:19

Today when I am anxious I read His words in Phil 4:6,7

“Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks-
giving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passeth all
understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. “

Blessings on you all today gents...

***Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971***



Base Under Attack
by Our tour of night duty often started off quiet
Yet the danger was always there.
You stayed tense and on the alert
As into the jungle you'd stare.

You start to think that the peace and calm
May last through the entire out the night.
Then the man on the radio
Announces that one of our other bases is in the fight.


Increase your vigilance we are told
And quarter your post once more.
For Da Nang and Phan Rang are under attack
And Charlie may be at our door.

We curse the night and the fear we feel
As we do what we are told.
Our sentry dog is eager to work
For he alone is courageous and bold.

Our heart is beating so heavily as the blood
Rushes throughout our whole being,
And the fear of death once again
Is all that we are seeing.

So we hold on to his leash
And hope for the best
As off in the night we walk on.
For other bases are under attack
So tonight it's the same old son


*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

 *I've* listened to sirens that blast
And young soldiers responding fast.
To the places they know so well.

I've listened as they survived to tell.
I've looked at their sad faces as they moved out
To fight another round in the same old bout.
To stop an attack that was under way.
I've looked until the dawn of a brand new day.

I've thought many times will this war ever end
So we can return to family and friend.
To once again know love and forget this war.
I've thought this as I entered that Freedom Bird door.

*Chaplain Steve Janke
483rd SPS, Cam Ranh Bay AB,
K-9, 1970-1971*

 Sometimes he'd alert and point to where he wanted me to look.
That special alert of his was all that it really took.
What happened to this wonderful k9 friend?
Then we dug in or was told to go in and check it out.
We held our breath and walked real slow to see what it was all about.
What happened to this wonderful k9 friend?

Sometimes it was a standoff as we both held our ground,
Or flashes of incoming rockets which then began to pound.

What happened to this wonderful k9 friend?
Sometimes they tried to get around the k9 teams
And memories of then are still in our dreams.
But what happened to this wonderful k9 friend?

Some of the war dogs were given to the South Vietnamese Army to an unknown
fate...Once again I salute you Kobuc, x433 and others...

Jack Jobes... I Sit Alone © 2011

Jack Jobes,

LM 542

Phan Rang AB, 67-68, Panther Flig

Had a tough night a couple nights ago. Sat down and wrote the following.

I sit alone at night and cry
In my mind I ask myself why

Was it a TV show or sad plot?
Or the evening news telling
Of someone being shot?
Was it memories of long ago
Of things that happened
Only we brothers can know?

I've been told that the memories
Will never go away.
Somehow that's in a way OK.

We did our job and came back home.
And now sit nights all alone.

Jackie R. Kays ... Our Country Tis Of Thee, 1993

**A Sad Moment in Time
© 2003 by Jackie R. Kays**

While walking down a crowded street, on a hot humid day in the year of nineteen sixty five in a place then called; Saigon. Out of the corner of my eye.

I noticed a small woman dressed in black silk attire. She was kneeling, holding a very small baby and through her desperate tears, she begged for money. The baby's eyes reflecting a silent death stare.

I asked my friend if he understood what she was doing. He replied that she was trying to get enough money to bury her dead child.

A sad moment that forever will remain indelibly in my mind from a far off... war torn place and time

Jackie R. Kays... A Salute to Chuck Yeager... © 2004

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

He was young.
He was fearless.
Lucky was his middle name.
He rode a rocket ship through
the sound barrier that brought
him historical fame.

Forty thousand feet above God's green earth
he sailed into the blue at the speed of sound,
creating the first sonic boom that was heard
all they way to Old London town.

On that day... he flew higher and faster
than any man had ever gone before,
and will be remember forever more!
American as apple pie...Chuck Yeager
forever an Ace in God's blue sky

Jackie R. Kays... A Salute to The Blue Knights of Vietnam © 1999

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

They stood tall...protecting those mighty war birds and the men that kept them high.

They stood tall...in the hot Asian sun, in the monsoon rains and that cold winds that blew by.

They stood tall...in the dark, near the perimeter wire,waiting...waiting with their weapon ready to fire.

They stood tall...night after night on the dark tarmac, lit only by a pop flare's light.

They stood tall... waiting for that distinctive call... "V.C. on the fence!" or "Charlie in the wire!"

They stood tall... professional sentinel's one and all.

They stood ready and waiting for that ominous call.

They stood tall...Blue Knights in Camouflage armor dedicated to protecting and defending those mighty war planes and the principles they personified.

They stood tall...representing the bright light of freedom that protects us all.

They stood with distinction and valor...they answered that call and here and now, I stand in attention and salute them one and all.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

It was a hand-me down,
bright yellow gold with
etchings all around.

His great Grandfather gave it to his
Grandfather, who in turn gave it
to his Dad.

Who just before he shipped out,
gave it to him. He shall keep it for
a lifetime and hopefully someday
give it to his young lad.

Its crystal face is cracked, and its
gold chain has worn thin, but if that old
time piece could talk, it would tell a
tale of years gone by; The Civil war,
World war One and Two and all the
wars that have pursued.

Into that desert war, he carried it proudly,
for it represented who he was and what
he stood for.

Engraved within its golden cover,
“Freedom at all cost!”

Now it lies silent on a field of Red, White and Blue,
as the forlorn sound of taps echoes anew.

Dedicated to the young soldiers who have paid the ultimate price in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

As we celebrate our countries 235 years in existence,
it's a time to remember, who we are and how
this great nation got its beginning and give
thanks to those fifty six brave men who signed
the declaration of Independence giving us our
freedom.

A time...
To remember the men and women
in the military, who served over the years
to maintain our freedom and to the fallen heroes,
who stood tall and gave their all for this freedom!

A time...
To remember those brave young men and women
now serving to keep our freedom true.

A time...
To celebrate and give thanks for our precious freedom!

A Happy 4th of July to all!
Jackie

"I am forever honored for I have marched with heroes!" (jk)

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Once again, we gather here today
in the brotherhood of the Eagle and
Shield to reminisce and relive
a time and place, eternally
recorded in the history of
yesterday.

Vietnam Veterans one and all!
Served with dignity, courage
and honor. Vigilant and alert,
in blue, we all stood tall.

On our shield, we pledged
protection and security for
the principles of the Red,
White and Blue.

We shall forever remember
those courageous men and women,
on that black granite wall, who
gave their all.

Brothers in war and peace,
we shall stand shoulder to
shoulder until that last call.

We forever pledge;
“All for one and one for all!”

Vietnam Security Police is our call!

Jackie R. Kays... Another Deadly Jungle Day © 2000

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

As the rays of golden sun-light from the early morning dawn begins to penetrate the sanctuary of the dark green jungle, the strange noises of the eerie night are silenced. The smell of the mountain air flowing fresh from the South China sea, pumps life into the new born day.

The low puffy white clouds lazily drift in from the shimmering emerald sea. Here time doesn't exist.... nothing matters, nothing is of significance. Today is the same as yesterday... ten thousand years ago.

Over the centuries, many have lived and died here. But the jungle doesn't count...it just consumes. Life and death are irrelevant and all things are fair game in this place of open exposure to the ancient jungle laws.

Beauty is abundant...giant white flowers dangle from their swaying vines. In the clearings... elephant grass rises six feet high. Colorful song birds fill the air with their strange sounds. The bright red clay is exposed where the jungle hog has rotted for his early morning meal.

The cool serenity and reverence of the early jungle morning suddenly, violently erupts into the hot winds of war. The deafening sound s of the Howitzer, the distinctive crack of the AK-47, the immediate response of the rat..a..tat..tat of the M-16. The pop-pop-pop of a chopper blade awakes you from your slumbering dreams.

Your reality is just another deadly jungle day!
And life in the World is far...far away!

Jackie R. Kays... Another Deadly Jungle Day © 2000

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Dedicated to CW2 Jack Stoddard

U.S.A RET.

And to all the men of M-Company-11th Armored Cavalry Regiment

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Tell me. I really want to know!
Where's this old world going to go?
The answer, no one seems to really know.

People come and people go, a few are
remembered but most we shall never know.

Do we really make a difference, or
are we just passing through?
We tell each other how important
we think we are, but in reality those
tales don't seem to go very far.

The more things change the more they
seem to stay the same, and for all the
folly no one wants to take the blame.

War, poverty, hunger, and crime.
1405 or 2005?
Apocalypse in our time, or just
more of the same old timeless rhyme

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Can you still feel it?
Can you still smell it?
Can you still remember it?

The monsoon rains!
The aroma of the black bags!
The nightmares,
after all those years!

Fifty Eight Thousand!
Oh! Where have they all gone?
Gone to join in the glory of the
poppies that will forever grow in...
Flanders Fields.

Jackie R. Kays... Beautiful Atlanta © 1964

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

A warm breeze stirred the Spanish moss in the old sycamore,
on that bright summer morn of September the second,
in the year of eighteen sixty four.

In a cloud of black powder smoke, a hundred canons delivered
Atlanta's death blow in one terrifying roar.
Atlanta, Atlanta, O' beautiful Atlanta will you be no more?

The gray pickets fell, as ten thousand blue coats swarmed
Atlanta's gate.
Atlanta, Atlanta what will be your fate?

Sherman lit the torch to Atlanta, then turned to the East and marched trium-
phantly to the sea.

Atlanta, Atlanta, O' beautiful Atlanta what have they done to thee?

Flames and smoke rise above the grassy hills, as far as the tearful
eye could see.

Oh! Where... Oh! Where...
is the army of Robert E. Lee?

Atlanta, Atlanta, Oh! beautiful Atlanta will you rise from the ashes like a Phoenix
and return to thee with resounding jubilee?

Someday... Oh! someday,
we shall see

Jackie R. Kays... Beautiful Snow? © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Softly falls the beautiful winter snow
that will soon turn to mush and dirty slush
where you and I must shovel and tread,
and then left to shiver in our icy cold bed!

Every year it comes...like it or not!
It brings no cheer...just a cold, the flu
and aching arthritis too!

Children love it...but what do they know?
Sleds, snowmen, cold hands and a head cold.

Can't drive...slick, slip and slide
So you see...snow and ice are not so nice!

No birds, no bees ...no warm summer
breeze, no green leaves in the old oak trees!

If had the dough ...I'd jump a Greyhound
and to warm Florida I would go and get the
hell out of this cold, wet slushy snow!

Snow...snow, Oh! Beautiful snow!
Humbug!!
I've had it with the snow and ice!

About ten days ago, I slipped and fell on the ice in the local bowling alley parking lot!
Face down I went! Broke my glasses, my watch, put a knot on my forehead about the
size of a goose egg, gave me two black eyes instantly, and knocked both hearing aids
out of my ears! Hurt my right shoulder and right knee. Transported to the emergency room...

Cat-scan, five x-rays. No long term injuries. (I'm still sore as hell!)

The above is what I think of the beautiful snow!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

On a cold dreary day...
Twenty Fourth of December in the
depression year of Nineteen Thirty
Seven, I slipped, stumbled, and cried
as I hurriedly trotted behind my
Grandma down the old Missouri
Pacific railroad tracks, with a cloth
sack of oranges on my back.

She would say; "Hurry-up!
It's getting colder and darker,
and we still have a long ways
to go, this sack of corn meal and
potatoes ain't gotten' any lighter
you know!"

Four years old I was then, to the
county welfare office we'd been.
Pants too short, jacket too small.

The icy wind whipping my bare
ankles and stocking less feet in
black tennis shoes too small,
and every time I took a step,
I'd almost fall.

But that was all right, for
Christmas was tomorrow!

All you could eat...
chicken and dumplings,
cornbread and
black- eyed peas.

Jackie R. Kays... Being Poor © 2002

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

And maybe a small slice of pumpkin
pie, if you'd say... Please!

Things have changed a lot in the past
sixty five years, but being poor is not one of them.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

“**O**ld man what was it like?”
They ask of me.
I answered...

The year Nineteen Thirty Nine,
before the world lost its mind?
Before globalism was born and
everything became foreign.

The Red, White and Blue
waved proudly, apple pie,
picnics in the park on the
Fourth of July.

Studebakers, Packards and Desotos too,
parked on the city streets without fear
of losing their hub caps to a street crew.

No gangs, no muggings, no need for locks
on the doors, no fancy carpet on the floors.
Sirens few and far between, crime was
just a dream.

Jack Armstrong, Superman and Hop-a-Long
Cassidy were the heroes of the movie house
and on the radio-waves along with Mickey Mouse.

No T.V's, videos , computers or C.D. raiders.
Just fishing poles, swimming holes and baseball players.

Sunday afternoons, sail boating, kite flying,
people playing croquet and badminton
in the park, life was just a lark.

Jackie R. Kays... Before the World lost its Mind © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

No A-Bomb, H-Bomb, just peace and calm,
that was in Nineteen Thirty Nine before
the world lost its mind

Jackie R. Kays... Blind I'm Not! © 2002

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Blind I am not,
so leave me to my lot.

I can not follow the
teaching of ancient
times, when people's minds
were governed by delusions
and ancient rhymes.

I will make my decisions
based upon the clarity of my
own thoughts of mind.

My fate will be clear to me,
and not formed in the dark mind
of some ancient shaman priest...
you see!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Born from a she wolf, the queen of
evil in a small Iraqi poverty stricken
village, a boy, who would soon
learn to lie, steal, murder and rape.
People accused him of being part
man and part ape.

Years passed, and with the help of
the devil, he became the Dictator of
Iraq. Master of deceit, torture,
intolerance, hatred and war.

He ruled for thirty years with an iron hand,
and hundreds of thousands died in that hot
desert sand.

Then one day when the world could no longer
abide his murdering ways. The American Eagle
swept across his boarder and stopped his killing days.

Then one day while running and hiding like a rat,
he was cornered in his hole and like all rats, he
cowardly gave up without a fight and that was that!

He will get a fair trial and then be executed in
Baghdad square for all the crimes he committed
from there!

No Palaces, no martyrs, no virgins, no Allah's blessings,
just hell's fiery date for the Baghdad butcher and
his gargoyles mates

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Can you hear it?
The rhythm of the surf
as it calls to you.

Beaches of glistening white sand,
sea oats standing like sentinels on
the rolling dunes, and small brown
sandpipers drinking from shallow
blue lagoons.

High flying sea birds gliding silently

near the small, puffy white clouds.
Flocks of black tip wing gulls,
squawking often and loud.
Palm trees swaying in the warm
summer breeze. The gentle splashing
of the white foaming surf, lapping at
fresh footprints in the soft white sand.

The feel of salt water in the air,
which straightens the curls from
your raven black hair.

Come with me, hold my hand and we'll
run in the warm surf once again.

“Close that door!...snow is blowing in.”

Day Dreams.

Jackie R. Kays... Denied Valor © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Who are you, who come today with the
tenacity to deny honor to those who so
valiantly served on that infamous day of
Nine Eleven?
Heroic Firefighters, Police officers,
Emergency response personnel,
Religious Leaders and civilian volunteers.

“NOT INVITED...!”

Mayor Michael Bloomberg,
How quickly you have forgotten...

Remember this Mayor?

9-11...The Devil Himself
First disbelief, then instant reality
as the indestructible, gray mountain
of steel, concrete and glass began to
shiver, tremble, sway and violently
shake, just before it crumbled from its
cloud covered steeple to the cement
jungle far below.

Death was everywhere to behold.
From the highest windows they
leaped. In the stairwells, they
huddled without hope to reap.

Jackie R. Kays... Denied Valor © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The winged gargoyles from hell
had been unleashed. From across
the sea they had come, with hatred
and a wish of death, they drew
with every evil breath.

They proclaimed a righteous cause,
but humanity will not tolerate their
insane laws.

Martyrs, they call themselves,
but the world will always remember them

“ As the devil, himself.”

May America forever remember the heroes of 9/11,
and Mayor, may your infamous name fade away
with the annals of time.

The above was in accordance with Don Poss' Bulletin Board "Open Letter" post.

Jackie R. Kays... Devil Dancing © 2002

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Listen!

There it goes again!
It's the Devil dancing in the wind.
Roaring, twisting, bearing down,
like a giant monster from the heavens bound.
The black clouds swirl slowly towards the ground.
Birds of the sea quickly flee.
Lightning flashing, thunder clashing.
Foam capped waves crashing over the tall sea wall.
The gale winds howl as the might oaks begin to fall.
Once on land he's violent, unforgiving
and destroying everything he can.
Flying glass, two by fours and jagged tin.
Death and destruction is his biggest sin.
He's the devil...
dancing in a hurricane wind

Jackie R. Kays... Disposition? © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*F*inal arrangement, waiting transfer, or prevailing plans,
all legal terms for movement of the bodies. All lined up in
neat rows on the blistering tarmac. Tags on each...Name,
Rank, Serial number and final destination.
Black, ominous body bags.

Disposition?...Ultimate sacrifice.

It's been forty-one years, but I shall never forget the black body bags
waiting...just waiting for; "Disposition" from that hot jungle land.
Was it worth it? Only time will tell.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Do you remember...
When you were a kid, lying
on a grass knoll, on a warm summer's day.

Peering up into the robin egg blue sky,
at the white fluffy clouds as they form
different shapes and then dissolve
and sail on by.

Running through a clover covered meadow,
filled with daisies, daffodils and buttercups
in a daydream and you hope you will never
wake up.

Robins chirp, bluebirds sing and a red tail
hawk circles high on the wing.
From the old oak tree,
high in the air you swing.

The copper sun begins to set, as shadows
start to form on the garden wall,
like dancing pirouettes small and tall.

Lightning bugs glow in the dark,
as humming mosquitoes hit their mark.

Starlight, star bright, never meek.
Hide-and-go-seek, but don't ever peek.

Darkness falls and Momma calls...
"It's time to come in now!"

You are tired and ready to sleep.
A day in your young life is at its peak.

Jackie R. Kays... Dust in the Wind © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Yesterday is gone.
Tomorrow is forlorn.
Today's the day!

So sing and dance
with your dearest friend,
for today too, will soon
become dust in the wind!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

As he lies dying... life slowly
oozes from his gaping wound.

The glory of the battle has
quickly passed, and the blue
in his young eyes has turned
to gray...pale ash has invaded his skin,
as he feverishly thinks of his
next of kin.

Principles, valor and glory
are fading away in favor
of pain, shock and the chill
of fear intensified by the cold
pouring, monsoon rain.

The Red, White and blue waves in
the Autumn air as the bugle calls...
A line of young men stand tall.
Rifles at Present Arms, Fire!"
is the command.

Once again...
a young warrior is being laid to rest.
For he has given his life for what he
considered the very best!
"Duty, Honor, and all the rest"!

Jackie R. Kays... Autumn Leaves © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

In the pale moonlight, silent shadows dance on the garden wall,
and the weeping of the willow can be heard in the cool Autumn breeze.
The crickets play their last crescendo, as a lonely loon sings its melancholy call.
Like tiny magic carpets, they glide to and fro as they tumble in colors of bold... red,
persimmon, and some as yellow as bright shiny gold, where they will forever rest on
Nature's earthen breast.

Autumn trees
Autumn leaves

Oh! How I love Autumn...
dressed in her beautiful
multi-colored gown of Autumn leaves.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*he foreboding dark dangers of life,
prevail, persist and plague us daily,
no matter how hard we try to resist.

Run, run with happiness, and the joy of life sublime!
Don't ever stop and glance back, for in hot pursuit
will be the evils that haunt all mankind.
Dance, sing, love and live today!
For tomorrow is promised to no one.

Life is but a nanosecond, in the eons of time.
So live life to the utmost and try to make it rhyme.
Worry not of today, for after a thousand tomorrows
it will not matter what happen yesterday.

For all things shall pass!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Ah! Those were the days my friend,
we thought they would never end!
But end they did and then there
we stood without pomp or ceremony,
deep in that deadly jungle land.

Blood on the sand, blood on our hands
and we wondered where it would all end.
Mac, Moe and Billy Joe just dust in the
wind, and no one knows and no one cares
what they've done or where they've been.

War is the name of the game and only the
player's change and all that's left is
tombstones and forgotten glory,
and forgotten names.

Jackie R. Kays ... Freedom is not Free © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

“**E**very morning,
you wake up free,
thanks to guys like me!
The American veteran!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

From across the crowded room, and as
chance would have it be, our eyes met
in perfect harmony.

Was it love at first sight?
Or just a fleeting moment of flirtation
in the excitement of that special night.

Pleasantries, niceties, laughter so bright.
Champagne, the sound of music and
merriment was enjoyed by all throughout
that special night.

Then poetry she did recite, to everyone's delight.
Wanda... so beautiful in the evening's candle light.
And across the crowded room sat the Poet from,
Whom she did recite, and stole his poetic heart
on that special reunion night.

Dedicated to my Special friend, Wanda. 9/14/06

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

On the swirling tide of time,
goes the bidding of life's rhyme.
Into the whirlwind, never to be
found those wandering souls
of sinners abound.

Hard they rode over the steppes,
hoards swarming from the East,
Mongols one and all, shouting
and growling like crazed beasts.
Swords high in hand, blood flowing
crimson red on the desert sand.

Hell be theirs through eternity,
for they have murdered, raped,
pilfered and sacked the reverent
sites of the holy lands.

Their curse is to be repeated over
and over again, for their murderous
blood reigns on in their living kin.
The Millenniums have quickly passed, but the
world still recognizes them for what they are;
terrorist, killers of innocent women and children.
Ancestors of the murderous Mongol hoards and vile
Gargoyles from hell!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The year was; 1206
Out of the steppes of Asia-minor he rode,
leading an Army with bloody hands.
Conquering all before him as he crossed
the hot Gobi sands.

Into China he charged...
killing, burning, and looting,
with no end at hand.

An enormous empire he carved
from the map, and all before him
bowed and obeyed his every command.

In spite of his riches, power,
and growing empire,
he discovered, as all
eventually do...
Time waits for no man.

Now Genghis is just
another ghost in the
winds of time,
remembered only in
history and rhyme

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Iwish I were as tiny as an ant...
I'd hop a ride on the gossamer
wings of a yellow butterfly,

Oh, so high we would fly
across the buttermilk sky.
Landing on a daffodil, a daisy
or maybe a sunflower or two.

Laughing with glee...
sailing above the garden gate
and over the morning glories
in their early state.

On those tiny gossamer wings,
to a lilac tree, where I'd stop
and visit with a sweet little
honey bee.

Down the floral path we'd fly,
high, high into the sky...
across the fields of clover,
near the white cliffs of Dover...
just the little gossamer
winged butterfly and I.

High, high into the buttermilk sky,
I would fly on the gossamer wings
of that little yellow butterfly.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

My world gets smaller everyday
as time silently slips away.

O' what happened to those days
of wine and roses, of singing in
the sunshine and dancing our
young lives away.

Ball games, picnics, swimming
holes and Saturday matinee shows
where everyone used to go.

Lazy, hazy summer days that
somehow just seem to melt
away.

Sixty years ago we still recall,
Memories of yesteryear's
seasons in the sun and faces
and places where we all had
so much childhood fun!

Harrah for Yesterday!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

You say, "This is my country,
I have the right to dissent!"
You say, "Hell no! I won't go!"

Yes! You have a birth right
to dissent, but with that birth
right comes an obligation to
defend this great country you
so freely live in!

Let me ask you, my friend,
if you and I refused to
defend, then who in the
hell shall we send?

When our enemies kill us in
our streets and bomb our
cities, who will defend?
Who will you befriend?

For then you see...
Hell no! You won't have to go!
For the enemy will be here,
to take your life and cowardly
soul!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*he Stars and Stripes of White and Red lie on a field of Blue,
draped across his military casket so shiny and new.
The eerie silence in the chill of the dreary winter day,
suddenly broken by the sound of exploding rifles in
their salute to this fallen hero, who so gallantly
fought for his country in the sands of a desert so
far, faraway.

The Stars and Stripes are precisely folded and
the Sergeant of the Honor Guard respectfully
presents it to the forever grieving mother,
who grasps Old Glory in her trembling arms
with a broken heart like no other.

Then the heart wrenching sound of a lonely bugler,
as he plays the melancholy notes of Taps, softly
echoes from a distant hill for all to hear.
A saddening sound causing all attending to
shed a solemn tear.

On this cold, barren hill lies an American Hero, who
stood proud and tall for freedom and justice for all,
and his heroic actions defy all words of praise that
come to bear.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Cast in Bronze they stand,
frozen forever in time...
Representing thousands of
heroic men and women.

Statues of Warriors in
a metallic rhyme.
All died for a cause,
that seemed right at the time

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*I*n the fog of time, he now
struggle to clear his aging mind.
Memories that flicker and fade
of by gone days, images, faces,
name of jungle places, that have
become scattered by the winds
of time, and seems to no longer
matter or even rhyme.

As his aging memory fades,
yesterday is long gone and tomorrow
quickly becomes yesterday's skeleton;
he realize that each new day is a
gift from God.

He's nearing his eighties and the wars
he fought and the faces of the young
men he once knew are fading into the
abyss of obscurity.

But, he still looks at the discolored
pictures, through the tears of his aging
eyes as he shows his great grandson
and says; "Son, that me...that me,
back in Korea and Vietnam...you see!"

Few remember and fewer yet care
about wars long past, but he still
post Old Glory outside of his home
every morning as his first daily task.

Jackie R. Kays... His Last Guardmount © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

He still stands for the playing of
the National Anthem and proudly
salutes the passing of the Red, White
and Blue.

He is still a soldier and will always be
until the day he stands that last guard out
and taps is played in his honor, well
deserved and long overdue.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*here's nothing like hot dogs and apple pie on the Fourth of July...
A parade down mainstreet with the musical band, soldiers marching
with their flags and banners flying high.
Kids following with their red, white and
Blue balloons floating in the sky.

Swimming holes, fishing poles, and ball games in the park.
Sack racing, badminton, lawn bowling until it gets dark.
Fried chicken, potato salad, corn bread and beans.

Soda pop, watermelon, homemade ice cream.
The men and women talk, while the kids all play and scream.
And on the band stand the director leads everyone in singing
the "Star Spangle Banner."

The sun goes down and the fireworks can be seen all over town.
That's how we Americans celebrate the birthday of the good old USA.
And God willing...that's how it will always stay.

Oh! How magnificent American stands between the
two great oceans in God's hands.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Once I was young and foolish
and thought my life would forever
shine in the sun.
I sang and danced to my own tune,
little did I know that jungle war
would be calling me soon.

Across the Pacific I flew to a land
of war and strife, with young men
I knew, who became friends for life.

Now, many years later as the horror
of that war still haunts our souls.
We will forever be brothers of that
jungle war until the bells toll.

There was Warren, Stan, and Olbert,
and other names forlorn.
They were men of honor, and men
of trust.
Here and now and forever more,
I am honored to say...
"I marched with Heroes!"

Dedicated to all the young men and women that served in South East Asia during the
Vietnam war.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*here's a dark place in a far off jungle land,
that still haunts my reverie....
after four long decades.

A field of death where Bouncing Betty's still
lurks among the poppies, elephant grass
and rusting wire.

On a dark monsoon night so many
years ago...still often echoes in my mind.

Flares aglow, as time stands still...
a mighty war bird's flight suddenly and
violently ends with a thundering crash!

In sheets of wind, the monsoon rages on...
as silent fear permeates this dark unholy
place of war.

Now... mangled metal slowly rusts in
that poppy field and Bouncing Betty's
silently wait to maim those wandering
unaware....

Forty year long past...
but etched in my memory
forever to last...

of seven young men in
that tragic flight on that
deadly monsoon jungle
night!

*Jackie R. Kays... Where Bouncing Betty's
and Elephant Grass Still Silently Grow © 2008*

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*he white and purple orchids bloom at night in the bright jungle moonlight but beneath the fields of tall elephant grass, still lurks the deadly bouncing betty and the cannons have been silent for the past thirty-some years, but those echoes still ring in many old soldier's ears.

In the middle of the night, sounds of rockets, bombs, and claymore mines return to the maimed, blind and psychologically damaged minds.

The names and faces of young combat buddies stay anew to this aging soldier from a war long past but forever so true. My war, our war, the war...will always be with you and me even though there were those who protested and disagreed. You and I answered the call and we shall never be ashamed, for one and all stood proud and tall!

Those who were there know...
Those who were not...shall never know!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Look away, look away!
Don't peer into the eyes of the devil.
You'll be mesmerized, you'll be
tranquilized, you'll be trapped into
the sins of temptation, greed and
damnation.

His promise is false, his logic is flawed,
his love is hate. He has but one burning
desire... to take you with him through his
hell fire. There the pain will be inhuman.

Look away, look away!
For if you peer into the eyes of the devil,
evil will befall you throughout eternity.

Sing not of his praises, drink not of his
brew, accept not his golden offer for he
is the devil. If we are not vigilant he will

be the ruination of humanity too.
He comes in many guises, but you will know him,
for he has the evil eyes of utter deceit, burning,
piercing and hypnotically inviting.

Beware, beware! For he, my friend lurks everywhere

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Will man still be alive?
Will he still be eating beef, or will beef be made from
sea weed and will he be drinking milk made from soy beans?

Will he still have a name or just an I.D. number?
Will he still have a country, or will he be just
a citizen of a Global Government?

Will he still have freedom of speech or will he be
ust part of the silent majority? Will he still have ownership of his
home or obligated to live in a Government compound?
Will he still have personal transportation or will he have
to ride the Government rail?

Will he still be providing sons and daughters to fight
in wars around the globe or will there be no wars?
Will the exploding population consume all of the non
replenishable resources, or will child birth be predicated
by lottery?
Will these things come to pass?
No one knows for sure!
But one thing is for sure!
Gasoline will be \$50.00 a gallon!!

(Smile)

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Rally around lads...
speak not to me of retreat, surrender or defeat!
Sound the charge loud and clear for we shall
send the enemy to hell where the devil they
shall surely meet!

Forward lancers! Charge!
Straight ahead lads! To the pickets
we shall gallop! Flag-Bearer keep the
Union Jack flying steady, so the enemy
shall know we are bound and ready!

Through the smoke and cannon fire they bravely
charged, six hundred strong into the Valley of Death.
Where they fiercely fought one on one and
English blood ran deep on that frozen battlefield
forlorn...for Queen and Country.
Forgotten not...for the echoes of bravery will
forever sound...forward Lancers...Charge!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Hues of pink and orange light up
the early morning sky as the fiery
daylight star is born once more
and no one questions why.

Soft white clouds billow into the
pink early morning light, as a young
Hummingbird spreads its wings and
learns to take flight.

From a bright red rose basking in the
warmth of the sun's golden rays, soft
diamond shaped dewdrops glisten in
the early morning haze.

A warm summer breeze softly glides
through the tall oak trees.
Life is everywhere, birds,
butterflies, a rainbow of
flowers full of humming bees.

Just another beautiful summer day,
Just another panorama of this
wonderful land, just another
magnificent gift from God's hand.

Jackie R. Kays... Just Fade Away © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Today we gather here to lay to rest one of
our own, an old airman that's done his very best!
He served and fought in that unpopular jungle war,
over forty years ago.
Few remember, but he will be honored by those
who still care.
Time marches on, new wars rage on, and new
heroes are born.
But the old airman knows, that "Old soldiers never die,
they just fade away."
He will always be honored, for he has marched with heroes,
from the jungle wars of yesterday!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Shut your eyes and listen!
Can you see the sunbeams
dancing off the emerald waters.
Can you hear the soft gulf
breeze blowing through the
Magnolia trees.

Can you taste the warm salt air,
and feel the hot suns glare.
Can you see the white sand
beach that we can share.
Can you see the sea oats
swaying back and forth,
without a single care.

Can you see the giant sea
gulls riding over the
slow moving tide.
Can you see the silver
dolphins jump and dive,
and the brown pelicans
in their graceful glide.

Oh! The Gulf of Mexico
is where, we want to be!

If we open our eyes,
snow is all that
we're going to see!

I think we'll just keep
our eyes closed and
drift on out into the
deep warm sea...
Just you and I

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

They tumble, roll and glide in the strong March wind's blow,
forgotten leaves of autumn past, not unlike my aging soul.
No longer living leaves of bright yellow gold, maple tan
or autumn red, just dark brown...dying or dead!
My life's ending...Oh! What a dread!

Soon , no more bright Spring days,
no more warm Summer nights,
no more Autumn painted leaves,
no more Winter's dark naked trees.

Leaves of life
That's all there is...death in the end!
All things, just dust in the wind.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

I met you in the autumn of my life,
at a time when we neither had husband
or wife.

Our springs and summers are gone,
and now we are deep into our life's autumn.
What has been...has been and yesterday
is gone, tomorrow belongs to no one, so
My Darling, let's just sing today's songs.

We will start anew, just you and me!
We'll dance and sing, kiss in the rain.
We'll thumb our nose at old father
time and make our new love rhyme.

We'll live and love until we die, and
then the world shall say, "They were
lovers from the day they met until the
day they died, like a candle flame flickers
in the wind, their love will burn until
eternity ends."

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*M*y shadow, where is he
in the dark of night?
He always pops up when
the sun is shining bright.

He never utters a sound,
but mocks my every move
as I walk around.

He's on the wall,
the sidewalk and
in the hall.

Sometimes he's big and
sometimes he's small.

He wears me out, watching
him jump and run across the ground.
But no matter how hard I try
to get rid of him...
he seems to stick around.

So I guess I'll have to
keep him until I'm no
longer bound to this earth.

Jackie R. Kays... Memories © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Metal ravens fly in the black of night,
to avoid the sun's brilliant light.
Eggs of steel drop silently,
when the target is in sight.

The ugly little jesters in their black pajamas
dance with glee all around, while we
bleed and died in the air and on the ground.
The monkey is on the mountain and the
elephant grass is tall, while monsoon mud
covers us all!

Beauty is in the night orchid, but death is in the air.
Beware...beware, for bouncing Bette's are buried
everywhere!

This game is for real, bullets, bombs, Claymores,
razor sharp wire, people, places and things on fire.
Snakes, super-sized rats and deadliest of them all;
delayed death...agent orange from the sky did fall.
In the dark of the jungle, silent movement suspicious
and out of sight, Hồ Chí Minh trail is busy again tonight!

The deafening roar of Fifty Two's on darkened runways
night after night. Death in the air, death on the ground,
death all around!

Anger, night sweats, PTSD, and the
boogieman too...gifts of war forevermore!

On and on it goes, indiscreetly devouring the innocent
and guilty alike, thousands by day and night, no end
obviously in sight!

Jackie R. Kays... Memories © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

War is its name; no one seems to want to take the blame,
but, blame there is more than enough to go around!
We will just have to wait, till it's all over and see what
comes down!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Happy were the sounds coming from the little white house on Walnut street where a small boy of five played in the back yard, near his mother's beautiful flower garden so clean and neat.

Roses of red, daffodils tall and true, colorful gladiolas too. Morning glories, red, white and blue growing on the garden gate, and spotted wing butterflies fluttered from one flower to another. Little did he know of his life long fate.

The sand in the hour glass quickly passed and here he stands with all those years gone so fast.

Here on Walnut Street in front of that old house, no longer white, but a dirty weathered gray. Windows broken and nothing seem to have survived from those childhood days. Where sixty two years ago he remembered that beautiful garden in the back yard were he played as a boy of five.

He walks around the house to the back, where his mother's beautiful garden once grew, but only tall ugly brown weeds came into his view.

He tried to remember his mother's beautiful garden, that all those years ago he once had known, but now only tall weed have grown. He shuts his eyes and imagines that he is only five, and lo and behold... there were Red roses, daffodils

Jackie R. Kays... Mother's Garden © 2004

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

tall and true, gladiolas too. Morning glories red,
white and blue growing on the garden gate and
kneeling in this beautiful garden was his
mother in her tender loving grace and once
again for the first time in sixty five years...
he could remember her beautiful smiling face

Jackie R. Kays... Mountain Mornings © 2004

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

October rains are falling
A cold North breeze is calling
The buttermilk clouds are stalling

The old rusty windmill shakes
and rattles in the gusty wind
The barren oaks sway and bend

The crows flutter and noisily call
as they peck at the scattered grains
from the autumn wheat straw

Signs of winter are in the frosty air
A warm wool sweater is nice to wear
Mountain mornings are sometime cold to bear

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

In the darkest corners of my aging mind,
lurks the demons of my shame, sipping on
a carafe of bitter wine.

Mockingly, they stare with eyes of
incrimination... you're too old to be doing this,
you're not pure enough to be doing this,
you're incapable of doing this!

Ah! Tell me not...they are the reapers
of my soul? For from here I know not
were I go. For I have no future and
the past is just dust in the wind...
that's the realities of life my friend.

Is this it? Is this all there is? Is this where it all ends?
What about the good things I've done...doesn't
that count some?

Demons are unbending! They never blink,
they never think, they never forgive or forget!
They constantly and silently shame the sins
of all my kind.

I came into this world without the burden of sin.
I shall leave sinless, no matter what the preacher
or the Pope proclaims. I know that I've done the
best I can.

My demons...Ah! Those dirty little demons...I hereby
cast you out of my life... for you see...I'm in love!
No demon of guilt can shame me from this pure
white dove.

Jackie R. Kays... My Genie © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

You've come through the door of my life,
at a time when my life was in turmoil and
saddened by many things.

You've brought love and peace to my troubled
mind. You've calmed the fever in my soul.
You've made my heart strings sing.

You've lit up my life... you're the sunshine that
warms my inner sanctum. You're the reason that
I smile again...you're the one that lifted the weight
of my sins.

You My Darling, are the candle flame of hope in my
wretched, and pitiful life.
You've given me the softness of touch and the gift
of love that I've so long desired.

You are my Genie, out of no where you've come
through my life's door,
and I will love you forever more!

Jackie R. Kays... My Silent Friend © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

When I was about fifteen, I used to go to my friend Vick's house after playing ball. The first time that I went, Vick's mother was in a small bedroom feeding her invalid son, Billy.

Billy was unable to speak, walk or feed himself. He was nineteen years old and weighed about seventy pounds. He made a low hissing noise. He lay in a constant fetal position.

One day, Vick asked me if I wanted to meet Billy. I said "Sure!" He took me into the little bedroom and there on the bed lay Billy. Vick said, "Hey Billy, this is Jack." I nervously said, "Hi Billy." I noticed an immediate change in Billy's eyes, they were brighter and attentive.

It was mid-summer and in 1948 the small house had no air conditioning and was very hot! The tiny fan on the night stand did little to cool the room. Billy was sweating excessively. There was a small bowl of water with a few melting ice cubes setting on the night stand. I picked up a wash cloth and dipped it into the cool water, wrung it out and wiped the sweat from Billy's forehead.

His light blue eyes quit rolling around and focused on me. I could sense the gratitude in Billy's eyes.

Many times after that, I would visit with Billy. I would hold his hand, talk to him and sometimes give him a drink of water.

"True friendship has no boundaries."

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

In 1965, out of the dark jungle night
they came, fifteen Sapper strong,
across the live runway, with AK-47's aflame.

Some gave...and some gave all!
Some will live forever on that
Black Granite Wall.

Duty bound was he, outnumbered,
outgunned ...he fought to his last
round, in defense of his duty
bound.

He took a brave stand and fiercely fought
in that jungle land. He answered that last
duty call and battled them all.

Sergeant was his title, Terance
was his name, Air Policeman was
his fame.

On that dark jungle night, Terance stood tall
and gave his all. He shall be remembered
forever on that Hallowed Granite Wall.

May his Spirit soar with Eagles.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Once there was a bad guy named, Ben Laden
He masterminded a horrifying, evil deed, that
will never be forgotten!

He ran and tried to hid, but time was not on his side.
They hunted here and they hunted there, but when he
least expected it, a seal swam by, and shot old Ben
between his beady eyes.

He sank to the bottom of the drink, food for fish,
no longer will we have to put up with this tall, ugly,
bearded geek

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Raging across the hot desert sand
blood near boiling, weapon in hand.
Dust and grit, eyes aflame,
sleeplessness they're all to blame.

Camouflage helmet, fatigues, and tank.
In charge, a First Lieutenant is his rank.
Onward soldiers! He did command,
Onward across the hot desert sand.

Shells exploding all around, bullets galore
hunting human targets, that's for sure.

Constant sound of a humming engine and clanking
tracks and silent prayers that we'll all come back.

Soakin' wet, sweat on top of sweat!
War is hell, on that you can bet.

Baghdad straight ahead!
No time for sleep, no bed
to lay our weary heads.

Sand in our MRE's, sand in our eyes.
Sand in our weapons, sand in our hair,
sand, sand everywhere!

Soldiers straight ahead!
And with that said;
Across the Iraqi desert
we quickly sped!

Dedicated to all the American and coalition soldiers!

Jackie R. Kays... Our Flag! © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

“I am forever honored, for I have marched with heroes!” (jk)
Old Glory, Stars and Stripes, the Red, White and Blue!
This is the flag of the greatest Nation in the world,
this is OUR flag, to be cherished, loved, and respected by
all, no matter where she may fly!

The defenders of OUR flag have paid a valiant price to
keep Old Glory waving and providing the freedoms that we
so willingly take for granted.

Now foreign invaders misuse the freedom, which she provides,
by, openly and reprehensible desecrating OUR flag,
OUR honor, and OUR way of life,
under the misguided interpretation of the laws of OUR constitution!

The law and the interpretation of that law was created by man,
and can be changed. The only law that is written
in stone was created by the hand of God!

What has happened to ...
“Don’t tread on me!”
“The Stars and Stripes forever!”

No longer should we tolerate deliberate and intentional,
vile acts of desecration of OUR Nation’s most sacred symbol!
These acts of hatred disdain and total disrespect
for the symbol of OUR nation is incomprehensible and intolerable!

As service men and women, this is the flag that WE pledged our allegiance
to uphold, protect and respect!

Jackie R. Kays... Our Flag! © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Notify your congress Representative today, and tell him or her that you want the interpretation of the law changed.

No longer should we tolerate deliberate, intentional and unspeakable acts of desecration of OUR Nation's most sacred symbol. This is not happening in Tehran, it's happening here in OUR own country!

So I ask...no, I plead with you, please act today to help save OUR flag from further desecration!

No, I'm not a book burner or a Nazi, I'm just an old soldier that loves his country and the flag it represents, as I'm sure each of you do as well!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

We have all been outside the wire sometime in our lives and we all know the inherent dangers; bouncing betties, claymores, mortars enemy small fire, friendly fire and sometimes the worst threat of all; ourselves. In order to get back to safety we must trust in our

Comrades in Arms, our training, our skills, our family ties, our faith and our determination to make it back to the safety and protection of our Comrades, friends and family!

There are time when we all feel like quitting, when the burden seem too much to bear and we find ourselves outside of the wire with our back to the wire, that's when it's time to trust our brotherhood, our friends and our faith to guide us back to reason and safety.

Sometime one of the biggest obstacles to reason is our attitude, which dictates our actions in all matters. We cannot be right all the time and realizing this fact we must be big enough to admit and submit to compromise which can open the gates to the wire and return us to the safety of our compound, our buddies, our family and friends.

There is no honor in quitting!
To quit is to parish!

Remember the VSPA Motto: "We take care of our own!"

The timeless combat code: "One for all and all for one!"

A wise man once said: "No man is an Island to himself." (How True!)

Jackie R. Kays... Pearl Harbor Day © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*I*t's the 7th of December again,
and time to bow our heads and
pray for all of those fallen young men.

Sixty-five years ago today...
a day of infamy was on its way.
Bomb after bomb took its toll
on that bright December day.

Ship after ship floundered and
sank into Pearl Harbor Bay.
Hundreds of young Americans
were lost in that infamous way.

They ask not for pity or fame in anyway,
they simply want us to remember
their spirits on this...Pearl Harbor Day.

For you see...
they died so we might continue to
live in the traditional American way.

Jackie R. Kays... People of Iraq! © 2003

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Can you smell it?
Can you feel it?
Can you taste it?
Sweet Freedom!

Is your heart beating faster?
Do you feel euphoric?
Do you feel the freedom from your cruel master?

Are you experiencing the tears of hope and joy too?
Are you thankful for the Red, White and blue?

Freedom and Liberty at last!

People of Iraq!

The blood of American, British and Australian sons and daughter was shed so you can walk free on your own soil!

NOT for your oil!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Five years old...
there he sat on Walnut Street...
all dressed up in his little sailor suit.

His little blond curls combed so neat...
ready to go in the hot summer heat.
Waiting, waiting to be picked up...

By someone, anyone...who might care.
But no one came and no one cared...
No one to meet the poor little boy

On Walnut Street.
Now there he sat, all dressed up on Walnut Street...
So small, so sad, so sweet...
With his little blonde curls combed so neat.

Only five years old, but oh ...
He knew, he was just a little throw-away boy...
who lives on Walnut Street.

Just like a poor little throw-away toy...
that's quit giving love and joy...
just a poor little throw-away toy...

Oh, how small, how sad, how sweet...
The poor little boy on Walnut Street...
Sitting there weeping...in the summer heat...
so small, so sad, so sweet!

*Jackie R. Kays... Response to Don's post on PTSD
(I'm telling it like it is!) 2011*

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Hi Don, I could write a book on this subject! For over forty-five years, I have wrestled my demons in...sleepless nights, nightmares, night-sweats, anger, depression, and the hold damn game.

I could not, before or now, rationally discuss this subject with anyone, without becoming emotional and very angry! I have often wanted to visit the "Wall", but knew I could not bear the sight of the names of young men that I personally knew in Nam.

I have been an outpatient at the VA hospital since 1966, during that time, I never mentioned this subject to the doctors, or anyone else, outside of my immediately family, who were and are very familiar with my demons.

You see...I missed a damn good chance of becoming a "KIA" while I was there. That experience, left me with an everlasting feeling that I have been living on borrowed time! The only reason that I mention this matter now... is because, after reading Don's post in regards to this subject, I suddenly realized that I am a member of an elite organization (VSPA) of men, who have been there and done that...and hopefully will understand where I'm coming from! I am sure, that I am not alone in this nightly drama!

Thanks Don!

Jackie R. Kays... Soldier Boy © 1999

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

We read him speeches, and taught him about valor and fame,
and how to defend the glory of his country's name.

We dressed him in bright colors, with waving banners,
shiny buttons, new repeating rifles, and marched him two by two.

We sent him marching down the streets, to the sounds of the
drummer's beat and yells from the crowds, encouraging him
to win and never to accept defeat.

We sent him sailing across the oceans afar, to fight and die for
the Red, White and Blue, and...for me and you.

Oh! How quick we forget, when war is no longer a threat.

Bugler's taps...and tears of pain.
Did the Soldier Boy die in vain?

I think not...freedom is still ours to claim!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The days, months and years
have passed, but sometime, I'm still in Nam.
I'll be damned, if, you were in Nam, you know
it wasn't too grand.

If, you were into snakes, spiders, giant mosquitoes, raw fish
and black pajamas, you were a V.C.
If you were a V.C., you'd best not meet up with me!
Whirly-birds, pop flares, claymore's, F-104, napalm and
rockets galore,

"Good Morning Vietnam!" Powdered eggs and fried spam.
A few bottles of "33" then you can take moonbeams home in a jar.
If, you've been there, then, I don't have to tell you about Nam,

If, you have not been there, then you wouldn't understand.
Forty years later, in the middle of the night, when sleep won't come,
all hell breaks loose, the 105's open up, the 52's rain their bad news,
and pop flares are floating everywhere. Agent orange--Oh!
how forlorn!

Elephant grass ten feet tall, the V.C. breaching the wire, but that's alright,
for they will be greeted by K-9's and automatic fire.

Sometimes, I think we're all still in Nam!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

In the year 480 BC,
At the narrow pass of Thermopylae
stood the Spartans, a mere three
hundred strong to face the charging
Persian juggernaut.

The ferocious battle raged for two
and half days, and the Spartans
fought like tigers in a cage.

The pass, they held with
bloody combat...
hand to hand.

They gave their all...
body and soul,
to hold back the
Persians was their
ardent goal.

On the morning of the third day of battle,
all was lost, and the three hundred brave
Spartans lay dead or dying at the pass of
Thermopylae.

All for one and one for all,
they made their last stand,
and courageously died for
their native land.

And say me to you...
That's all that can be asked of any
man!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Steel raindrops fall and young men
die for that silent call.

The man made thunder and lightning clash
and the blood of the guilty and innocent flow
in crimson red, delivering pain and mayhem
as they stand tall and fight for one and all.

The jungle night comes alive with stealthy shadows
silently, hurriedly gliding under the pale moonlight.
Mortars whistle in flight as they deliver death in the
jungle twilight.

Death wears no mask, its ugly bony face glows with
anticipation, finalization and delight.
Pain, suffering, agony, and unadulterated fear haunts
the reverie of the victors and vanquished alike.

The Elephant grass comes alive with invaders through the wire,
while defenders with grenades, machine guns, and mortars open fire.

The yellowish glow from a pop flare's light reveals the horror of young
men dead and dying on a bloody jungle battlefield for principles they hold
sacred and dear. A war long gone, but one for which you and I still shed a tear.

For those who survived, sounds and sights to this day...in the middle of the night.

Vietnam.

Jackie R. Kays... Stranger in the Mirror © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

A photograph is just a reflection of someone, for only seconds after the picture has been taken, the subject begins its metamorphosis, unnoticeable at first, then little by little as time marches on...the hours, days, months and years fly quickly by; the subject changes...no longer the image in the picture... but a stranger in the proverbial mirror.

Jackie R. Kays... Swamp Monster! © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Gather around, I'm going to tell you a story about a place I once knew,
when I was much younger than all of you.
Long ago back in this darkened swamp, tall cypress trees laden with
Spanish moss grew. From out of the early evening mist a strange
sound could be heard by more than a few.

Some say screams, others too afraid to say.
But I know what it was and I'm going to tell you on this very day!
Beneath those brackish waters Cottonmouths, gators lurked, and a
single black raven loudly squawked as he fluttered from tree to tree.

It was the scariest place I'd ever been. You can believe me when I say,
I won't go back again!

Since I was a lad, I wanted to venture
into this old swamp and see what it had.
I'd always heard that a snake-eyed monster
lurked there.

Some said it was just an old black bear,
but I wanted to see for myself if there
was really a snake-eyed monster
living there.

On that muggy day, not far away. I saw it! A brown hairy creature staring
from behind a big old cypress tree. You guessed it! Staring right at me!
Green glowing snake like eyes, shiny black horns on his bony head. It
jumped up and down and screamed. Scared? I thought for sure I was dead!

I screamed too, and took off running down that swampy path and I ran,
and ran and never looked back, until I was sure I was long gone from
that Monster's tracks!

Jackie R. Kays... Swamp Monster! © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Now I don't know, but I've been told that some that go into that dark
swamp doesn't always come out! But after what I saw, that's a story
I don't doubt!

If you want to know where that swamps at! Send me a dollar and
I'll send you a map!

Jackie R. Kays... Terrorist © 2004

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Ah! Speak not to me
of your God on high!
For no true God would
sanction the be-heading
of one of his own creations.

Speak not to me of your
riotous hatred, your pious
beliefs of your mad man..
Mohammed.

You will die in the desert,
your soul will sink to the
depths of hell for you
are a killer of innocent
men, women and children.

You are a bomber, murderer and a coward.
You have committed crimes of barbarism
against the laws of humanity.

You will never receive the sacraments
of grace. You will never witness
God's glorious face.

You are a Gargoyle from hell.
You have no conscience, no
compassion, no humanity.

You abide with the devil, for
only he, you know.
You can pretend, but the world knows
you are the son of the devil...not of man.

Jackie R. Kays... Terrorist © 2004

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

No angels, no virgins, no martyrs,
just an eternity of damnation.
Hell will be the final destination
of your sorry terrorist soul

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*I*t's quiet here today.
Thanksgiving has come and gone its way.
The winter skies are gloomy and gray,
snowflakes are expected this evening
in an amount that will surely stay.

My Grandson has returned to the prairies
of Oklahoma. School you know, he must go.
Work calls our daughter and son in law.

There's a lonely silence in this house,
the barking of my Grandson's little black
dog, he calls "Midnight" is missed by all.

My son and his wife are gone too,
business called them away.

I don't think they knew it
was supposed to snow today.

Blackie, our cat, he's been acting funny,
I think he misses everyone in his cat way.

The decorations are now just being placed
on a small Christmas tree.
I'm sitting here with a stomachache,
too much turkey and cake...
we all ate.

Christmas is on its way,
and then we'll all be
happily together again
on that wonderful holiday.

Jackie R. Kays... Thanksgiving is Over © 2002

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

More turkey and cake...
and probably another stomachache.
But that's okay, I can't wait!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

I'm not for sure, but it appears to me, that many have forgotten,
that jungle war long ago; but let me tell you my friend,
the surviving warriors will never forget :

The unbearable heat, the pounding, monsoon rains, the sounds, sights,
and smells of a jungle war.

The snakes, spiders and giant mosquitoes;

The anger, the fear, the loneliness, and the sight of black body bags
awaiting their long journey home.

The thousands of dead and wounded, the POW's and the MIA's.

Sir, you ask of me, do I remember that jungle war?

Yes, my friend, I and thousands of other veterans will forever

remember: nights of anxiety and fear in fox holes, bunkers,

towers, and on the ground K-9's and handlers guarding

the perimeters all around, the dead and the blood, the injured,

the sounds of exploding bombs, rockets, and small arms fire.

Those brave men fought not for a cause, but for the following

principles: freedom, love of country and the Red White and Blue, and

last, but not least the river of tears shed by the families of the brave

men and women, whose names appear on that black granite wall of heroes.

Sir, does that answer your question, why were we there?

For those who care, that was indeed why we were there!

Yes, after all those years, these aging eyes still shed a tear

for the warriors, who served there.

Jackie R. Kays

©3/24/13

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The ball and chain of ignorance
is mankind's heaviest burden to date.
No matter how he struggles and fights,
he can not break away from his chained fate.

After thousands of years, he still hates in the name of his god.
After thousands of years, he still despises the difference in his fellowman.
After thousands of years, he still kills in the lands of the Bible and Koran.
After all those thousands of years, he's still the cause of misery, pain and suffering
through out the land.

The ball and chain of ignorance is man's sad legacy
to mankind. Until he can break that chain, he will
be bound to that sad fate. No matter how long he
struggles or how long he has to wait

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

As the broiling bronze sphere
rises high in the turquoise sky,
circling black scavengers wing
on winds of high.

The smell of blood and carnage
inflammes their nostril beaks as
their prey lie dead or dying on
the desert floor so surreal and bleak.

The blood curdling cries of the
black winged vultures echo over
the now silent battlefield where
the reeking bodies lie.

The battle is over and the victors
have gathered their wounded and
dead as the vanquished silently
await their fate flying high overhead.

A gruesome scene to behold as
death takes its bloody toll.
An eerie silence prevails over the
battlefield as the victors march silently
off in their triumphant victory so bold.

Losers lose and winners win,
and that's the rules regardless
of their warring sin.

As long as there's wars there
will be warriors to fight and
die and the count will forever
be too high.

Jackie R. Kays... The Battlefield © 2004

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The birds of prey will continue
through the centuries to survive
in this hideous way.

And the continuity of death will
provide for these feather beasts
on battlefields of upheaval,
in a life and death struggle
for causes of good and evil

Jackie R. Kays... The Big Red Fire Truck © 2002

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

When I was child of four or five,
I remember the big red truck
screaming as it raced past.
I asked my mother what it was, and
she told me it was a fire truck
running so fast.

I thought how scary!
A truck that races to your house
and sets it on fire.
From then on every time I heard
a fire truck go by...
I would run and hide.

Now when I hear that siren
screaming loud, I still shiver
inside.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*he Book of life is brief, the pages turn quickly
like in a short nursery rhyme, and the fleeting
shadows of life dance on the garden wall in double time.

What's on those pages is up to you.
It's your life to do with as you choose to.

But, keep in mind those page are only held together
by delicate twine. So, when you misuse those
pages, your life become a real grind.

When the book of life closes, it's not what's on
the cover that make the book sublime, but what
was on those pages, held together by that thin
line of delicate twine...The Book of Life

Jackie R. Kays... The Daredevil © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Constantly in the eye of the tiger,
blindfolded at the edge of the abyss.

Mount Everest bound, always
pushing the envelope, always
one step ahead of hope.

That's why he's the dare-devil
at the end of that invisible rope

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

I cried bitter tears of anger and frustration,
for the thousands of men and women,
whose lives were obviously lost in vain.

How can history justify all the death,
destruction and carnage, as well as the
pain and suffering caused to the South
Vietnamese people, who lost their
country's name.

I ask myself over and over again;
How could we have let this happen?
The answer was plain; "Back room deals,
and a Government, who had lost the will to win!"

In the street the Hippies danced and sang,
while thousands that had fought the jungle
battles moaned and cried as the church bells rang.

After years of war, disillusionment and strife,
Saigon fell and the Republic of South Vietnam
went straight to Communist hell

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

In the mirror of my soul echoes
the ghost of a jungle war long
past.

Sights and sounds so surreal,
the smell of napalm as it
burns on a nearby hill.

A pop flare slowly drifts
across the razor fence,
as black pajama clad shadows
in slow motion perform
their strange, exotic dance.

The death defying silence
broken by the roar of a
noisy 105.

Instantly followed by the
crack of small arms fire,
and the jungle comes alive.

Out of the jungle darkness,
a single voice in time.

Heel Blackie! Heel!

Enemies beware!
For here lurks the
dreaded K-9

Dedicated to all military police K-9 Handlers and their dogs, past and present.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Things are just great...so they say!
Gas goes up a dollar everyday.

If this keeps up...we'll all be walking
and our cars at home will simply stay.
It only took a few days to win the war,
but look at the years it'll take to win the peace.
A few good men and women die everyday, but
as the years go by, that amount will soar no matter
how much we cry and pray.

Our borders are standing wide open ... thousands are coming in;
illegal, outlaws, dope peddlers and terrorists too! Pretty soon,
there will be no room for me or you!

With the cost of all this and shots to the moon,
your taxes will soar like a trillion dollar balloon!
They say it takes the first four months of each year
to earn the taxes we pay. That just goes to prove
hard working Americans are getting the shaft
each and everyday!

AFTA, is going to make your life easier...so they said.

What do you mean...you can't find a job!
There's plenty of jobs; picking vegetables, fruits,
flipping burgers and parking cars. At minimum wage...
you're sure to be hired!

Pay your taxes on time...so they can afford to continue
this folly of spending your last tax dime.

The good old American Tax Payer...what a great guy!

They say; Things are just great... Yeah! Well...they must be high!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The copper sphere, blinks and then sets behind
the lavender clouds in the evening sky.
A light breeze blows the remaining scarlet
leaves from the old oak standing so high.

As the mystic night curtain approaches and
the cool Autumn air drifts like an Angel
mist cross the low lying valley....at last,
tranquility abounds.

The call of the lonely whippoorwill echoes
from the forest of these windy Ozark hills.
The secretive night owls, hoots and hoots
his melancholy call to his mate on the old
rock wall.

A white tail deer cautiously grazes, with her
spotted fawn near by, as a covey of quail
flush and take to the early evening sky.
The night hawk appears in search of its prey,
a sure sign to the end of another Autumn day.

All is calm...as time stands still at the
"Hole in the Wall."
My home... My final destiny...
My all!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

From the rocking cradle to a hardened young man,
hand to mouth, hand to hand.

Cardboard in his shoes to keep out the dirt and sand.
In the thirties and forties from a shack on Walnut Street,
he did reap...loneliness, sadness, abuse by the heap!
No love, no compassion... for no one cared for
the poor little boy on Walnut Street!

All alone he did hope, dream, wish and weep.
From a lesson hard learned and never forgotten...
alone he would have to be his own keep.
The years slowly evolved, but one day he turned seventeen!
Hard as a rock, cynical as he could be...he joined the young
men who defend...you see!

In combat he learned what true friends could really be...
but to all others skeptical he remains to this day, you see.
THEY say; he has a suspicious mind, no heart and no
faith in anyone but he.

THEY have never walked in his shoes with cardboard soles,
or lived from hand to mouth in a world all alone and down
and out, or cried night after night, wondering what life is
all about.

THEY say he's a loner, and marches to a different drummer!
What they don't know is...
where he's been and what he's done!
With a crooked smile and determination strong and wild,
he took on the world for seventy-five years and did it his way
without regrets or tears.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

As time always will, it has quickly passed.
Now the young boy from Walnut Street is old, feeble and weak at last.
Yet, he still is who he always was... firm in his beliefs, kind to those
who are kind to him and he dares those who scorn and laugh...
for they have not worn cardboard in their shoes or dodged the
enemy's bullets and wrath!

THEY have not been to hell and back...
therefore, they are not entitled to judge
this man born within a dilapidated shack.
He still has a crooked smile on his face...
even though he knows that the grim
reaper will soon win life's race!
Regrets, he has but few..
for to himself, he has
always been true!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Broken shafts of amber sunlight sift
softy through the dark blue haze of
the evening twilight.

The edge of another hectic day is softened
by the entrance of night's slumbering
purple curtain call.

A moment of peace and tranquility for
the human mind to quietly unwind.
With anticipation of drifting in dark velvet
sleep throughout the night, minus the recoils
of yesterday's harsh light.

Deep, deep...sleep, without counting sheep.
No bumps in the night, no silent shadows on the
wall, no ghosts dancing in the hall, just mind
rejuvenating sleep for us all.

Sleep-zzzzzz

Then bright shafts of amber sunlight sift through the
gossamer curtains, on to the bed they fall. Morning
is here, and the aroma of fresh coffee beckons to all!

Jackie R. Kays... The Rose © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*he flower of virtue and love
blossoms in the early morning
to the life giving moisture of dawn.
Buds of red and yellow bursting
forth in the warmth of the new
born day.

Sparkling diamond dewdrops,
accent their beauty in the early morning sun.
Each rose a reflection of life renewed.
Fresh, clean and alive, like a promise
of hope just newly arrived.

The Rose.

Note: I'm sure you noticed, this poem does not rhyme.
To force it to rhyme, I felt would rob it of its meaning.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Did you see it!
There it goes again,
Swirling, whirling, gliding
like a magical carpet.

The warm autumn air pushing it along.
Slowly twisting, descending, but not quite
touching down.

Then quickly rising back into
the late Autumn sky.
Like a bird, it flutters and
soars higher and higher.
Can you still see it?
It's almost out of sight.

Oh! It's gone!
I wonder where it will eventually land.
That last scarlet leaf at autumn's end!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The Sergeant yelled; "Attention!"
And everyone snapped to!
And across the wide ocean they marched,
two by two into the dark jungle deep.
Mortars and flares overhead,
everyone hit the dirt, just like
the Sergeant said.

Bullets, bombs, napalm, and tracers of red and green.
Flares that hung in the heavy jungle night
air like twinkling stars in distant flight.

Rain and mud, snakes and other crawly things.
From a cold can... franks and beans, no chocolate
ice cream. Wives and girlfriends were just
memories and dreams.

Black pajamas, stealthily move in the tall
elephant grass, razor wire, Claymore mines,
Ha, Ha, Charlie's takin' automatic fire.
Fear was a silent companion of each day and night.
Destiny was a silent thought, spoken of - not.
Blood, death, and black body bags, in that hot
jungle sun was their unspoken lot.

Warriors came and went as the months turn to years,
the blood covered the jungle floor, and the
young warriors that died there are heroes forever more.

Survivors still fight in the dark of the night,
in a jungle war that has long been out of sight.
The Sergeant ordered; "Sing!"

Jackie R. Kays... The Sergeant Ordered: Sing! © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

So, we all stood at attention and sang;
“Bye, Bye Miss American Pie.”

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

A large dust devil scurried
across the hot desert floor,
and out of its wavering heat
rides a giant of a man on a
tall white Arabian stallion
to meet the last charging
Moors.

His sun lit castilian
sword held high,
a warning to the Moors,
who yet may die.

On the dry desert wind floats
the pungent odor of decaying flesh,
and nowhere on the battlefield
does the blood run fresh.

Birds of prey circle aloft
and scream their deadly cry,
as they wait for the last
invading Moor to die.

Silence falls upon the
crimson-battlefield.
Feasting upon the
unexpected bounty,
the scavengers
care not why.

Hundreds of shield clad
Moors lie dead or dying.
Their banners no longer
flying.

Jackie R. Kays... The Spanish Lion © 1990

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Their mounts wandering
aimlessly on the desert sand,
as the victors steal the gold
from the dead Moors' hands.

It's the year one thousand,
Spain has won the day.
Thanks to the noble El Cid,
who fought like a Spanish lion
to keep the invaders at bay

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The Vietnam War has long come and gone,
leaving many forever to mourn their loss.
Over the years as time passed some wounds
healed, but many still last.

Those of us who were there...
can tell you for sure...
we still remember,
we still care.

That black granite wall is our memorial stone.
Those forever inscribed will be
remembered as long as one of us
is still known.

Comrades forever, no one can
deny and nothing on this earth
can defy.

The Spirit of the Vietnam
Veteran will survive!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

During the era of the Roman Empire when the Centurions returned to Rome, a time of festivity was observed by all of its citizens. Honoring their returning warriors with a parade of bright colored chariots, musicians, dancers, performing acrobats, flags, banners and flower bearers. Not to mention a feast of food and wine.

When the Vietnam War Centurion returned alone to his Rome. There were no musicians, dancers, performers, flags, banners or flower bearers. No bright colored chariots or feast of food and wine.

Just apathy and arcane silence for all time.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Faces long ago captured by death,
still haunt my memory in every
nightly breath.

Friends, foe and children,
all had to fall. Day and night
death made its horrendous
call. It had no preference
at all.

Blood stains forever remain
on that battle ground and
on the hearts and souls of
all those, for whom the bells
toll.

Thousands of innocent, guilty
and indifferent, all died
in that jungle hole.
Called...
The Vietnam War.

To this day, I still
ponder the effects of it all,
and wonder how many tears
will fall at the foot of that black
granite wall!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

“**D**o you remember the kid down the street...
I can’t remember his name, but what a shame!”

When everything was shinny and new in
his young life, the aroma of spring flowers,
warm breezes, clear blue skies and multicolored butterfly in-flight; all was well,
with little or no strife.

Four was he, in a wonderland so big and wide,
“What is this?” “What is that?” What and why,
he asked, repeatedly, for only four was he!

Time passed, and seven he quickly became!
Stick horses, cowboy hat, and pearl handled
cap guns, fireflies in a mason-jar and eating
tootsie rolls and watching the bright stars.

Sand through the hourglass and ten was he!
Summertime, climbing trees, riding his bike
down Fifth street, eating wormy mulberries
from the old mulberry tree. Life was free
and so was he!

Turn around, and fifteen he became.
Baseball, fishing pole, swimming holes,
Boy scouts, and the discovery that all the
ugly little girls had magically turned pretty!

Time fluttered on, and now seventeen was nearly gone.
Football games, high school queens, late night movies
and stolen kisses at the drive-in, and that’s how his time
had passed, without a serious thought or a single sin.

In the blink of the eye and twenty-one was he!

Jackie R. Kays... The Year of the Monkey © 2011

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Now where were the butterflies in-flight,
the summer breeze and the old mulberry
trees and his young future, so bright?

Gone forever by an AK round, on a dark
monsoon night, in a jungle firefight,
during the year of the monkey...
Nineteen-sixty-nine!

“What was his name...
Ah! I can't remember

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

There's a little person in all of us, and every
once in a while he or she shows their ugly face.
This little person is quick to display their anger,
rage, and their inability to cope with criticism.
They curse, rant, rave and stomp
their feet in an uncontrollable rage.

They blame, they call people names, they
are inconsiderate, and think their always right!
They embarrass us at every chance they get.

They're from the dark side of our psyche.
If you feel them coming out...count to ten,
ignore them and let them just squirm and pout!
Then maybe someday they will pack their little
bags and get out!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

They come in the black of night,
stark and ugly, as we struggle and fight
to forget forever that lingering fright.

Dreams...pray tell,
but you and I know they are
truly echoes from a seething
jungle hell!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

At the Battle of Lexington ...they fought and died!
At the battle of New Orleans...they fought and died!
At the battle of the Alamo...they fought and died!

At the battle of San Juan Hill...they fought and died!
At the battle of the Argonne...they fought and died!
At the battle of Verdun...they fought and died!

At the battle of El Alamein ...they fought and died!
At the battle of the Bulge...they fought and died!
At the battle of Midway... they fought and died!
At the battle of Iwo Jima...they fought and died!
At the battle of Okinawa...they fought and died!
At the battle of Normandy...they fought and died!

At the battle of Seoul...they fought and died!
At the battle of Bloody Ridge...they fought and died!
At the battle of Chosin Reservoir...the fought and died!
At the battle of Pork Chop hill...they fought and died!

At the battle of the siege of Khe Sanh...they fought and died!
At the battle of the Tet Offensive...they fought and died!
At the battle of Saigon...they fought and died!
At the Fall of Saigon...they fought and died!

At the Battle of Baghdad...they fought and died!
At the battle of Falusha...they fought and died!

They are still fighting and dying for you and me
and for the principles that we hold sacred.
Freedom is not free...

Jackie R. Kays... They Fought and Died! © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

It's a gift given without reservation from American
fighting men and women, over the past Two Hundred
and Thirty years.

They will continue to fight and die for that precious gift
called FREEDOM!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

As I stand near this hallowed wall,
my thoughts drift back to the men
and women, who gave their all.

Of a place and time now forgone,
but not forgotten in anyway.
Where bullets, mortars, grenades,
and land mines were the tools of the day.

Of young men and women,
who's youth fell to the bloody call.
To all those who returned, and
die a little each time they experience
a visit to this hallowed wall.

As time marches on, may new generations
visit this hallowed ground and realize the sacrifice
that each man and woman has laid down so that the Red,
White and Blue will never, ever touch the ground

Jackie R. Kays... This One is for you! © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

This little poetic voice comes to me in the middle of the night,
rising quickly, before I forget the words and turn on the light.
Pencil and paper at hand...down jot the words to beat the band.
Sometimes words of love and devotion, sometime words of
concern and emotion, sometimes words of revelation.
Sometimes words of nature's beauty; "as autumn leaves slowly
tumble from the great Oak trees."

Some time words of peace and tranquility, sometimes words
of war, hate and instability, sometimes words of encouragement
and stability.

All of these words are written, so you may understand my
feelings at this moment at hand. For if it were not for you,
who reads these humble words of mine day in and day out,
I would be a poet only in my own mind.

So thank you for your time!
I hope you will keep reading my little rhymes.
This goes to prove that,
"Poetry is truly the window to the soul."

This One is for you...
from my heart to yours in pure gold!

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Off a lonely mountain top,
he stumbles and falls,
bleeding, bleeding,
in a pleading voice he calls.

In blinding pain, down,
down into the ravine,
he stumbles again.
The cawing of a single
raven breaks the silence
of this untold sin.

As the mid-day sun,
scorches and sears
his flesh, he weakly
struggles to draft
his last breath.

Death invoked by
a crushing blow
to his head.

Murdered by an
unknown and left...
to die alone.

Washed away by
the spring melt,
bleached bones,
this unholy secret
will someday tell.

Description: This poem is based on a true incident: In 1964, a young airman was murdered in the San Bernardino Mountains of California. His remains were not found for several months. His assailant(s) was never apprehended.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

A cold wet wind blows against his window pane,
as dusk begins its nightly search for darkness.
The ambience of silence comes slowly at first,
then the loneliness and despair take over his
aging soul, as the desert wind slowly blows.

The shadows appear on his cell wall as
a cold draft manipulates the tiny, dim, yellowish
flickering candle flame in the hall.

Smoldering embers in the fireplace pop and crack,
as the warmth of the flame dies like a shivering ghost
in the gloom of the early desert morning hour.

The deadly silence is suddenly broken by the sound
of the rusty, screeching door, opening into his
inner sanctum once more.

“Who goes there?” a weak trembling voice asks.
“It is I...your conscience, your guide, its justice
with my troop of unconscionable friends
from places that you would never want to have been!

“And I ask where would that be?”
“OH! So you want to know... do you?”
“That would be to the fiery bowels of hell,
to the depths of the Seven Seas, and to the
worlds beyond reality!”

“Why do you tell me of these horrible places and things?”
“Well Old man...if you don't hurriedly change your ways,
these places and things will be yours for all of eternity!”

Jackie R. Kays... To Hell Tonight? © 2006

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

“For you see...you are a sinner in the first degree,
and you are hell bound and when you arrive there
the devil will dance and sing with jubilee!”

“Oh! No!...I shall repent! The war that I waged was not truly meant!”
“But, Saddam, my old friend, your day of judgment is close at hand,
and your soul is black with sin! Your trial is about to begin.
You have about as much chance to win as a one legged man in an
ass kicking contest in the end!

So grab your balls and hold on tight, for Allah is sending
you to the Devil tonight.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

After all these years I've discovered
that the world is truly round and
everything that goes around,
comes around.

It's been my experience that those who
deal in lies, hatred, intolerance, and
misery can and will at some point in
their lives receive the same in spades.

You and I both know good people, who
are truthful, honest, tolerant and kind.
These are the people who daily fight off
the temptations of a world in turmoil.

These are the silent majority!
Touched by the guiding hand
of God

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

His ears ring, his
head throbs, his
thoughts confused,
his chest crushed.
Uniform and Jump Boots

His ears ring, his
head throbs, his
thoughts confused,
his chest crushed.

The colored images in the
box strangle dance around,
there's no sound cause
the damn thing is turned
down.

He rises, staggers,
shakes and quakes.
It's no use, too
late for his sake.

One last breath,
then death.

To the floor in a heap,
no one left to weep!

Men in black suits,
lower him down in his
old uniform and jump boots

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

If we do not appreciate the past,
then the future holds little value,
for there will come a time
in all our lives, when the
past will be all we have
in this world to value

Jackie R. Kays... Veteran's Day © 2005

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The Red White and blue,
still waves over this Great
Nation bright and true.

Thanks to You!

The American Veteran
past and present

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Once again, we gather here today
in the brotherhood of the Eagle and
Shield to reminisce and relive
a time and place, eternally
recorded in the history of
yesterday.

Vietnam Veterans one and all!
Served with dignity, courage
and honor. Vigilant and alert,
in blue, we all stood tall.

On our shield, we pledged
protection and security for
the principles of the Red,
White and Blue.

We shall forever remember
those courageous men and women,
on that black granite wall, who
gave their all.

Brothers in war and peace,
we shall stand shoulder to
shoulder until that last call.

We forever pledge;
“All for one and one for all!”
Vietnam Security Police is our call

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Battles are won and lost by brave
soldiers in lands far away.
The cause of the war is not always
understood by those who question
it's validity each and everyday.

Right or wrong, the war goes on,
and who am I to scold, only time
will tell for whom the bells toll.

No one knows the sound of those bells
like the soldiers that so gallantly fell.

War is truly Hell

Jackie R. Kays ... Our Country Tis Of Thee, 1993

A Sad Moment in Time
© 2003 by Jackie R. Kays

While walking down a crowded street, on a hot humid day in the year of nineteen sixty five in a place then called; Saigon. Out of the corner of my eye.

I noticed a small woman dressed in black silk attire. She was kneeling, holding a very small baby and through her desperate tears, she begged for money. The baby's eyes reflecting a silent death stare.

I asked my friend if he understood what she was doing. He replied that she was trying to get enough money to bury her dead child.

A sad moment that forever will remain indelibly in my mind from a far off... war torn place and time

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

The Red, White and Blue at
the sound of taps, lowered
so slow and true.

A lump in my throat, choking
back sorrow only another
warrior could possible note.

The decades have quickly passed,
but their honor will forever last
in the memory of that Asian war,
so permanently cast.

Youth forgone on battlefields afar
and forlorn.
Courage above and beyond at a time
when other chose to spit and scorn.

Names on a shadowed granite wall,
warriors that will forever stand tall.
They made the ultimate sacrifice for
us all.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

We were young, we were unsung.
We responded to our countries' call.
We crossed the ocean to the jungle
with rifles slung...
Warriors one and all!
We fought, prayed and cried while
others died.

Now after forty years, some say it was all a lie!
It's our country...and we still say:
"It was an honor and a privilege to serve,
until the day we die!"
Warriors One and All...
will always be our battle cry

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

I'm just an old man, sitting
here in the four walls of my
inner sanctum, wasting my
time writing lines of poetry
that just don't seem to rhyme.

The words seem to linger
in my mind, and eventually
start to climb. Visions of
times, places and faces sublime.

The Day is long gone, when I was a
dream weaver and could turn back
time, but now tomorrow has
slipped into yesterday's rhyme.

The days come and the days
go, leaving me with the feeling
of just sitting here, growing old.
So before I fall asleep here at my

magic machine, trying to be witty
writing this little ditty, it's become
obvious that this is not much of a poem...

What a pity!

*Jackie R. Kays... Where Bouncing Betty's and Elephant Grass
Still Silently Grow © 2008*

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

*T*he white and purple orchids bloom at night in the bright jungle moonlight but beneath the fields of tall elephant grass, still lurks the deadly bouncing betty and the cannons have been silent for the past thirty-some years, but those echoes still ring in many old soldier's ears.

In the middle of the night, sounds of rockets, bombs, and claymore mines return to the maimed, blind and psychologically damaged minds.

The names and faces of young combat buddies stay anew to this aging soldier from a war long past but forever so true. My war, our war, the war...will always be with you and me even though there were those who protested and disagreed. You and I answered the call and we shall never be ashamed, for one and all stood proud and tall!

Those who were there know...
Those who were not...shall never know!

Jackie R. Kays... Where Have They Gone? © 2000

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Where Have They Gone?
They drifted back one at a time?
into the World.
No music,
no drums and
no flags unfurled.

Most tried to leave their ghosts,
in-country.
But some will live with the sights and sounds of war until the end of time.
Some will never return,
but in our hearts they will always stand tall.
Many will be remembered until time stands still,
on that black granite wall.

They changed their uniforms for civvies and tried to start their lives over.
Some became lawyers ?
Some became Policemen ?
Some became Doctors ?
Some became Nurses ?
Some became Truck drivers ?
Some became Business men ?
Some became Men of God ?
Some became Farmers?
Some just couldn't stand the pain ?
But most managed to sustain.

And all will be eternal brothers in a faraway time and place called ?
The Vietnam War.

***Dedicated to all the men and women who served in SEA during the Vietnam war.
Thank each of you for taking the time to read it.***

Jackie R. Kays... Where Were You? © 2013

Jackie R. Kays

4/20/13

SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)

DaNang-65

Where were you, and what were you doing on 4/30/1975, the infamous day that Saigon fell to the communist? I recall that day well, I was sitting on my couch in the living room, watching the news coming out of Saigon! Tears of anger and disbelief ran down my face, as the sights and sounds of our military retreating from South Vietnam.

I was medically discharged in 1966, but I watched the war news every night and thought about my brothers in arms, that I'd left behind. I thought about the 58,000 troops, whose names would be forever engraved on that cold, granite wall and their grieving families' lasting pain. I thought about all the innocent Vietnamese left behind to face the advancing enemy.

I thought...God what was it all for?

"I am forever honored, for I have marched with heroes!"

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Who...left their loved ones crying in the night?
Who...left their homes far out of sight?
Who...made the dreaded ten thousand mile flight?
Who... faced the enemy in the dark jungle night?

Who...watched their buddies bleed and die?
Who...watched the body bags as they piled them sky high?
Who...held their head in their hands and cried and cried?

Who...did they blame for a war that went from bad to worse?
Who...did they spit on, shout and curse?
Who...did they send in straight jackets to the head nurse?

Who's...life will forever be changed?

Yours and mine...now isn't that a hell of a shame?

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

Over the target they circled
like a guardian angel...
dropping their life saving light
in the midst of the battle, throughout
the rainy jungle night.

They made one last desperate pass,
circled once more and then headed home
to base, when the heavy plane sputtered
and ran out of gas.

The pilots and crew... professionals all,
fought to keep the trim, but as fate would
have it...Down! Down! It came in the
monsoon rain.

Crashing into a mine field, skidding
along the muddy jungle floor...
breaking up like a toy plane, to be no more.

Thank God...none died, and all survived,
but, the horror of memories forever will
remain.

On the Wings of a War Bird they rode the jungle skies,
and the warriors on the ground will warmly
remember them until the day they die.

Dedicated to the seven crew member of C-123 aircraft (Flare ship) that crashed in the jungle near Da Nang Air Base, South Vietnam in the early hours of; November the 21st, 1965. I shall forever remember that incident and the airmen involved.

Jackie R. Kays
SSGT. USAF (Med. Ret.)
DaNang-65

In the Sergeant's arms lies the precisely
folded triangular banner of Red, White and Blue.
In the cargo bay of this giant silver bird lies the
golden casket of his friend and fallen Hero too.

No words can adequately describe the
significations of this unselfish supreme
sacrifice. Bravery, courage, dedication,
and loyalty to God, family and Country.

What more can be asked of a young man,
Whose life has been taken defending
the principles by which we so freely stand.

A loud report of rifles of honor and a moment
of silence...dear hearts can hardly bear.
High on this wind swept hill drifts the melancholy
echo of taps suspended in the cool Autumn air.

Here in this hallowed ground, lies another
young American Hero for whom the bells toll.
May we never forget his ultimate contribution
to the cost of freedom's goals.

May that Red, White and Blue banner always fly in
America's sky...for the cost in young American
Heroes continues to be tragically high

Major Bruce W. Lovely... The Soldiers Night Before Christmas 1993

Guardian of Honor
"THE SOLDIERS

I wrote this poem for Christmas Eve 1993 while assigned to
US Forces Korea Lt Col Bruce Lovely, USAF
(printed in the Fort Leavenworth Lamp, 1995)

(With apologies to Clement Moore who first wrote this story for his children in 1822)

The Night Before Christmas

Twas the night before Christmas, he lived all alone
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone.
I had come down the chimney with presents to give
And to see just who in this home did live.
I looked all about, a strange sight did I see.
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.
No stockings by the mantle, just boots filled with sand,
On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.
With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
A sober thought came through my mind.
For this house was different, it was dark and dreary,
I found the house of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone,
curled upon the floor in this one bedroom home.
The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
Not what I pictured of a United States Soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I just read,
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for a bed?
I realized the families I saw on this night,
owed their lives to these soldiers,
Who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world the children would play.
and the grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas Day.
They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
Because of the soldiers, like the one lying there.

Major Bruce W. Lovely... The Soldiers Night Before Christmas 1993

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
on a cold Christmas Eve, in a land far from home.
The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.
The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa, don't cry, this life is my choice;
I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
My life is my God, my country, my Corps."

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it, I started to weep.
I kept watch for hours, so silent and still
and we both shivered from the cold night's chill.
I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night
This Guardian of Honor so willing to fight.

The soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,
whispered, "Carry on, Santa,
It's Christmas Day ... All is secure."

One look at my watch and I knew he was right
Merry Christmas, my friend,
... and to all a Good Night!

By Major Bruce W. Lovely

Cam Ranh Bay, 1966
12th SPS, Cam Ranh Bay

Go to war
our leaders said,
to protect our way
of life
Which is right !!

Trust us,
we never lie,
we should have asked
WHY !!!

We would have
never gone,
now we're back
never to go again

to protect our
children &
grandchildren
in our land of lies ???

Frank Pilson... War and Christmas, 1966

Cam Ranh Bay, 1966
12th SPS, Cam Ranh Bay

Christmas Eve

all is quiet, good will to mankind except in Nam,
sand on our roof, rats in the bunker,
Uncle Sam and Ho say truce, not in Nam
Working mids with my meal of C Rations ... call McD'S no drive-ins

Christmas

Bohica ... Mass ... off ... number one

Day After

slept all day, home next year [1967]
WHY ??? were there for whom ????
war is cold wet and rainy ... 70 ...
War kills, spirits and bodies now or later

missing you

Choi Oi ... Figma ... Fubar

I came home which was purgatory

I lost which was hell

and I survived

Heaven!

DUNG LAI

Don Poss... After You, I Insist © January 2013

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



*T*oo many years to think and wonder
why I lived and you died.

I don't think we planned it to happen;
it's just that we suddenly were there
and suddenly I fired and you did not.

I wonder why?

You were alone.
I was on point.

Don Poss... After You, I Insist © January 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

Unexpected. But that is silly
considering the fact we were only
there because of the war and
searching each other out.

Still,

I knew you could be there,
but you had never just appeared
like a sudden slap.

If I could undo it ...
If I could be certain you would
never kill my friends, and
If I could believe you,
I think I would undo it all.
I've wished for that so many
sleepless nights.

I've seen you fall...
blown backwards really,
and not get up nor
breathe again.
Too many holes to even
think of trying to stop your
life draining away, even if I had
wanted to
.. and I didn't

Your spirit fled so fast and
your eyes took on that look only dead
eyes can acquire to mock the irony of life...
and so easily give up the ghost without
any fight to live.

Don Poss... After You, I Insist © January 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

No 'by your leave' ...
No 'sorry'bout the mess' ...
No 'deal with it.'
Just ... gone.
Checked out.

Did God see you fall, like a sparrow, that day?
Did He care?

Pats on my back...
defensive laughter...
cursing your body and believe me,
many did that.

Going through your stuff,
discarding photos with rude
remarks.

Posed photos ... as if you were a
hunting trophy.
I could not bring myself
to throw mine away after
all these years. Until finally,
I realized my eyes looked more
and more like yours. So I left
your crinkled black'n white soul
at a Buddhist temple in LA.

They were scared and I was terrified at what
just happened to you -- what had just happened to me.
And for the first time I wondered: Why You ... Why Not
Me?

How easily I had fired in reflex, and how
easily you fell, just like the movies, and
I, oh how easily, just walked away,

Don Poss... After You, I Insist © January 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

heart pounding, forced grin ... macho,
forever changed.

Better you than me,
so I've told myself Lord knows
how many times.
Would you have felt the same?
Would you have still wondered why?

What the hell were you doing out there alone?

Your Poem Called to me.

I was not alone that night. Nearby were comrades at rest in the tunnels. My leader knew my dislike for the tunnels and sometimes sent me out to check for movements of the enemy. Rarely did you venture nearby at night.

Below ground, I felt confined like a worm crawling about, breathing heavy earth-air, stench of unwashed men, and suppressing a growing fear: only the dead are meant to be buried alive, like this.

In some narrower branches I porpoised-forward or scooted like an earthworm. It was necessary, so that you could not follow. You would not have wanted to catch me there.

I had left the stagnant dampness below, inhaled the night air and found the scent of ocean bay fresh and uplifting. A short walk brought me to my favorite place where I could forget the oppressive tunnels. From a palm laden vista, the valley was like the cupped hands of a giant, and I watched as moonlight spilled into the ocean. I could see the distant Air Base we sometimes attacked, and of comrades who did not return.

Don Poss... After You, I Insist © January 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

I could watch as stars fell from the night, like the firebirds they were, landing gracefully as others silently lifted on roman-candles for fun -- stars reborn anew.

Flashes of a distant storm tap randomly, like my leader's typewriter, and silhouetted mountains. Clouds snug against lower hills glowed as if heat-lightning flashed within. I knew my comrades below could feel the earth tremor, and some could even guess the direction and distance of the bombs.

I pushed those thoughts away. Why did I think of the war while up here, and the hidden valley while down there?

If the night was clear;
if the moon was full and glowed the earth in silver;
if the clouds were like drifting balls of cotton;

then I could imagine the cloud-shadows' game of chase as they slide down hillsides into the valley, skipping through an abandoned village and waft off to wherever cloud-shadows played.

I admit that my thoughts were of home more so than the enemy: my quiet village and cooking fires; grandfather; mother and my younger brothers and sisters at play. And yes ... I had fallen asleep for a while and dreamt of Dao, and our last moments together.

It was time to return to the tunnels and report what I had observed of the enemy to the leader, who would nod wisely and know that I would be a good earthworm for another day.

I inhaled deeply, savoring life above, and felt melancholy walking back.

Within a few yards of the entrance I sensed a presence and suddenly we were before each other like eclipsing clouds. I squinted trying to identify friend or foe and felt a stabbing flash of light flick the trail

Don Poss... After You, I Insist © January 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

green ... and cast a pale moonlight-shadow as I fell to earth

Unable to move, I wondered: Why Me ... Why Not You? and indifferently
watched a growing-glistening black pool of life beneath me fade to
nothing.

My spirit was drawn to voices in the abandoned village.
Elders, like mist, tended fires and listened to the needs of the living.

I have not revisited the tunnels ... but often see the silver tinted valley
at night. Stars do not rise and fall now, nor does the earth quake from
distant thunder.

No, I do not wonder about what happened that night.
I accept what happened. Can you?

Let go for this one night, and I will show you my valley and a new way
to dream.

If the moon is full and paints the valley silver;

If clouds are sliding down hillsides like children playing;

Then we may yet hear their gleeful laughter drifting in the night.

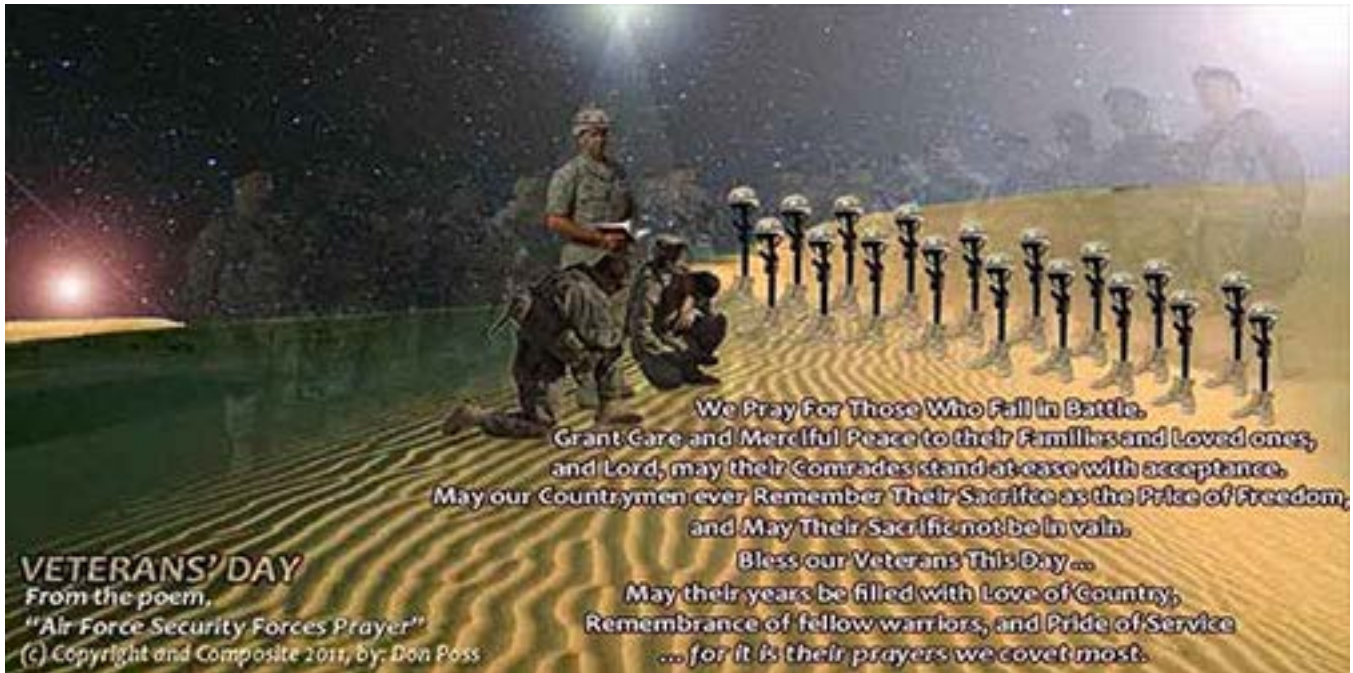
Our paths will have eclipsed once more through our dream

-- no one will die --
and with the dawn, we will feel at peace.

Don Poss... Poem - Air Force Security Forces Prayer © 2011

**366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966**

Korea, Vietnam War, Terrorist Wars
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan
United States Air Force
Military Police, APS/SPS, Security Forces Prayer



Our Father Who Art In Heaven...

We stand before you to Ask for Victory over enemies...

We call for Your Blessing

Upon the people of this land.

Upon the environment,

Where none shall fear drinking from a well fouled with the dead,

Nor suffer the harvest ruined in waste.

Upon the villages and cities,

Where none shall fear the fanatic who would bring terror rather than hope or
those who hate more than they love.

Upon contact with friendlies, that we might be wise in our strength, that confusion

Don Poss Poem - Air Force Security Forces Prayer © 2011

be set aside, and we are united in winning peace through courage and might.

We ask when battle comes You would instill discernment to us all
To recognize the enemy amongst the innocent,
Wisdom to do our duty to protect our fellow warriors,
Courage to protect the innocent endangered in our midst, and
Strength to achieve Victory.

Give us lasting Victory in Battle, which must proceed Freedom and a Lasting Peace.
Grant the warriors acceptance and peace from the horrors of war, so they may endure.

Grant a Lasting Freedom to all from
Fear of government,
Fear of soldiers and police,
Fear of religious persecution,
Fear for safety of loved ones, and
Fear of the Peace being greater than Fear of War.

For our Military Enemies
Deliver us from evil,
Grant us the strength to defeat them,
Confound their wicked efforts.
Let our aim be true, and protect the innocent used in their midst from our power.

Let enemies who come against us fall before the sword of the Defenders of the Force.

For those Who Fall in Battle
Grant Care and Merciful Peace to their families and loved ones, and
Lord, may their comrades stand-at-ease with acceptance.
May our Countrymen ever remember their sacrifice as the price of free dom, and May
their Sacrifice not be in vain.

For those Wounded in Battle
Touch and heal their wounds, ease the pain, and take away the memories of agony.
May their loved ones and friends support their full recovery.
Guide the hands and words of medical personnel in their care and resto ation ofwounds,
and banishment of trauma and anguish from mind and body.

Don Poss Poem - Air Force Security Forces Prayer © 2011

May our nation open its heart, and do all possible to restore the wounded warrior's strength, body, and serenity.

May the country gain respect and appreciation for the symbol of the

Purple Heart, bestowing gratitude to those so awarded, with thankfulness for lives spared, and a certainty that You have embraced those wounded unto death.

For those Who Fought and Lived

And survived the battle unscathed, we thank You for Your mercy and grace that surpasses our understanding.

For Warriors Captured in Battle

Grant them Freedom

From torture, disease, and Torment.

Strengthen their faith in certainty that countrymen are praying for deliverance, and ward their searching comrades with power to find and swiftly restore them to the brotherhood that many will never know.

For those who Served in lands at Peace during times of War

My our nation remember their vital service in securing the lasting Victory with a Lasting Peace.

Bless those set above us in leadership.

Grant them wisdom in decisions of war and peace.

Grant them discernment, valor, and courage.

Grant them Your mercy.

Grant them Your forgiveness.

Grant them Victory.

Bless the Veterans,

May their years be filled with love of country, remembrance of fellow warriors, and pride of service ... for it is their prayers we covet most.

May We and Our Enemy strive to be on Your Side,

For only then will peace on Earth reign eternal.

May the Fortress of Peace ever Stand.

In Your Name we pray,..... Amen

Don Poss... Along The Way © 2013

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*

Little boy blue
Cold as night
Laying quiet by the trail.

No one came for him
in his black stained pajamas...
And no one looked back
From down the trail.

A shallow grave of dust and
Deadfall,
and no one cared a final word

Don Poss... Boots © 2013
366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966

Laced up boots and shallow ponds are but unvarnished dreams delayed.

Wasted days morph to wasted years
where sight, sound, or scent triggers replay.

Depression or joy...
little in between...
where reality and despair unleash the wind of
broken dreams and harried souls to
howl the night away.

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

There was a time when our numbers shook the Earth
Of Vietnam and Thailand.
As Defenders of The Fortress!

Air Police.
Security Police.
Twenty Thousand strong ... young Warriors we were, and
The Fortress was safe.

For a decade, the enemy tried our gates,
Fell upon our swords ... and died!
The Fortress was safe.

Our blood was shed ... the cost of freedom.
One Hundred Eleven dead ... Five Hundred more Wounded.
The Fortress was safe.

Then we came Home.
The Fortress was safe.

We were not.

Our numbers grow fewer by the decade
Our Names join those who fell before.
We die too young and too often,
Lingering Shadows, and
Agent orange coffins.

Too many now guard the Pearly Gates --
Winged reminders to treasurer my brothers.
I miss them ... and that is certain.
I remember them ...
Faces ever young ...

Faces that grew old.
Heaven is safe.

Don Poss... Brothers, I Don't Want You to Die ... © 2008

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

Brothers,
I Don't Want You to Die ...
Stay a while longer if you can, if only until relieved ...
Remember with me those we have lost ...

The times when our numbers shook the Earth,
And those who would cause us harm, feared us.
The Fortress was safe ...
And none ever lost!

Don; You have said a mouth full with that poem. I hope everyone who visits the BB takes the time to read this piece of work and remember it. ***Jack The Old Cowboy***

Don: That is one of the most beautifully worded, thought provoking and emotional poems I have ever read. You have expressed something we all think about, and have done it masterfully. Thank you for sharing your time and talent. ***Howard***

Very nice, very-very nice.
Janet Matthews-Wise

Great poem brother Don. I seemed, however, to have problems reading it with the mist in my eyes. ***Chaplain Jim LM #442***

That's beautiful, Don, and very deeply meaningful. Thanks for sharing your limitless talents with us yet again. ***Phil***

Don, what an eloquent memorial tribute and as I read it a plea to our remaining brothers to continue the good fight and keep alive the memory of our brothers who have gone before us, many all too soon. Lord look after us, one and all. ***Newell***

Don Poss... By The Light of a Silvery Moon © 2012

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



Would the elders talk all night?

We passed near my village, and I had been away three years --and I am suddenly allowed to stay until morning.

She had changed. No longer a child, but a young woman. Beautiful. Desirable--and watched by sisters and guarded closely by brothers, father, and grand-father. I had changed to ... so she said ... and perhaps that is true.

Why are the elders staying up so late -- and on this night?

She had promised to sneak out and meet me at our secret place ... as soon as the elders are asleep.

Don Poss ... By The Light of a Silvery Moon © 2012

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

Do they think they can solve Vietnam's problems and make the Americans go away?

Yes, I am impatient, and tired, and have caught my head bobbing once or twice, as I wait for her near the bamboo trees we played chase by as kids. I will wait forever!

The elders' fire in village center is hypnotic. I can almost feel the warmth of burning logs, and inhale the fragrant scent of ironwood from the mountains. Embers sore and twinkle like fireflies, as if trying to return to their forest home in the sky. He breathed deeply the familiar scents of home, and happy memories of family. He pondered the crackling fire's smoke, and its intent, as it conspired and wavered protectively above her hut.

Strangely, I think of the American papers that rain from the sky, with drawings of villages like mine. Everyone is happy.

Once I saw her peeking from the hut window. But that was forever ago. The night is perfect for a first-walk ... and maybe ... if only... When she had smiled, my mouth gaped and she laughed, and smiled even brighter. Surely she has not forgotten her promise to come to me.

A soft breeze is alive with new cut hay, gathered for the animals, and the perfume of forest flowers and scented fragrance of newly extinguished lanterns, confirming the village sleeps.

His mind drifted, remembering the day they came from the North to the village and took him. Since then, he had longed for his village ... even the elders ... yet wondered what his comrades were now doing, and thought of dead friends ... too many had died ... and felt the ache once more of a healing wound.

The village is so still, and all the hut fires are long out ... except for the elders' fire, and one of them just tossed another log on the low flames, shooting embers and sparks – what are they cooking on sticks? – his stomach growled at the wafting aroma of some sweet meat.

A perfect moon sails the night.

For lingering moments he cast his eyes upward, captivated in primeval wonder and awe ... the heavens are aglow ... veiled in pale-silver splendor of a laughing-moon at the black and silver world below: dancing bamboo teased by skipping cloud-shadows and a racing moon. A

Don Poss ... By The Light of a Silvery Moon © 2012

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

sawing wind rippled the forest palms like an ocean swell ... leafs rustling vigorously in imitation of a joyous rain.

You would never guess war was all about us. Here, at this moment, I can even dream of peace and wonder what it is really like, and if someday I will set with the elders at their fire on a perfect night such as this. Perhaps they might forget to return for me?

The fire began to flicker its weariness of the long night. Glowing embers snuggled near starving flames ... like comrades throwing themselves against an Air Base fortification ... more would die, as certain as the dying embers.

Even the dragon planes are asleep and not flying for some reason. No flares are drifting nearby ... not even on the horizon. No false thunder. And the earth does not quake from distant bombs. Only the moon rules... cooling hazy translucent clouds in a silver glow. As a boy, I remember a French soldier had whistled a song on a night like this, and said it was an American song called "By the Light of the Silvery Moon." Then, as now, I cannot not help being amazed by the starlight, clouds, and moonlight that bath the palms and village in the softest silver glow ... the only light ... now wasting from the elders' fire.

Will they ever go to bed?

Crickets merrily challenged frogs to acapella duets of croaks and chirps.

Clouds faded and were reborn in intertwined ever-drifting patterns of melancholy ... savoring the glow and magical light of the Silvery Moon.

By dawn, only the elder grand-father dozed near radiate embers; his grandsons felt it safe to sleep before the day's work drifted to their huts, one by one, knowing their sisters would watch her until the boy left.

*Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009*

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



For decades he annually returned to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The Wall... called to him... touched something in him. As a Vietnam War veteran, he felt he owed it to those who went before him. His flagging health and confinement to a wheelchair had prevented visits in recent years. But today was different—today was special. He had donned his old green floppy-hat, the only real keepsake from the Vietnam War he possessed, and on his birthday was going to The Wall—in a limousine!

There was no shortage of volunteers to wheel him wherever he wanted to go—where the heck were they ten years ago? And no shortage of reporters asking if he knew yesterday's passing of that-other-guy made him the last living Vietnam Veteran? Why can't they ever say Dead? Passing sounds like a good BM. Of course he knew, but still found it odd that somehow such circumstances could make him famous.

He knew also that if he hadn't fibbed about how he was feeling, they wouldn't have let him go to The Wall today of all days: Memorial Day. Being an aging veteran—and now the last Vietnam Veteran—was indeed bitter sweet, and all too impossible to fully grasp. I can't be the last...I just can't be...he thought. He also knew that no one knew the name of the last draft-dodging-deserter-sob to bite the dust—and frankly, no one cared. He smiled at God's joke permitting him to outlive all those losers...especially that famous shrew, what was her name, but for some reason took no pleasure when she, like a good BM, finally passed.

He was at The Wall and thrilled, and nothing could spoil this day, even though he still didn't know what the media wanted from him, or expected him to say. Maybe they want me to do something dramatic, like croak, in time for the five o'clock follies, he grinned. Screw'em...I'm

Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009

gonna live forever—or maybe not, he thought. He didn't feel like he would live forever. He felt tired and exhausted from this gusty day, this week...this life...with its ever-present aches. He felt like a grumpy, gnarly, barkless old tangled tree too many bears had itched against. Can trees be grumpy? he shrugged, the answer not worth the puzzle. But he was mostly just grumpytired of being tired.

They wheeled him to the Vietnam Nurses Monument and he gestured for someone, whose name he should remember, to place his store-bought roses just-so, in the lap of the kneeling nurse, and between her hand and helmet—perhaps the roses might ease her grief...a grief he could relate to. The wounded, dying, dead warrior cradled in the nurses' arms...her grief and compassion frozen in recognition that his spirit had left the body, and were it possible by will alone, she would have brought him back.

He thought of Donovan's old song, "Catch The Wind" wishing he could recall its lyrics, and its unintended hope he thought it offered gravely-wounded...hoping to catch the dust off chopper riding on the wind.

"In chilly hours and minutes,
of uncertainty, I don't want to be...
For me to love you now,
would be the sweetest thing,
would make me sing...
we'll try and catch the wind..."

His eyes were drawn skyward, following a nurse's gaze ever searching for the dust-off chopper that would never come, and sighed in resignation that salvation was not upon the wind that day. As he wheeled toward The Three Soldiers...Three Warriors...someone asked the question he was always asked at The Wall: Did you know my dad...but this time they said their dad had known him. He wanted to remember, wanted to offer some words that for a moment would make a connection for them...but the names had mostly faded generations ago. He then wheeled left to better read the dedication plaque: "In memory of the men and women who served in the Vietnam War and later died as a result of their service. We honor and remember their sacrifice."

He honored and remembered the many friends who had suffered from Agent Orange or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Such a small plaque, he thought, to honor those countless thousands. Their deepest wounds unhealed —with pitiless fates impatiently lying in wait to

Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009

savage minds and bodies and rot away their spirits. Indeed, too many had later died as a result of their service—a pain without measure. It didn't have to end like that, he thought.

His attention was drawn back to the three young warriors standing vigil. His old eyes recognized and felt the sheer exhaustion forever etched in their eyes...a shared memory of too many sleepless nights...too much pain from dust-off friends...and too certain of a very uncertain future. "Don't mean nothin'," he recalled was the phrase. Through the decades he realized it did mean something...a great deal of something, in fact: he was now the last man standing, and there was no one left he could really talk with. He shook his head in disbelief...they're...all...gone .

He savored a quiet melancholy moment as his helpers chatted with media covering his birthday visit to The Wall. Being over a hundred years old, he had discovered people wanted to talk to him, especially now; everyone knowing well his time was near.

They rolled him the few yards to see nearby old glory...and she was glorious, catching the cool breeze, rippling gently, as only such beauty could with dazzling colors perfectly backlit by the sun. He thought, if only you could talk...what stories you could tell. The flag always brought joy, and sometimes a lump to his throat, as it waved-to, ever so slowly, then-fro with a crisp snap. At another time...another place...we flew old glory and oh how we cheered to see her fly...but they made us take her down.

They paused briefly at the southwest entrance, and he could see The Wall in enfilade and just make out the black granite of the monument's center where it V'd and pointed toward the Washington Monument. Only a decade ago there were still a few misty eyed old men looking for a buddy's names...but no longer.

With a nod, they rolled him forward slowly down the pathway, and in his wake he listened to the trailing sounds of shuffling feet, like a herd of recruits rote-stepping across a bridge. How once we marched like giants down trails of darkness...and like brothers fought till there was light. He felt like a point-man leading a squad as he followed the list of flowing names like markers along the road of life. Moving closer to The Wall, he could feel the cobble stones beneath his wheels, and reached out with finger tips and touched the flickering stone-etched letters as they tapped a Braille Morse Code... like playing cards pinned to a child's bicycle wheels, strumming spokes.

How quickly The Wall grew in height with names overwhelming and never ending, until

Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009

suddenly his chair was swiveled facing center. The Wall somehow seemed taller than he remembered. They waited as he knew they would, while his eyes found the name that was more than just a name to him. He thought, You're still here...in my place...just as you have been all these many decades. He bowed his head slightly and they eased him back to lawn's edge. The name blurred with an old man's vision as he remembered that day for the countless time and wondered anew why he made it home, and they had not. Dreams of Home... that's all we ever had.

He could just see the length of The Wall, from the beginning to end of the war. Without realizing it, he sat at attention...as some forgotten sergeant had instilled in him eons ago, and with a start was momentarily angered when someone broke his thoughts and stuck a tissue in his hand. He instantly resented their assumption he would once more blubber like a woman. Maybe it would be different this time—but they knew him too well. And then he sat alone at the edge of the grass in the park-like setting...his eyes brushing The Wall's black granite...feeling the presence...drawing strength and a comforting peace that it always gave so freely.

His makeshift entourage stood back...giving him space, as they called it, and for the moment grew quiet, each slipping into private thoughts of what The Wall and all those names represented. He knew some would smile as his eyes closed, thinking him drifting into another nap. But truthfully he found that sometimes, some places, he could actually see better, see further, with his eyes closed. Even now he could see the miles-long curve of Da Nang's China Beach, feel the burning heat of the golden sands, taste the salt of ocean spray—and there they were... he could see his sun baked friends waist deep in bluest-blue water riding each other's shoulders in horseplay and laughter. He was twenty again...they all were so young...and each celebrating another day of life. Old reminiscences gave life to youthful memories and wandering fraternal shadows of his soul. I would give it all just to be there with them...one more time. His joy faded as thoughts morphed into night black as the deepest black-hole...his eyes following as a drifting pearl string of flares were consumed by the void.

Perhaps he had dozed, he thought to himself...but they were all so alive, so real! He had never returned to Vietnam, as many veterans had, and thought...truth is...I've never felt closer to it all than right here at The Wall. For him, Vietnam was only an eyes-rest away. Another moment and he envisioned parked F-4 Phantoms, wing tip to wing tip, for more than a mile, and a string of Hueys thumping overhead like enraged geese...a doorgunner waved in passing. Air crews scurried about the flight line, and he could feel the ground quake with a distant B-52 strike. Men were joking and laughing as they boarded the Freedom Bird home... as silver canisters were silently loaded by forklift into a cargo bay. And then he could feel his

Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009

muscles straining in calisthenics amidst thousands of others at boot camp. Mind drifting...his friend was suddenly dead and flown away into the night...tape across a locker...and another scar across his own heart. His eyes swept the sky in denial, searching for shadows of aircraft numerous as stars, and trying to paint the memory with a face. B-57s ...C-47 Gooney Birds, Hueys...fighter planes, war ships at sea, they were all there...thousands of fellow warriors... reflections of my life...when I lived and was alive because I was not dead...and how we drank toasts to everything we missed back in the world...and prayed our Whys? to Jesus.

Just as suddenly his mind's eye could see his old veterans' association of hundreds of members marching so long ago in the 25th Anniversary Parade of The Wall—curb to curb—waving and cheering in celebration...and then the last reunion, where the two surviving members decided to open the last-man-standing legacy bottle of liquor together—neither liked drinking alone, they said— and in tribute shared a toast with the young warriors from a nearby base. A final grand toast, and grand it was...tearful in memories of those who fought and died and fought and lived, and of the many lingering veterans through the years who fought desperately just to live... heart-tugging for the loss of so many friendships...wonderful in having shared the unbreakable bond of taking care of our own. So many things we all remembered... now I alone remember...of life...of death...of war. And in that wordless moment following the final toast honoring all Vietnam-Thailand comrades, he felt the brotherhood was complete. The connection—made...the bond—forever ...the torch—safely passed to the young men and women from the base. He knew he was ready. It was time to say goodbye....

He whispered an old friend's oft said words, "I am forever honored for I have marched with heroes." Then thought of the ancient Hollies' song, He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother, and could hear it playing in his mind... nodding at the lyric's simple truth...

"The road is long
with many a winding turn
that leads us to who knows where
who knows when
but I'm strong,
strong enough to carry him
he ain't heavy, he's my brother...."

So true, he thought, once I was a warrior... so very long ago. I carry the pity of war still... it has never let go. A gentle breeze fluffed a lock of his frail white hair, like caressing fingertips of an angel. The same breeze caught the moist tissue in his hand and whisked it away to drift like

Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009

an autumn leaf...and soared away with his spirit.

Astounded—there really was a white-light—he found himself standing before a multitude of young warriors suddenly cheering and clapping and shouting Welcome Home over-and-over...his old buddies, all forever Vietnam-young, and grinning broadly suddenly surrounding him, pounding his back happily, hoisting him on their shoulders, whistling shrilly and tossing his hat all about like a Frisbee. And when they let him down his foreveryoung friend of so long ago clutched his shoulders...Welcome Home...we've been waiting a long time for you!

Several days later the presidential motorcade pulled to the curb along Constitution Avenue, and nearest The Wall. A bustle of activity darted about, but only one lone figure walked to The Wall's floodlit center. The president thought of his words spoken earlier that morning, at the last Vietnam Veteran's funeral at Arlington, and how sad it was that nothing he said was worthy of closing the chapter on a war nearly three million Americans had served in...all of them gone now.

The last Vietnam Veteran excitedly pointed, proclaiming, "That's the President!" Taking him by the elbow, his friend replied, "Yeah...isn't that great?...they all find their way here...but check this out...I've got some brothers I want you to meet...and then there are the Korean War guys, and World War II and World War I guys, and civil War and Revolutionary War guys...and you won't believe all their stories!

The president had come to say goodbye and place a memory at The Wall. He stood reverently, filled with gratitude, reading a few names, touching one here and there. American names... American dead...each an American hero. We haven't forgotten the price that was paid...we will remember your sacrifice...the cost of freedom... as long as there is a United States of America. He paused for one last look at The Wall, and thought how fitting a place was this hallowed ground for the last man standing to have crossed-over from. His eyes swept the length of The Wall and filled with mist...I just want to thank you, one last time...welcome home sons... welcome home. At that moment he came to attention...old military habits taking hold...held a salute to The Wall...and felt goose bumps on his arms from a sudden whisper-breeze...like the fleeting wind from millions of returned hand salutes...and from a young veteran proud to be...the last man standing.

Don Poss ... Catch The Wind, Memorial Day 2062,
The Last Vietnam War Veteran © 2009



Veterans Groups unanimously agreed on design, wording and location of the
Vietnam Veterans Memorial addition.

In Memory Plaque to Honor Those Not Eligible for Inscription on The Wall;
was Dedicated November 10, 2004.

The 24-inches tall by 36-inches wide plaque is placed within the N/E corner of
The Three Servicemen Statue Plaza



Don Poss... Da Nang Air Base: Dark Valley © 2002

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



***T**here is a Dark Valley near Da Nang
with rolling sinking vistas of darkness
where cloud-shadows
dance a plague on men,
sunlight is swallowed whole,
and life,
don't mean nothin'.*

Nestled between razor-back mountains,
not in mute slumber, but like a snare,
waits patiently.

Soft globs of fire, red and green etched lightning,
float and snap toward passing men of wings
slapping some to earth and waiting dogs,
amusing others who wing away.

Men of arms, like soldier ants, stalk scent-trails
of heat, overlapping, deceiving, some ancient

Don Poss... Da Nang Air Base: Dark Valley © 2002

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

others more compelling with dewless brass shell-memories
doting earth enriched by blood of men where tangle brush

blooms with vigor.

There is a valley near Da Nang,
soul embracing ... with pearls of light floating,
sinking nearer ...
captivating ...
jealous of other memories through decades
'till life's end,

waiting still ...

... still waiting.

Don't mean nothin'.

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*

Gents: A Memorial Day poem. A little dark, but still very true to man.

The 'Why' is like scurrying bruised clouds of combat whose dappled shadows in flight exploit valleys and folds of earth, embracing every blade of grass ... every rock ... everything.

A frightful shadow that takes but does not give, and wounds a man (did you hear his cry?) or slays another (utterly ... silently),
and you turn to laugh with him at the silver-lining having randomly skirted bunkers, divided fighting-holes and drawn so near ...
startled to find him slain and you happily (too happily) alive.

Why me? Why am I still here? Why did this mortar arc its way merrily-twisting hither, swirling upon the axis of life, nudged left, right, up or down ever so gently by winds-aloft ... then tugged by gravities' indifferent mass, flicked by fickled fingers of toying gods ... only to slash the earth with shrapnel gleefully flying yet heartless as to the where, what, or even if it smites flesh. Yet, he is dead ... the sandbags still bleeding rivulets of indifferent soil – and dappled shadows of 'Why'
caring not this night you will tread the first-step of decades seeking the answer to 'Why'.

Clouds passed again, often and without prediction, favoritism or fate, playing games of inequality and chance, fully shorn of joy or sadness, blasphemous and devoid of all emotion while skipping a tuneless cleansing-purging dance ... or not.

I saw the inviolate pattern forming ...

They died ... I didn't.

They were wounded ... I wasn't.

They have Agent Orange ... I don't.

They are broken ... I am not.

They are resolute in manly strength ... I try to be.

They are coping ... as am I, mostly.

They do not sleep the sleep of innocence ... nor do I.

I'm all used up from the Why;
dappled shadows have passed me by.

Don Poss... Defend the Fortress © 2013

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*

They came against us like a rain,
a random shot,
pelting, mortars and rockets
monsoon, sappers and endless
tsunami, brigades across the land.

They could not sweep us aside
nor break our spirit
nor overwhelm us
nor capture the fortress.
When we left...

they strolled across the bases
without resistance.

We were the difference
they failed for a decade
to claim the free southern land of others,
and now we are gone,
they are left behind,
and the fortress rusts in ruins

Don Poss ... Dragon the Long Night © 2013

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



I felt the dragon's speckled breath
And grinned as he fled my glare.
Then left Vietnam that indifferent day
having played my part in war.

Once scoffed I the dragon's jest...
As shadow of wing swept o'er.
His barking sigh laughed death's
cry with booming broadsides
and slashing swords.

Decades flickered like an old
silent film, too swift, as time will do.

Don Poss ... Dragon the Long Night © 2013

The shadow of wings soars at will,
and dives like a ghost uninvited.

Gathering spirits seems dragon's hobby...
devouring thousands his skill.
He scours the body...
Consumes all else with glee...and
savors the mind for last.

He alights and flaps a raging
screech that taunts the earth be still.
This night had come--as I knew it would--
the dragon stalks his kill.

Having driven away all those I love,
a pale moon cowering behind dark clouds,
set I here now awaiting beast's return.
I cannot hide--he has found my lair--
this fortress I vow to defend.

He did not know I lay in wait
and by oath had sworn to fight.
Winged-shadow, by autumn's moon
crossed o'er--an eclipse of dark things to come.

He settled--wrapped silently in leathered wings,
cloaked in blackest night--drooling, savoring
thoughts of prey--
Eyes like beacons searched the night, engulfing my domain.

Dragon's fetid breath crept in.
I felt his humid sigh ozz through cabin's wood,
invading my earthly-mansion like a steamy dew--
settling upon my brow--festering bones to the marrow.

I sensed it was Now ... well before my time...
My face, to drain of life and thus bound for the long night's rest?
If it must be so...I vow: Dragon too will end this night.

Don Poss ... Dragon the Long Night © 2013

A rustling of wings...
unfolding like great canvas sails athunder.
Wings raised high above, tip-to-tip, snap mightily,
roiling heaven's clouds, quivering forest pines, and
flinging cabin's shingles asunder.

I gape trembling through dark rafters,
weapon in hand, and
Serpent's eyes fixed my stare...
a foul jest, turned mortal quest.
I did not grin...but felt a hermit's chill.

He did not flee...clouds drifting...quiet as the deaf.
And...see how Dragon flaps gracefully away.

Silence stings my ears.
Dragon has let me be, another day, another night.
How strange...
I had longed for an end to this Dragon, and The Long Night.

Dragon--The Long Night, portrays:

- * *Dragon symbolizes Agent Orange.*
- * *The Long Night, is the declining quality of life left to Veterans before the great dark.*
- * *The Cabin is the diminished shell of man, the final fortress and refuge to defend.*
- * *The dragon's sudden turn and flight represents the ups and downs and battles to survive that veteran's with Agent Orange must endure.*
- * *Dragon's flight, begs the answer whether or not to claim another Vietnam Veteran's life, or let him be...to toy with another time.*
- * *"I had longed for an end to this Dragon, and The Long Night..." it the veteran gathering the will to continue to medical treatments and beat the orange-dragon*

Don Poss ... Forsaken Carousel © 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

A thousand years they've rode the earth
Round and round and round.

Heads were piled...hands all bound,
bodies stripped of armor, and
bleached bones the only clues of war ever found.

By dawn they were buried.
Bashed broken losers of the battle...
skulls chocked with soured-mud in shallow ground...
Victors fled in to the eons.

No one remembers the-why of it all.

Don Poss ... Gentle Mist of Carnage © 2013

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



Gentle mist, of carnage fair...
unbiased, uncaring, so unaware.

The dragon comes for those of his choosing. By
day, a gentle mist of fiery breath scorched living
green from earth,
tainted all mortal living flesh below,
and lay a demon seed within
all who taste of it.

None shall be granted deliverance, save by death, as
mortal's time upon earth is fleeting, without reprieve, or encore.

Shall a distant hope be found in strength of will?
It is not to be.

No soul is spared the scourge of dragon's breath, nor
sting of mourning those consumed beforehand.

Oh Gentle, cruel mist of carnage...
Why did you fall upon us?

Don Poss ... Gently Down The Stream © 2009

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*



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

Don Poss ... Gently Down The Stream © 2009

sampans ... and to feel the adrenalin rush as to whether those riding the gentle current were friends or foe....

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

Don Poss ... Gently Down The Stream © 2009

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.

Don Poss ... Time Lies © 2013

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*

The day will come when they
carve my name in stone,
toss me in the ground alone,
sprinkle daisies upon my new earthly home,
then kick dirt till hole is filled.

They'll say the goodbyes, farethewells and so longs,
and then wonder how long till they again sang this song

Don Poss ... Twilight Enemy © 2013

***366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966***

Near fifty years and a sudden
wisp-memory assaults like a hologram.
The dream loops once more,
cauterizing senses with a searing clarity,
and indifferently vapors away.

The war is long over--
isn't it

*366th Security Police Squadron, K-9
1965-1966*

First man died
I didn't cry
It was too much like a movie.

A few at a time was not a
Crime, in fact it was kind'a groovy.

A civilian again...
What they think's a sin
is killin' trees, and raping earth;
environment is their new religion.

As long as you agree with them,
it's whatever floats your boat,
and justifies whatever you want.
No one's fit to judge.

They're not like me, their freedom wasn't free,
I run loose, and bolt from their scene

*Don Poss ... Da Nang Airbase Lost Pilot - POW * MIA*

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

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Forty years and more have passed since his aircraft was shot down. At first, the search was feverish. Then other pilots were lost. Transfers, new guys in old guys out, and the war raged on. In time, his file was relegated to a government issued file-cabinet somewhere that was beginning to bulge with added files of other Lost Pilots.

For too brief seconds he drifted under full parachute, like god's hand trying to slow his fall, then ripped violently, fatally, through the upper-triple jungle-canopy. Helmet shattered. Bones broken. Quiet. Life was seeping away. He thought of home. He thought of family whom he deeply loved. He could not focus sight through the swirl of multi-hued greens and dark shadows below that swallowed all light. He was dying, and knew it. He felt a sharp sunburst of light sweep across his body, dangling by parachute cords ensnared and now a part of the twisted vines. How bright the light, like a white beam from heaven, he thought. Maybe...they will find me and take me home. No man's left behind -- everyone knows that -- they ...will...find... me. They will take me home -- If..

Don Poss ... Da Nang Airbase Lost Pilot - POW * MIA
366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

If
The Season is right ...
The Monsoon is elsewhere...

It is not raining...
It is not cloudy...
The wind is calm...

The jungle canopies have not closed...
A sunburst of light flashes between countless leaves and branches,
glints from helmet's shattered visor and catches a searcher's eye...

If he is looking up...
If skeletal bones and tattered uniform conspire to hold human form...
If they are still searching? If they don't give up on me.
They...Will...Find Me, and take me home.

Don Poss ... Mosquito Net © 2013

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

Mosquito net...

*Moonlight dices through
Silver-luminescent blue,
Like a dream, surreal but true,
filling secret boxes of my mind*



Don Poss ... Pity PTSD © 2013

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

*There is pity for the fallen warrior...
was it all for naught?*

*Moreso for he who stood and fought
... and now fights the night*

Don Poss ... Prime Law Enforcement Recruit © 2013

PRIME LAW ENFORCEMENT RECRUIT
USAF Air Police, Security Police, Security Forces
© 2013, by Don Poss

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966



Before the Police Academy
Before University Criminology
Before he wore the badge
Before his first-day at Roll Call
Before he mistakenly sat in a dinosaur's squad room chair

Before he ever walked a beat
Before his Training Officer let-him-drive
Before he arrested anyone
Before his first pursuit
Before his first ass-chewing
Before his first shots-fired call
Before his first Officer-Down call
Before his first police-funeral
Before boding with brothers' in blue

He had years of Law Enforcement experience
Had made apprehensions and arrests
Wrote citations
Calmed the angry drunk
Controlled Resisting-Arrest bad guys
Confronted armed suspects, and disarmed them
Been on the receiving end of shots fired and heavy weapons
incoming Stopped an enemy determined to step over him
Mourned fallen Air Force security police
Cried alone and wrote letters to their families
Visited their graves
Reported for duty once more
Stood his Ground
and forged a warrior's bond for justice...

...and a Prime Law Enforcement Recruit!

He was an Air Force Security Police combat veteran.



I do not seek answers...
but an understanding of how to defend myself.

I can fight men, win or lose,
but cannot fight the dreams that storm about
dwelling between the thunder claps of my night.

Dream-things, like huey-night owls swooping at scampering prey, wet-things that slime from earth at scent of passing blood, or death-reeking scavengers tilling soil for droppings of wrong I have overlooked...or ignored.

Without warning those retrieved scraps are thrust forward, assaulting twilight-mind, taunting, raping, enveloping, consuming...digesting, and I am once more in the midst of unfolding darkest-visions...

swirling, unchanging-sameness...

eternal moments of shadowed-reality...

dimensional memories demanding rebirth...

refusing to be gone...unforgiving, insisting on replay as if I have missed a lying-truth

and do not recognize every microframe that loops its way through the virtual night, long imprinted upon my soul, and even now daring to infringe upon the fleeting solace of cockcrow, and dawn.

I awake...or am I...

Has it ended... I see the searing lightening-moments even now.

Was I ever asleep?

Dark Memories take flight from my soul...

Unspoken dreams...just secrets of the heart...the light too harrowing to endure.

Forgiveness ungiven, like malingering apocalyptic darts of tribulation.

Get-It-Right!

Why do they return..? Generations have slipped by...

Get-It-Right!

Why don't they stay in their ghostly box? Why now?

Get-It-Right!

365 And a Wakeup. I've dreamt The 365 ... for over 45 years.

I yearn for the And a Wakeup moment.

Tell me how to make it stop...

before these dream-things consume me

Don Poss... PTSD: I thought I was stronger than that! © 2011

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966



I thought I was stronger than that.
I thought I could put it in a box.
I thought I didn't need anyone.
I thought no one understood.
I thought I could handle it.
I thought no one cared.
I thought it would go away.

PTSD: I thought I was stronger than that, by: Don Poss. 2011

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

I thought I could forget.
I thought I could forgive.
I thought I wouldn't be missed.
I thought I couldn't stand it anymore.

I thought I was alone.
I thought about asking for help.
I thought they would think me weak.
I thought I would say goodbye.

You are strong . . . but not invincible.
You can put it in a box ... for a time.
You may not need anyone . . . but you are needed.
You can meet hundreds who understand.
You can handle it ... let your brothers help.
You know they care ... they've been there.
You know it will never go away ... We can face it together.
You can forgive . . . but need not forget.
You still miss those who fell ... they are safe now.
You can stand with those who know the burdens.
You are not alone. There are no dust offs for wounds of the soul...
but they are waiting . . . as I Am.
You can ask at any hour for as long as there is life . . .
You are not weak ... just human ... and have seen what mankind was
not meant to see.
You can say 'I need to talk' and brothers will say, 'Welcome Home.'

Awaken from your dream . . . I AM stronger ...
We will make it . . . together.

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Don Poss... Reborn © 2013

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

I will gaze upon your engraved name no more...
nor dread old man dreams of foreign wars.

To the other side the river I cross...
from darkness into the light.

First the pop and sizzle...
then the great vault void of darkness
as brothers fall away slain by their years;
hardened by flames of war and life--
tempered souls--
like quiet simmering embers reborn

Don Poss... Take Ten... PATROL © 2011

10 minutes to Paradise

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966



Take Ten... The word came down the line. They had patrolled half the morning outside the wire around the giant sprawling Air Base. The defoliant stuff had done a great job clearing the jungle back a few hundred yards and several centuries from the perimeter, but it never hurt to unexpectedly rove into the dense forest for a mile or so now and then. You would think the jungle-like forest canopy overhead would cool the ground-fall trail, instead it acted like an oppressive lid on a boiling pot and even muffled aircraft sounds from the base.

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

He eased off the path and eyed the tall grass and brush for a reasonably dry spot to sit. A hard-shelled thumb-knuckle sized critter fell from overhead and scurried for the spot he had decided on. Tell God hi, he muttered and planted his heel mashing the bug into the dead fall compost, pleased with the squishy-crunchy sound.

He hunched down in the dark shadows beneath elephant-leaf palms. Sweat-salt stung his eyes and though he knew better, he tried to rub the sting away. Quiet ... temp's at least a hundred-plus ... humidity's about maxed without raining. He eyed the surrounding brush, and wondered for the thousandth time why the new guys thought it okay to break noise discipline just because they took a quick break. He started to say something when Sarge told'em to shut up. They settled in ones and twos. A quick chug from a canteen or something from a C-rat stash. K-9 on point quietly scanning ahead.



Although midday, it was strange how a canopied forest stole away the sunlight ... it seemed as if night would fall any moment. As he settled in for the brief rest, sweat soaked and tired, he thought of his last Christmas at home with family and the crisp winter air. Somehow he didn't think the coming Christmas in Vietnam could even be a close-second in comparison. With a shrug of shoulders, he wondered how he had ended up squatting in a Vietnam jungle, which he noted really does steam. When he had enlisted in the Air Force after high school, ground-pounding in a rancid jungle zzwas the last think he had expected, and somehow not mentioned as a possibility by the recruiter. Nevertheless, there was no denying it... except for bugs of all sizes and colors, spiders, ants (red and black like in Texas), flies, scorpions, centipedes as big has a hand, scorpions, bees, knats, mosquitoes, razor-grass cuts, oppressive heat, and rot-stink aside ... the jungle-forest, whatever you called it, had a primeval-beauty he had never seen before. He'd given up trying to describe what it was like in letters home.

Funny what he noticed just setting still: There must be a hundred shades of green in the brush and trees about him, he thought, wondering if each hue had its own name. Light from somewhere above teased broad leaves with a taste of sunlight cascading its way down toward earth through countless gentle swaying branches and foliage.

Incredible, he thought, how detailed the giant palm leaves seemed...almost translucent, and when backlit you could see water, or whatever, coursing through its veins. He watched a dark silhouette of something scurrying across a leaf top then free fall onto a patch of ferns and disappeared. He could see the leaf's veins as another thing methodically munched a growing half-cres-

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

cent bite from one side. Yet another chewed a hole through the leaf and a beam of laser-light stabbed through, flaring glistening dew drops on a giant umbrella-like spider web he had not noticed.

His eyes followed silver hair-like strands of web as they trailed away, secured to branches and limbs unseen. One broken strand wavered to the ground, and he watched a bug-eyed hairy spider dance away where the strand anchored, then maddeningly-skitter across a near-invisible thread-tightrope across the path. Odd, he thought, floating dew drops, glistening; sparkling in brilliant sunbeam-winks, like the most delicate string of magic-pearls he had ever seen. Slight movement caught his eye and looking closely could see a mass of black ants reducing a rodent's carcass patiently. New workers arrived as others departed holding high a prized morsel, following in line to wherever it was they were going. Looking around he could see the ground fall teaming with life, and forest-things being consumed. As a kid one of his favorite toys was the shovel he used to smack, but rarely killed, black ants and tarantulas. He watched similar black ants now, doing their duty, no noise discipline problem, moving across the trail in single column with sunlight lighting-them-up. They moved through dancing shimmering laser spotlights unconcerned. He cocked his head, curious, ants can't fly, but there they were spurring along a few inches above the trail carrying their prizes. Then his heart jack-hammered -- an ant-bridge trip wire others somehow missed lay taunt inches above the trail, just waiting for him.

Without Sarge's call to rest, he would likely have tripped the wire—most certainly—and his last Christmas would really have been his last Christmas.
Without Sarge's call to rest, he would likely have tripped the wire—most certainly—and his last Christmas would really have been his last Christmas.

Sarge was pissed half the squad had passed over the tripwire without noticing it—unspoken was the fact that he was also pissed he had missed it as well. After a show-and-tell butt-chewing, the patrol moved out, each man quiet with his own what-if thoughts.

He knew fate had intervened: but for the bugs ... but for the hole in the leaf ... but for the hairy spider deciding hunting was juicier on the other side of the trail, and, but for the impossible chance angle of sunlight stabbing through a chewed leaf—and all at that exact moment twinkling the ants who scurried along on the wire ... Lord, if bugs go to heaven, choi-hoi the one I stepped on.

Take Ten... PATROL © 2011, by Don Poss

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

Move Out... his thoughts turned inward and he resolved never to squash a leaf eating bug or stomp ants again.

A few seconds later, the insect he had stomped clawed its way from the soft earth and indifferently bulldozed away.

Don Poss... Twilight Enemy © 2013

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

Twilight enemy
conjured from battlefield graves...
no one can stop him,
Not the heart of one brave.

He will not combat fairly
and slays with a heart-stopping dream.

What hope of tomorrow's morning dew?

What is wrong?

Nothing.

Why the melancholy...the withdrawal once more?

Why do you walk away?

Don Poss... When We're Long Gone © 2013

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

When we're long gone,
Who will sing our songs and
tell our tales of foes and woes?

We hope our deeds are not
forgotten.

The way of an old warrior is bleak
and without restful sleep, and
we are soon to fade away

Don Poss... Why write poems? © 2013

366th SPS , K-9, 1965-1966

Why write poems?

The dreams
The memories
The hope
The sorrow
The loss
The empathy
The pity
The ears
The tears
The need to reach out
The need to touch
The poems....

Don Poss... A Worm Moon Rising © 2014

VietnaM ~ THAILAND

Worm Moon Rising

© 2014, by Don Poss

366th Security Police Squadron, K-9

1965-1966



A Worm Moon was rising and skipping from siros cloud-to-cloud, like a rock skipping pond water. Moonlight, pale and luminescent, bathed the night in subduedsilver, framed mountains and coattail-hills in soft glowing-silhouette, and sucked black-clad night crawlers from the earth.

Standing quietly in the night an Air Force sentry easily read his c-rations' labels hoping for a favorite pound cake everyone else seemed to hate. He never considered that, like the mountains, he was aglow in haloed-silhouette and anyone so inclined could have blown him away with a lead-yawn.

Quiet!

Don Poss ... A Worm Moon Rising © 2014

VietnaM ~ THAILAND

Worm Moon Rising

© 2014, by Don Poss

366th Security Police Squadron, K-9

1965-1966

The sentry's thoughts had replayed his prom night and last-night home.

His eyes were drawn toward the heavens in wonder, and for some reason he thought about the fact a hundred years ago we had fought our own civil war.

He puzzled again about why we were in Nam. No one had explained what was so important about Vietnam.

He squatted and broke off a stale piece of crumbly cake and wished he had a coffee to dunk it in. The smell of churned-earth hung heavily; courtesy of the runway construction crew squids... at least he was fairly sure they were Navy.

He glimpsed his Seiko watch; only minutes had passed since the last check. An F-4 Phantom launched afterburning nearly straight up as if targeting the moon, seemingly in reach, until phantom-melding with the stars.

Worm Moon (or Sap Moon, Death Moon): As the ground thaws, night crawlers emerge during the evening hours and point themselves toward moonlight.

Don Poss... PTSD Marked by the Sword © 2014

The fields of battle are silent ...

A young warrior lays upon a boulder, arched in repose,
eyes plucked by crows patiently huddled clutching naked tree limbs.

A gray warrior sets on dark ground, legs akimbo,
dull-eyes cast upon the boy whose gored-empty eye-sockets, freshly picked,
echo the sounds of grief.

Perhaps the boy is his son... or friend...
or the one too many horrors to ignore,
and he can stand no more.

It would be easy to lift his head from his body; yet there is no glory
in slaying the living dead who wander within the horrors of their
mind...spirits hovering indecisively, and forever remain—one marked by the
sword.



Steve Ray... Of Young Men and the Vietnam War (c) 1991

Cam Ranh Bay AB Air Base
Updated 2001 (16 March)

Of Young Men and the Vietnam War
Young men sent to a far away Shore
It was called a mere conflict instead of a War

But the young men knew its real name was War
And they marched off to fulfill a patriot's Chore
The innocence of all was stripped quickly Away

They lived on life's edge day after Day
Unwanted by those whose lives they would Save
Unloved by their countrymen and not the latest Rave

Their bonds were made strong by a similar Plight
They vowed their devotion and to make a good Fight

The hot sun beat down like a fire from Hell
There was not much rest and never enough Mail

Twilight brought them no rest not Respite
For Charlie lurked hidden in the dark shadows of Night

With a satchel charge and an AK clutched in his Hand
He brought much death and destruction into the Land

And the death angel would stand silently just out of Sight
While young men were sleeping quietly who did not know their coming Plight

When rockets would slam into the soft sandy Ground
If your name was written on it you never heard that Round

Some were unlucky and some weren't Prepared
And every young man was equally Scared

Steve Ray... Of Young Men and the Vietnam War (c) 1991

Their voices would quiver as they tried to make Jest
While 122's were falling launched from a far away Crest

The night sky was lit up a bright cherry Red
Young men were heard to scream from a hospital Bed

Yesterday they had spoken of leaving that Place
But before the dawn broke they met God face to Face
At dawn all could look and could clearly See
The results of the battle which had been a Melee

Holes blasted in parts of a winding Road
Buildings peppered by the impact of the rockets spent Load

The places men slept were ripped and Torn
The bloodstains cried out: FROM THESE NO CHILD SHALL BE BORN

The grim reapers thirst only partially Slaked
While young men sat and waited for the next he would Take

The wait was short as a sniper's bullet found it's Mark
An Air Force sentry lay wounded and alone just before Dark

I'm sure folks at home never heard of these Assaults
Probably too busy with a job or maybe their Thoughts
Oh, if these things could only be Hyperbole
Wish it were so for many would still have their Sanity
Alas, it is true, all that I've wrote and now young men must Forbear

With those that forgot them and never did Care
Now Hail the heroes of World War II, Korea, and the Persian Gulf Campaign
While young men - now old - sit thinking
Again
Will we be remembered as time passes By?
No, indeed, except by those who served
beside us and by Almighty God way up in the Sky

Kent Rutledge... My Flag © 2006

*I*m always proud to fly my flag, but this is your flag too.
It always stands for freedom, in everything we do.

But don't forget the ones who served, so freedom we could know.
Our "Stars and Stripes" forever, fly high so they may show.

The flags you waved so proudly, to welcome our troops home.
Don't put them in the closet, to sit there all alone.

Remember what we fought for, and raise your flag with pride.
You can fly yours next to mine, we'll fly them side by side.

We'll always be united, together we will stand.
We'll fight for God and Country, to keep "Old Glory" grand.

There's one thing to remember, no matter what you do.
Don't ever disrespect my flag, my flag is your flag too.

© 2011 by Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

She is despised by some and she's loved by others
She has always aided other countries when needed
Her young sons and daughters responded to the call
And though many call her names! She's My Country

All throughout our history we have been a leader
In industries that helped advance all countries
With our research & developments in medicines
She's improved the lives of many! She's My Country

It's strange how some nations we helped reject us now
And in some cases they have become our enemies as well
Using the technologies we gave them for war not peace
Then they will talk trash about her! She's My Country

Well say what you want and tell me she's just evil
But I'll tell you this fact there is no other lady
Who will think of others needs before her own needs
She's strong and she's very proud! She's My Country

Terry Sasek... At One Time I Was A Really Good Dancer

© 2011 by Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

At One Time I Was A Really Good Dancer...

In my high school years I was an extremely shy person
I found it hard to compete with those sarcastic jocks

That seemed to like nothing more than to embarrass us.
Us being the regular guys who didn't feel those needs
The needs to slam guys like us into the ground for fun

Trying to impress the popular girls or some cheerleader
They thought because we didn't act like a Neanderthal
That we could not say a word at all to any of the girls

They were like cavemen laying claim to any girl in sight
If you crossed their perceived territory God help you
They didn't think any girl needed a guy with manners

Who respected the fact that she was not to be mauled
How or why would they ever think of talking to one of us
We weren't muscle bound thugs who could crush a pop can

No we couldn't do that trick of slamming it into your head
But we did have many things that a young lady would like
We were smart and articulate and knew how to treat a lady

And then too some of us were damn good dancers in school
Dancing helped me get over my shyness and I was a gentleman
The jocks would make fun of us if we opened doors for the girls

It seemed there was nothing in those heads except for muscles
After entering the Air Force I had almost 8 months of training
And at the end of the week we would go to the USO dance in town

Several of us who were damn good dancers were getting popular

At One Time I Was A Really Good Dancer... by Terry Sasek

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

They would hold these dance contest at the USO club in Rantoul
So each weekend we would go and compete for some nice prizes

When they offered dinner for two prizes everyone wanted to win
I was still a really good dancer when I got out of the Air Force
And one of the things that attracted my wife to me was my dancing
Now years later my legs don't work so well even for a slow dance

My time in Vietnam has created many health problems in my life now
And though I am most grateful for having survived that time there
I think one of the things I miss most from my youth is the dancing

To have been so in tune with your partner and to achieve perfection
It was a passion I know now that I'll never again have in my lifetime
To see me now you'd never guess I use to be a damn good dancer once

Terry Sasek... Friendship... by Terry Sasek © 2011

Terry Sasek
BT 68-69 LM-687

*I*t is the most priceless thing you can have
But no amount of money or gold can buy this
Everyone wants it, everyone needs to have it

We could not get through a day without this
Many times people have it, but mistreat it
They'll assume that it will always be there

When you are upset you'll use it for hours
But if the roles were reversed then I wonder
How many others would use this special gift

Life's too short, so I can't even imagine how
We could ever get through each day without it
This most priceless gift that we call Friendship

Terry Sasek
BT 68-69 LM-687

I want to say thanks and give recognition
To a very special group of dedicated women
Who for years have been serving so bravely

Though they were not on any battlefields
They know each step that was taken by us
They have heard it all one way or another
We seldom talked of things that haunt us

Yet they seem to know of things unspoken
Sometimes we are surprised by this fact
It's because of things said in our sleep
And they were there each step of the way

As we had fought a battle or were shelled
How hard it must have been to bear witness
To see their men in their sleep crying out
For buddies so long ago killed or wounded

To hear things that were never to be spoken of
Yet they too now carry this heavy burden inside
And during our restless sleep they held us tight
Wishing they could rid us of those damn nightmares

That have continued to torture us still to this day
They have been through more than we will ever know
Even those of us who say I've never dreamed at all
Of those past events that took place in your life

Then just take a long hard look at your better half
In her eyes you'll see she has been there each time too
And she has lived through each nightmare along with you
For they have taken each painstaking step with you too

As you start your day today be ever so thankful always
We are who we are today because of these angels of mercy

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Because they have been right there every step of the way.
God bless our wives, or for those not married that

very special lady, whose always been there in your
life over the past forty years and who has always
stood by you in good times and also during those
bad times that have troubled many of us who have

those things and memories that we still deal with
in our lives or those nightmares that still haunt
many of us from the past. If not for these women
who are our own angels of mercy and who have

always been there for us, who's to say how many
more of us might not have still been here today.
I'm sure God has a special place in heaven for
our angels for having been our better halves

Terry Sasek
BT 68-69 LM-687

Another morning waking up to freezing cold
Frost layered on the windows blocks my view
There will soon be signs of spring I'm told
With plants rising up from the soil all anew

But my body is chilling from another cold
My nose running faster than the local river
I'll say that I hate winter if I may be so bold
Oh! I hate cold weather it makes me shiver

Spring can never come fast enough to please me
The bright sunshine and fresh breezes blowing
Now that is the type weather where I rather be
Not these freezing winds leaving cheeks glowing

With the rebirth of nature Spring is magnificent
Baby birds chirping on the dawning of a new day
With flowers blooming it's such a beautiful scent
I do so look forward to the months of April & May.

*Terry Sasek... Is it Really Just My Own Paranoia?
I Don't Think So! © 2011*

Terry Sasek
BT 68-69 LM-687

There are waves of emotions that still rush in
Assaulting my senses with memories from the past
Catching me off guard I struggle to control them

After forty two years you'd think they'd fade away
These overpowering moments of my own self-doubts
Flashing back to the days and long nights of fear

No matter how aware one is of these current times
And you may tell yourself everything will be fine
In the back of your mind plays scenes from the past

They remind me to always stay vigilant and alert
The world is a dangerous place with great evils
Just waiting for any chance to strike out at us

You just need to look back to 9/11 to know this fact
And some may tell me it's just my own paranoid fears
But with all that has happen can you just ignore it?

My own emotions go through many ups and downs still
From all that I've been through don't I have that right
I have seen the many things that evil can do to others

Though I have lived now some forty two years since then
I still deal with my emotions from that time in my life
It's not being paranoid to be ever watchful these days

For it is when you are least expecting it in your life
That those who had plotted, planned and remained patient
Will suddenly strike out at us with a horrible vengeance.

Terry Sasek
BT 68-69 LM-687

Life can be a long and challenging journey for most
We are faced with many situations as we go through it
Most things are very good experiences but some are not

We grow up and we go to school to learn many new things
We learn of the past, the present and look to the future
Hoping that we can contribute to a better way of life

Some will go on to college, some will go straight to work
Then still some will enlist to defend our nation & citizens
keeping us all safe so we can enjoy the freedom they give

At times their lives are cut short so that others may live
Some have been wounded and will spend their lives healing
But there are others who have been given a death sentence

They were exposed to deadly toxins & chemicals unknowingly
Years later the exposure causes a terminal future for them
With his family to care for they will now face losing him

This veteran knows what his outcome will be and he faces it
With the same courage that he showed fighting for freedom
He fights his biggest battle with little hope of survival

He does not blame anyone for his fate for it was his choice
He did what he could to save others while he defended freedom
He doesn't ask for any ones pity nor for any special favors

He only prays for just a little more time lord for his family
Just let me have one more CHRISTMAS with us all together lord
Let me get everything in order before I have to leave for good.

*Terry Sasek... Taking Care of Our Brothers
With Whom We Served © 2011*

Terry Sasek
BT 68-69 LM-687

As very young men we chose to serve our nation
We were taught many lessons as we were trained
We learned of traditions, honor and to respect

We learned the lessons that would change us all
From civilians of many backgrounds and customs
We became part of the team defending our nation

We also learned to trust and rely on each other
To care for each other and to help our brothers
And to never leave anyone behind in any battles

We were defending our nation and our way of life
We not only served the cause but for each other
You knew that you could count on your brothers

Now years after our own war had ended for us
Many of us still have lingering issues we face
Whether it's nightmares & PTSD or from chemicals

We're now 40 plus years past those days and nights
Those lessons we learned are still part of us all
We still care deeply and "WE TAKE CARE OF OUR OWN"

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Once I was a young warrior so many years ago
Saw things that no one should ever have to see
The death and heartache that I could not fore go
Children dying was hardest to deal with for me

Never thought I'd see children begging for food
I gave them my own rations and some candy I had
I guess as a kid I didn't know I had it so good
Always had good food, clothes and a mom and dad

Days were boring but it turned terrifying at night
A quiet night would suddenly turn into full chaos
Screaming voices in the night under flare light
There had been an attempt by some VC to attack us

Mostly they'd probe our outer perimeter lines
Trying to find a way to our ammo or fuel dumps
Some VC charged the lines and stepped on mines
Charging into a hail of fire landing in clumps

These brave young warriors had defended their bases
Fighting from gun towers & bunkers in two's & three's
They defended their ground as they had in other cases
Defending these bases were the Knights of Gallantry

We're all much older now than then & we'll reminisce
No longer the young warriors who'd served our country
We will remember those we lost and our eyes will mist
I'm proud to have served with The Knight's of Gallantry

I have this special bond with the warriors who I served with in Vietnam, they were some of the bravest men I've ever had the honor of knowing in my life and I am still closer to them to this very day than I am with my very own brothers. "***We Take Care Of Our Own***"

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Dedicated to Ian Yates and all of the American Warriors who have answered the call to defend our nation and other nations in their most darkest hours. Thank God our nation has always had the brave young men and women who were willing to risk their lives so that we could live our lives in peace.

We'll always be a strong nation unless we forget who gave us the freedom and safety we have today, it came from those who willingly faced the dangers and the hardships of war and who have bought & paid for your own freedom many times with their own blood, sweat, tears and their lives by many courageous acts of selflessness by these young people who put the lives of others before themselves as they serve our nation and our citizens.

These sacrifices they have made for others will never be taken for granted or forgotten by their fellow warriors and brothers in arms, and those of us who are veterans and have faced those same dangers as they when we took our turn defending this great nation of ours. I hope our citizens never forgets who it is that pays for their own freedom and rights that they and their families all enjoy each day.

May the Good Lord Bless And Protect all those now serving our nation as they protect all of us and our freedoms as they face many dangers, and let us never forget those who went to the far ends of the earth before them who fought and died to preserve your safety and freedom many who are still suffering still today from wounds and illnesses they received while they protected and defended America's families.

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Each day during their morning rush to get to work
They'd wear brown, black, gray and pinstriped too
But have you ever wondered what job they all did

Most people could never tell just looking at them
Maybe a lawyer or work for a Fortune 500 company
It is really hard to tell where they were rushing

I use to wear a suit once but it was a long time ago
There was a big difference between theirs and mine
I'd worn the exact same colored suit to work everyday

People could easily see that I was someone different
There was this air of confidence which surrounded me
People knew instantly for who I worked and why I did

The color of my suit was blue and I wore it proudly
They could see I'd been to many places in the world
There were colored ribbons that spoke of my own work

I was proud for I'd walked in the company of heroes
That thin line of courageous men who kept us all free
We'd seen the best and worst man could do to others

Yet we stood tall and would respond at a moment's notice
To go anywhere and meet any challenge to defend freedom
Because our suits were the color of U.S. Air Force blue.

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Only his family and brothers warriors care
Now that the end is approaching for himself
Morphine is the only way to ease his pain

A small pump that is used by him when needed
Injecting small doses of morphine into himself
It dulls the excruciating pain he now suffers

Does anyone remember that youthful warrior
Who fought for the freedom of South Vietnam
And who had protected his brothers in arms

He had done all that he could to help others
Despite the lack of support for a noble cause
He knew his duty and believed it was honorable

Now the years have passed by us all so quickly
And he and his brothers now suffer quietly
From the after effects of a chemical spray

This deadly and debilitating chemical used
So many decades ago during that jungle war
Supposedly to kill off the jungle vegetation

Which the enemy used to their own advantage
Hiding unseen by day and striking at night
Firing off rockets and mortars while hidden
These areas were sprayed with Agent Orange

A foggy sticky mist raining down from planes
It quickly killed off the jungle vegetation
And soon these dense jungles became barren

Becoming more like the surface of the moon

Than a densely overgrown jungle it once was
It seemed like a blessing to all us warriors

But years later we would face the realities
That this sprayed mist was far more deadly

Now many of our brother warriors are dying
While thousands of others are being crippled
Suffering many disease from their exposures

Today I heard that our brother needs prayers
As he only has a short amount of time left
His doctors say there is nothing they can do

So he is in hospice care now to ease his pain
And his family and his warrior brothers pray
Looking for this miracle they hope will come

He said he is ready to go when God takes him
He has no regrets for having served his nation
Or for having fought to give to others freedom.

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

In life we all will face the loss of a loved one
Whether they are young and died before their time
Or whether they were very old and had a full life

Each person will face it at one time or another
As we all die sometime that is how life works
We never want to face that fact but it is true

And when we do have to deal with it someday
We will have to deal with it in our own way
No one can tell you how you should handle it

Although some will try to offer words of advice
They'll say things like be brave or to be strong
They are better off now they feel no more pain

While these all might be true statements of fact
The loved ones left behind don't want to hear it
They are the only ones who know how they feel

Although friends and relatives try to help
Only the person who suffered the loss knows
The deep pain left in their heart and soul

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Sunday June 19th 2011 will be Father's Day once more
It is a joyous time for me celebrating with my family
My beautiful wife, our two loving kids and their kids

And as we all look back on our lives over the years
I'm very proud and happy to have been blessed richly
With my children's accomplishments and their successes

I'm extremely proud of them and their own families too
And as we gather and remember past events that we faced
I can both laugh and sometimes cry as well as we recall

And though we will pamper and spoil our new granddaughter
I will still have this big empty void as my Dad is gone
It's hard to really believe that 21 years have passed by

And though I will celebrate with my own children Sunday
I can't help but to reflect back on this great man too
For I still miss him greatly to this day 21 years later

It was he with whom I had always confided my worries & fears
As I left to become a warrior for this great nation of ours
He told me to write to him at his work about any bad stuff

Just write cheery letters and notes to your mom at home
He didn't want her to worry any more than she was already
So the bad times and things were only shared with my old man

He had enough to worry about already so I rarely wrote of it
I knew he worried about me while I was in that terrible war
He was the only one that seemed to understand why I'd changed

So this Sunday as we gather once more for Father's Day here

Terry Sasek... Remembering My Dad on Father's Day © 2011

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

I will thank God above for my wife, my kids and my grandkids
And I'll take pride in the fact that they all turned out great

But I'll look skyward too and remember the past and my own Dad
Thankful for all he taught me and those private talks we shared
And I can only hope that he knows how much I still love him so

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Sometimes we will look back on the past
Reminiscing on things we had faced then
The dangers from the rockets and mortars

It was always there the threat of death
As young warriors we took it in stride
We prayed each night that we'd survive

Most days were boring and nights scary
Waiting for the first rounds to hit us
We would quickly react to this threat

We were there to protect those serving
And each of us protected each other too
All for one and one for all was our motto

No matter what was thrown at any of us
We never thought of backing down at all
If we had to we'd have died for each other

Looking back after so many years that's past
I am very proud that I had served my country
And proud to have served with such brave men

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

I have paid my Respects and Honors here
To all those who have fought for freedom
They wrote a blank check to our nation

The value of this check had no limits
The writer had promised to pay the sum
That would be determined at a later date

But with handing over this blank check
The writer knew what the cost might be
He was willing to pay any price needed

For you can't put a price on freedom
To protect your nation and its people
That is why the check was left blank

But I can tell you this personal fact
From having been one of these people
And faced all the dangers involved

We all were willing to pay any price
That guaranteed the freedom you enjoy
Up to and including our lives for you.

With great Respect & Honor to my fellow warriors, veterans and all who had paid for the freedom that is enjoyed today I salute and thank each of you for having signed the blank check to be paid to our nation and her citizens to protect the freedom they have always known while growing up here in America, especially those who had paid the ultimate cost for freedom with their own lives so you and your families would always live in freedom.

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

It seems to me that we have a lost generation
That have no regard for other people or things
Stealing is much easier than working for it
We ordered a brand new solar powered umbrella
The kind that has both colored and plain lights
They're LED type lights for our patio table set
It had arrived this past Friday but we were busy
So we set it up Sunday morning to let it charge
Sunday night we sat out back watching the lights
When it is set on plain clear lights it is bright
But when it is set on multi-color it changes colors
And it will display several different illuminations
It was windy on Sunday night so we had closed it up
There was an attached Velcro strap that secures it
Keeping the wind from getting under the umbrella
I had told my wife how it would shade us from the sun
It was a very nice early gift for Father's Day on Sunday
I knew everyone would really like it's solar lighting
But now we will never know as it was stolen yesterday
My home has a six foot tall privacy fence around it
And our gate was secured with a titanium master lock
When we arrived home from shopping and having lunch
I unlocked the gate and as we carried in groceries
We saw that our new solar powered umbrella was gone
Just our beautiful patio set sat there in the sun
Which begged the question where in the hell is it
Taken in broad daylight on a very busy main road
We live across from the township's fire department
They usually sit out front on the bright sunny days
Yet none of them saw anyone anywhere near our home
So whoever it was had to come through the backyard
Through my neighbor's yard and climbed over my fence
It was a very heavy duty and a very heavy umbrella
Whoever it was must have seen the lights Sunday night
And returned yesterday after we had left to steal it
So I guess stealing is much easier than working for it

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Now a day, people are so brazen and could care less if they are seen or not as they would most likely be long gone before the police could arrive to stop them. With the economy the way it is and with the cops and firemen being the first ones who are laid off during our towns budget cuts, is it any wonder with so many people out of work and no jobs really available for the teens now days that it is much easier to steal than working for the things you want to get in life. It does not matter to them that you are on disability retirement and have a fixed income and more than likely you won't be able to buy a replacement umbrella for the stolen one that was meant to be my Father's Day gift and that now my Father's Day has been ruined for me. I think things are just going to keep getting worse for everyonenow, so tell me again how's that change you all voted for working out for you and your family?

PS: My poem was about my stolen Father's Day gift in 2011, it was found in a neighbor's yard two doors down from our house behind their garage the next day when they returned home from work and he was about to cut his lawn. Another neighbor who knew about it being stolen called us to let us know where it was and they returned it to us, whoever took it must have dumped it there after getting spooked by something or someone and didn't want to be seen carrying it off. So we figured that the person had planned to return later on to get it. After we got it back I had a friend of mine welded up a new base plate for it so we would be able to lock it up and keep it from being removed from the patio table again if the thief decided to return again to try and take it again.

Terry

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

The bagpiper's call echoes out across the field
A tribute played during this last final moment
We now lay to rest this man that we must yield
Amazing Grace was beautiful they would comment

There in the far distance he stands at attention
No one attending knows who this bagpiper might be
But he played for all there a stirring rendition
With his sharp uniform in its own Scottish colors

God has touched this man's heart and he believes
He came to pay his last respects and honor today
For this warrior he plays a tune before he leaves
They'd both been in Vietnam and held the VC at bay

We all were warriors who'd served time in that war
Some had volunteered to go they had served as cops
Defending bases there away from their homes so far
They defended everyone and they were all crack shots

I write this poem to honor my friend and a brave man
He survived our war and he came home to become a cop
His town was lucky to get this warrior who never ran
He was a cop in both war & peace he was always on top

He's also a poet here and helped talk me into writing
He's my friend and a brother Air Force augmentee cop
His knowledge is so vast and he's always enlightening
He is Howard Yates and he's called "The Kilted Cop".

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Oh the wonders of another fall
Such beautiful colors displayed
The gusting winds that now blow
Scattering multi-colored leaves

Enjoy watching our neighborhood
Fathers, mothers & little kids
Raking up leaves in high piles
As giggling kids jump into them

The trips we take to get apples
Having cider and the warm donuts
Getting fresh corn on the cob
Watching all the young families

In days long past on Saturday's
Remembering all the many aromas
Smells of burning leaves gathered
Some smells were of fall barbecues

They won't let us burn leaves now
But there's still college football
And the sounds of crowds cheering
The marching band stirring up all

Yes fall is grand and I do love it
The change of seasons is beautiful
Crisp breezes aid leaves take flight
They've completed their own season.

Terry Sasek... There were many Things that Visited Us at night

Terry Sasek

© 2011

BT 68-69 LM-687

They'd slip or crawl into our bunkers unannounced
Some were just nasty then others were very deadly

These little things would get your heart pumping
And if you had trouble just staying awake at night
They would surely give you a reason to stay alert

There were these ugly frogs who invaded at night
Crawling across the perimeter road from the wire
They'd get hit by our jeeps or armored vehicles

Then their remains baked in the daytime heat & sun
Leaving the foulest of odors for us night guards
They'd come from the rice paddies during the night

Then there were these giant black hairy spiders
These gave you chills down your back when spotted
I hated these silent and creepy monsters the most

You never knew when some scorpions would waltz in
They scared the living sh*t out of me each time
So ugly with their deadly stinger ready to strike

But the worst of them all were the venomous snakes
There were small, medium ones and then the cobra's
The sight of these almost gave you a heart attack

Knowing what they could with such lightning speed
They never had to bite you to do permanent harm
They were able to spit out their venom out at you

Terry Sasek.... There were many Things that Visited Us at night

Terry Sasek

© 2011

BT 68-69 LM-687

And if it hit you in your eyes it could blind you
Burning your cornea's & retina's with great ease

A bite would kill you if not treated very quickly
We mainly worried about the VC soldiers out there
But mother nature had many ways of killing us too
Finally that heat & humidity could also kill you.

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

They say that time marches on ready or not
Time will continue its journey regardless
It takes no notice of what mankind may want

We wish we could have more time during events
Trying to take care of our personal problems
A debt we owe or finding a cure for an illness

Sometimes it's mother nature's fury striking
Say a tornado or hurricane that will not wait
For us to quickly gather up our possessions

Maybe it was in war that time would not wait
As you ran for the bunkers to avoid rockets
Or to a defensive position not quite finished

We always seem to want time to change for us
For it to go faster while waiting for something
Or to slow down when we want to avoid something

Regardless of any ones wishes, hopes or dreams
Time is blind and deaf to any of our own wishes
And as they say Time Marches On Ready Or Not.

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

We were mechanics and office clerks
Supply guys and just plain old cooks
Just doing our duties we had no perks
Like a chess game we were the rooks

We would move from position to position
Filling in the line to help our brothers
Each time a new face and a new situation
We were a group of guys unlike any others

The combat cops knew they could count on us
And they had always trusted us to cover them
We'd heard warnings of attacks at guard mount
They told us to hold your ground brave airmen

We had joined from all over our own homeland
So many young faces from so many backgrounds
We were defending this line drawn in the sand
Against attacking VC and their mortar rounds

Manning our defensive bunkers some in a tower
Patrolling our remote base & watching the wire
Our machine gun was loaded she was our power
Lugging her ammo cans makes you quickly tire

Everyone is ready and vigilant for those sounds
Scanning the terrain on this pitch black night
Listening for the thump of fired mortar rounds
And praying we'd all live to see mornings light

It seemed like an eternity till we saw the sun
Another night had come and gone with my brothers
Now I thought of my hometown and summers of fun
But now we'll get some chow and write our mother's

Terry Sasek... We Were Called The Augmentees © 2011

Terry Sasek

BT 68-69 LM-687

Some will have to go work their daytime positions
They won't be able to go get some well-earned rest
Some worked double shifts during certain situations
I'm proud that I served with them they were the best

Mark Schrimpf

Hotel Co.-2nd Bat.-5th Marines, 1968

When my generation was young, there was trouble here and on other lands, some of us joined the armed forces, to see if we could lend some hands.

After some schoolin' and trainin', we left for a war to fight, shortly thereafter and still, came many a sleepless night.

Most of these short fire-fights were ambushes in the dark, the prey is sometimes caught and your weapons begin to bark.

Usually it was over, just as fast as it began, you take check of your comrades and account for every man.

Most of us were lucky and lived right through the test; some friends didn't make it, their bodies we laid to rest.

We became hunters and warriors, each with a different style; these skills were honed under fire, the only sure, true trial.

It seems strange that things that happen so long ago and far away, can come back to you in your dreams, and feel like yesterday.

My one and only wish, for those of us that did survive, deal with what you were, find peace, and stay alive.

Mark Schrimpf... The Nights © 2009

Mark Schrimpf

Hotel Co.-2nd Bat.-5th Marines, 1968

How many times do I have to push these feelings away,
they come and they go, but they fight to stay.

You would think that someday they would leave forever,
but they've been with me so long, I doubt it, never.

This year they will have forty years past,
they can enter your dreams and they seem to last.

How could you know, when you're young, and in the middle of a fight,
that when you go home, in the dark, you'll relive every sight.

If they wake you from your sleep, startled, and don't know where you are,
a very scary moment, when you realize you haven't come very far.

There are many nights, you'll stay awake, trying to refrain,
from falling asleep and starting the drams, that are sure to bring on the pain.

Your loved ones may inquire, into your strange habits of sleep,
is there a way to explain, that they might understand, without getting in too deep?

I don't know if there is a way, to make the cycle bend,
or if you just slide in the seat and take a ride, right to the very end.

Jack Smith... In honor my 377th Brothers © 2011
...in honor my 377th Brothers. Jack the Old Cowboy

Jack Smith

April 18th 2011

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

We are the 377th Security Police
Born into war and battle proven
Willing to fight never to cease
Brave young and courageous Airman

Standing our post and always on guard
Never forgetting who or what we are
Repelling all the enemies charges
In that land of Vietnam so far

Our home became Tan Son Nhut
Not a place where we wanted to be
Hot and rainy a horrible climate
With filthy places like 100P alley

When the time for battle reared its head
We turned to steel hard as granite
After Tet of 68 we counted our dead
Bloody troops who ran the gauntlet

After all the years that have passed
We come together once more
Sharing all the memories we have amassed
Honoring those here and the ones gone before

Jack Smith

Mar 14th 2011

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

Oh how we dread the dark of night
When that wide door to the past is open
Once again we return to that endless fight
Only to awake in the morning light so lonesome

So much of our lives have been stolen
Leaving us tired in pain so forlorn
Cold and shaking from being locked in this dungeon
Striking deep to the soul like a sharp thorn

Manhood robbed from us in our prime
Sickness not foreseen from the past
Taken by disease from the far away wartime
Now plague us one and all till the last

As we slowly wither and fade away
Soon to be lost from all thought
Let us take the time to pray
Hoping all we lost was not for naught

Jack Smith

Mar 14th 2011

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

It's here to torment me another sleepless night
Those same old dark haunting memories
Shadows that never come into the light
Stretching my minds boundaries

Carried back to a time when sleep evaded me
That place where fear was always present
Like yesterday its clear for me to see
Back to Vietnam ever now so frequent

Here in the dark I sat wondering
Is this night ever going to end
Why must I endure this ailing
Have I committed some great sin

Walking this lonely house still on guard
Not knowing what I hear in the dark
So many like me returned scarred
Still listening for that K-9's bark

That wind that blows forever
Filling my mind with pain
Why do I let it build and fester
Knowing that it can drive a man insane

The sun shows across the east
Lighting up the day as the night resends
That sickening fear and pain is released
Another night gone and again I blame it on the wind

Just something that has been running around in my head for a few weeks. It came out this morning at 0400 as I was making the 1st of many pots of coffee for the day. This poem might be the reason I have had some long sleepless nights. Sometimes the words build and it takes some time for them to form and jump on the paper. **Jack**

Jack Smith

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

In many distance lands a lonely bugle echoes
For those soldiers left behind so long ago

With many fields of fading white crosses
The only memorial for all of our loses

Time wears away everything with its wrath
Leaving nothing to show of what has passed

The brave American troops who so many times
Went off to fight against the worlds evil crimes

Now lay beneath foreign soil soon to be forgot
Should their lives and duty be all for naught

Let the torch of memories be passed along
Never let the generations forget they are gone

Honor our fallen from all the long wars
Those many still resting on far away shores

Jack Smith

June 9th 2010

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

With pride our country was founded
But when the final Taps is sounded
And the last Vietnam Veteran is laid to rest
Our generation will have lost its best

Vietnam Veterans are like no others
Not coming home to songs and banners
No one knowing just who we are
Trying to forget the war that was ours

Still living those endless nights
Praying to survive till mornings light
The past we lived that is ever present
From our thoughts it's never absent

Though we are safe now many years home
It comes seeping into our minds when we are alone
Seeking to pull us back to times better left in the dark
Attacking slicing biting like some fearsome shark

But when the final Taps is sounded
And that last Vietnam veteran is counted
We can all join together in Gods Formation
All of us whole never again to be broken

Jack Smith

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

March 15th 2009

The Old Cowboy Poet

A far away land standing your first post at night
Watching the night fill with stars
Trying so hard to control your fright
Thinking of family at home away so far

Ears alert listening to each night sound
Nerves on edge seeking demons in the dark
Waiting for the coffee truck to come around
Jumping as off in the distance a k-9 barks

Watching all around for a threat
All alone with fear grabbing your thoughts
Your hands wet shirt damp with sweat
Trying to remember all you were taught

Recalling all that the Sergeant had said
Keep out of the light don't fall asleep
Stay calm think don't lose your head
Off in the distance the roar of a jeep

You can overcome the inter fear
Coffee hot and steamy now in your hand
Realizing your new brothers are near
Learning to stand up like a man

Your relief now takes your place
Looking skyward you see dawns light
Heading off now with friendly faces
Do you remember your first post at night

Jack Smith

377th SPS 68-69 LM 453

March 15th 2009

The Old Cowboy Poet

If I could have stood in that crowd
With Washington, Franklin, Jefferson and all
With a chest swelled so proud
Knowing that England had taken the fall

To see these men of honor lay the foundation
Showing the world that free men can overcome
And build the greatest of all nations
Where freedom will always be sung

To have been there that July 4th 1776
To share in the thrill of freedom
Standing there in that great mix
Of American's so wholesome

So 234 years later I stand now
With as much pride as they all showed
As our flag passes my head I will bow
Thanking God for the freedoms they bestowed

Edwin J. Smith

May 22nd 2009

377th SPSD 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

Flags of red white and blue flutter in the wind
Placed upon the resting place of valiant military men

These flags gently erected by caring hands
For those lost in wars at home and in foreign lands

From our largest cities to the smallest town
Proud but humble veterans gather around

Honoring those that never came home
Tending through the years so they are not alone

There on bright sun lit days or mornings of frost
Veterans taking care of comrades lost

Never asking for anything in return
Just hoping that the young watch and learn

So when we are finally laid to rest
New veterans with step up and do their best

Showing as we have the honor deserved
For this lands freedom that we preserved

Jack Smith... Lonely Mother's Day © 2011

Edwin J. Smith

377th SPSD 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

I think so lovingly when Mother's day is here.
Wishing some way we could be near.

Remembering this special day each year.
And knowing you are with the Lord Mother dear.

Just that thought a son could wish for no more.
Because it's with angels of pure you now soar.

You made my life so rich though we were poor.
Again we will meet when God opens his door.

I shall again see your face, hold your hand.
In God's high and wonderful heavenly land.

Jack Smith... PTSD © 2011

Edwin J. Smith

377th SPSD 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

May 5th 2011

Sixty years ago we came home from a World at war
Facing problems never dreamed of before
Pain numbed by morphine and alcohol
People looking the other way not caring at all

Fifty years ago we came home from the Korea war
Facing problems never dreamed before
Fingers hands feet lost to the freezing cold
You will get over it we were all told

Forty years ago we came home from the Vietnam war
Facing problems never dreamed before
Shattered young dreams many dulled by drugs
Forgotten so many years just swept under the rug

Today we come home from the Iraq and Afghanistan war
Facing problems never dreamed before
Things have changed over the long years
But the pain is still there and can't be hid by our tears

Over all the years we have spent in war
Facing problems never dreamed before
May God bless all of us that cannot forget
Holding our hand as we seek a peaceful sunset

Edwin J. Smith

377th SPSD 68-69 LM 453

The Old Cowboy Poet

May 13th 2011

This poem was suggested by Dennis Evans. He asked me this morning for something on the upbeat side. Hope you like it
Dennis and all my brothers. Jack

Do you recall all those days when everything was right?
Hanging in the compound with all the other Sky Cops

Those hot but beautiful days with skies so bright
Just living in your underwear and flip-flops
Those late nights with a cold Bud and old Jimmy Beam
Playing or just watching those big stake poker games
Talking about your car back home with the engine so mean
Making up lies and bragging about all the dames

Marking off the days on that short timer's sheet
How many different naked women were on those?
That last week when it was almost complete
Dreaming about home and that thirty furlough

That last day when you said your goodbyes
Looking at faces that wish they were you.
Leaving your new found brothers with tears in your eyes
On that freedom bird in the skies so blue

Yes there were some good time to recall
We can all remember some of the good
Proud of what we did and standing tall
We became men putting away our boyhood

Independence Day
My Thoughts, 4th of July

As we celebrate Independence Day we need to remember that our freedom is the result of many people whom have made a sacrifice for us to be here. Just think of all the things that you can do and accomplish in a free society that we are so fortunate to be in.

We tend to take our Freedom for granted and we need to remember and pay homage to the individuals that gave it to us. Also we need to never forget that there are millions of people whom fought for us to maintain the right to be free. Our Soldiers whom are now worldwide in places like Kuwait, Iraq, Afghanistan and all over the world need to know that we support them and are extremely thankful for what they do for us and our principles. It is the women and men like them that insure that we will be able to continue our rights and live in a free society.

Because of them and those who fought in past conflicts like World War I, World War II, South Korea, Viet Nam and other areas we are fortunate to be able to remember the sacrifice they made (some of them Ultimate like my friend Louis B Arnold who died on October 31, 1967 in Loc Ninh) to allow us to celebrate the holiday, remember what our flag stands for and Thank God that we are Americans from the United States.

These Guys and Gals gave all so you could be here and don't forget and make sure you tell them how much you appreciate them. When I display my flags I remember quite a bit from the past and while it brings back the painful reality of the past, my tears look forward to the day I will join my buddies.

God Bless America! I love it, and I always am thankful for being here, and I Never forget what made it possible!

Sometimes in the late of night when I cannot sleep,
My thoughts go back in time to memories hidden deep.
There I dare survey the past, and what I might have lost,
Or maybe what I might have gained, and what had been the cost.

There are times in all our lives that we just can't forget,
More than just old memories are living with us yet.
Between the days of now and then, between conflict and calm,
That point of reference in my life is always Vietnam.

Guarding, watching, vigilant..., Security Police by trade,
Defend The Fort was our creed and the promise that we made.
While others slept we stood our post, and sometimes paid the cost,
But never once on our guard was an airbase ever lost!

We didn't go to some great battle each time we went on post,
Most times our worst enemy was in our minds like ghosts.
But when the battles came, and the fires of hell rained down,
As Brothers we fought side by side and bravely stood our ground.

I wonder how many more brave men might have died alone,
If the aircraft that we guarded might have never flown?
If the air support had never come to answer their dire call,
How many thousands more would be etched upon "The Wall"?

It gives me pride to know we always did our best.
Our legacy was born in war and we passed every test.
Second to none, heads held high, I survey now with pride,
And honor my Brothers one and all, especially those who died.

Air Police, Security Police, K-9, and Safeside,
Augmentees, Security Force, all can say with pride,
When my country called, I answered, and proudly now report,
Your Air Force is secure, rest well..., Defenders of The Fort.

Randy "Ramps" Stutler
23 Feb 2009

Every now and then something happens,
And it takes me back in time.
Something as simple as a sound or smell,
That activates my mind.
And it causes me to remember,
The way were back when,
Years ago in Vietnam,
Every now and then.

Sometimes I'll look into the dark,
And wonder if a foe waits there.
I'll seek to find the enemy,
Who hides beyond my steadfast stare.
It all seems so familiar,
As in my mind I see again.
The enemy is often in my mind,
Most every now and then.

Sometimes I can hear the sounds,
So real as if but yards away.
The chatter of machineguns,
The rocket's blast light night as day.
As I wait with steadfast gaze,
For the next volley to begin,
I taste the fear that I once knew,
Every now and then.

I oft' recall the friends I knew,
Back there in Vietnam.
We swore that we would never fail,
To keep each other from all harm.
And now as years swiftly pass,
And memories dull in time's vast din.
I shed a tear and remember friends,
Every now and then.

I wish that I could write a poem,
that would somehow let you see.
Long ago and far away,
of things I thought would never be.
Things that cut into my soul,
and filled my heart with deep regret.
Of days I can't remember,
and nights I can't forget.

I wish that I could tell you how,
and somehow make you feel.
The things of war my young eyes saw,
whose memories there linger still.
In slumber when I seek to rest,
no rest in my dreams do I find.
The sights and sounds of battles past,
lurk there in shadows of my mind.

I wish that you could somehow know,
the bond of Brotherhood we knew.
Of friendships born in battle,
known only to a chosen few.
Of happy days and fearful nights,
with those on whom our lives depend.
We once swore we'd never part,
and now shall never see again.

I wish that with time somehow,
the scars of war would go away.
That peace would come to those who'd fought,
and hope would bring a brighter day.
Peace is but an illusion,
and hope those things to happen yet,
Of the days I can't remember,
and nights I can't forget.

Alone, here I sit on the Fourth of July
Watching rockets as they burst in the sky
I wonder what others who are watching may see
A flash in the sky, or memories like me?

I see the young children as they watch with delight
And scream with joy as the rockets take flight
Then I recall screams of another sort
With horror and fear of the cannon's report

It was cold, bitter cold, in Valley Forge
But the heat was like hell on Tarawa's shore
I froze at the Chosen with my fellow Marines
As many more died with their shattered dreams

On D-Day, from Sky-trains we jumped into hell
With blood purchased freedom by each man who fell
And the bombers and crews who fell from the sky
Gave their full measure for Liberty's cry!

We were just kids in the jungles of 'Nam
We learned fast of "Sir Charles" and the dread Viet Cong
A Security Policeman, I stood guard all alone
Many nights filled with fear that cut to the bone

Now I hear the "swish" and the "pop" of the flare
And my eyes look intently for the enemy there
An' while others behold the bright sights with glee
I know they're not looking at the same things I see
Randy "Ramps" Stutler

LM 146 © 2008

Bien Hoa AB, 3rd SPS 1969

Griffiss AFB, Rome, NY, 1969 (SAC Trained - Vietnam Tested!)

Tell It Like It Is, by A1C William C. Weber, Tell It Like It Is
Tell It Like It Is
When The Man Says “What’s Your Problem?”
Tell It Like It Is

Last night I worked a mid shift
It was pouring rain!
I was posted as a close-in
Walking ‘round a plane.

I was super pissed off
Wet as I could be.
With rain spots on my glasses
I could hardly see!

I hadn’t had a skate, man,
In almost seven days.
I thought I saw my flight chief
Coming through the haze.

He had a rider with him.
The duty officer was out.
This had to be “The Man”
Without a doubt!

He pulled up right beside me
Cracked his window and he said,
“Is it raining out there airman?”
And then my face got red.

I must have lost my temper
'Cause I grabbed him by his shirt.
I pulled him out the window
And I laid him in the dirt!

I called him a dirty bastard
And a rotten S.O.B.
And I hit him in the face
Before the flight chief got to me!

He relieved me of all duty,
Took my weapon on the spot.
He must have thought me crazy
'Cause I told him "Thanks a lot!"

I saw my commanding officer
The very first thing today.
He said "Airman, what's your problem?"
And I had this to say:

I said, "Sir, you don't know what it's like
To walk around a plane,
While the sky is spreading misery
In the form of cold, wet rain!

A hundred thoughts go through your mind
Of things you'd like to do,
And then some guy comes on your post
And makes his fun of you!

I did it, sir, I hit him,
I'm as guilty as can be,
And I'd do the same to any man
Who'd make a joke of me!

It's not a laughing matter, sir,

William Weber... Tell It Like It Is © 2008

To stand out in the weather
When everyone else in the Air Force
Has a job you know is better!"

I looked at him - he looked at me
And nothing more was said.
I started to speak, but he cut me off,
It was he who spoke instead.

In a voice that left no doubt
That he was truly in command,
He handed down my judgement
And this is how he began:

He said, "Son, I know you've got it hard
But don't cry on my shoulder!
You'll realize the job you've done
When you're a few years older!

For it takes guts to guard an airplane
Every single day,
But to strike from anger takes no guts at all
And for this, you'll have to pay!

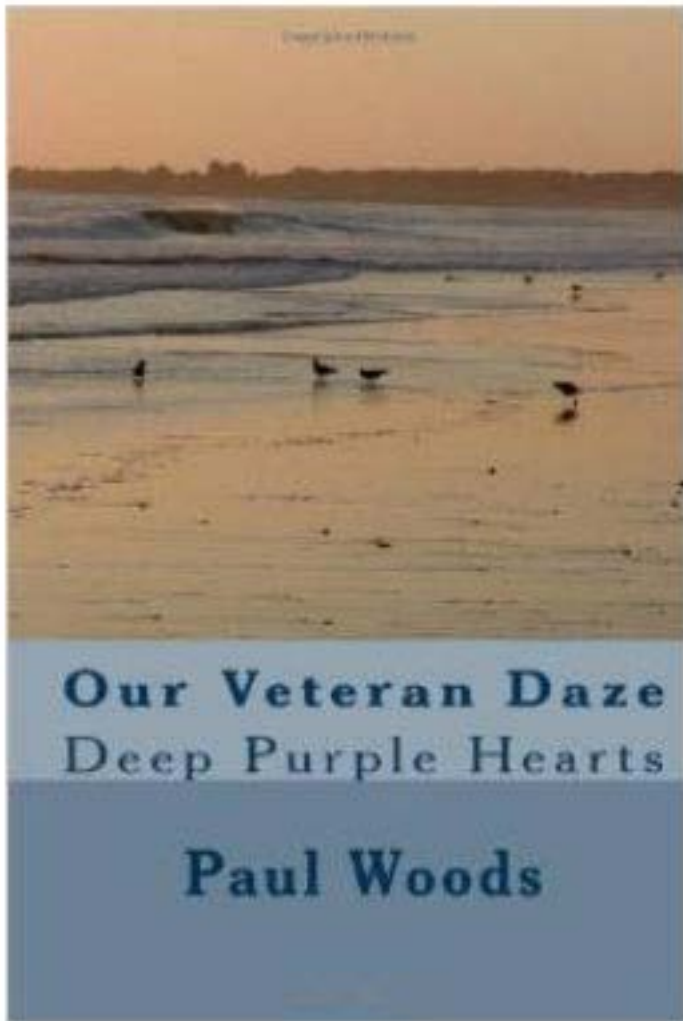
And just so you'll remember
This lesson that you've seen,
I'll give you the carbon copy
Of your Article 15!

Just take this pen and write your name
You don't have to be neat!"
I meekly signed my name
Upon that paper of defeat!

Tonight I'll walk the line again
Just like all the rest,
But this time it'll be different
'Cause I'm wearing one stripe less!

Paul Woods... Our Veteran Daze: Deep Purple Hearts

eBook ISBN: 978-1-63003-693-5 © 2013



*A Book Review by
Don Poss, War-Stories.com Webmaster
Four Star Review!*

Order *Our Veteran Daze: Deep Purple Hearts* (twenty-four new poems and short prose) at Amazon.com: Paperback or Kindle

“The dark angel has me in a victory roll...”

Our Veteran Daze: Deep Purple Hearts is a book of poetry and prose about men at war and the lasting effect it has upon them. Veterans of all wars will recognize its simple truth that they must handle the scars of war, or it will handle them. As in battle, there is an ebb and flow between war’s aftermaths claiming victory over a veteran. Paul Wood’s poem, *Past Armageddon*, acknowledges this with words from the heart: “The dark angel has me

in a victory roll...”

Our Veteran Daze: Deep Purple Hearts is poetry veterans of today will recognize as right on, just as would long faded veterans of past wars. Friends and family of veterans may gain insight to their veteran’s experiences, and why he was not the same when he came home from war, and never spoke of it with them.

War Veterans:

If your soul is light – Paul Woods’ poetry fights to hold at bay the darkness of war’s lingering memories.

Paul Woods... Our Veteran Daze: Deep Purple Hearts

If your soul is dark – Paul Woods' poems may draw you out of the dark, and you may realize that you are not alone.

If your soul is cobalt black – then God help you as Paul Wood's poems are snapshots of who you are, or could become. Without understanding war's traumas upon warriors, you may have little hope of climbing out of the abyss alone – Paul Woods' poetry may yet guide you to a lighter shade of hope, and out of the numbing post-traumatic daze of war.

Don Poss,
War-Stories.com Webmaster

Paul Woods' website: Woodswriting.com

In Honor of A1C Carl Ware , 15th Security Forces
And Now We Say Goodbye
Great sadness fills our hearts today
As pipes and drums, in slow march play.

A comrade's fallen by the way,
And now we say goodbye.

This hero to the very end
Was more than just a casual friend,
Who would a stranger's life defend,
And now we say goodbye

But we shall cherish, all our days,
The character this life portrayed
With sacrifice so freely made,
And now we say goodbye.

The hand salute, o'er Stars and Stripes,
And distant skirl of highland pipes,
Give last farewell with hero's rights,
And now we say goodbye.

While here on Earth, you gave your best.
Now in the Master's arms you rest.
T'is by your memory we are blessed.
And now we say goodbye.

Burrowed just beneath the sand
They hide throughout that arid land
And those who know their awful sting
Bear witness to the pain it brings

They sometimes venture from their nest
In secrecy which suits them best.
An evil kingdom to expand
They're spreading fear throughout the land.

These scorpions from ancient times
Are soon to lose their poison spines
And they will learn just how it feels
To die beneath a G.I's heel.

Then those who call that desert home
Will once again be free to roam
Not worried by that creature's sting
And all the pain it used to bring.

Photo by Phil W. Carroll

"The Wall"

Copyright (c) 2006, by Howard G. Yates
Photo Copyright (c) 2005, by Phillip W. Carroll

I pause in silence on the Mall
To spend some time and touch this wall
With names forever etched in stone
Of those who died so far from home.

This is for me such sacred ground
With names of heroes all around
Where some may come with hearts to mend
Or leave their letters to a friend

While others visit loved ones lost
Reflecting on what freedom cost
Or tell a youngster's eager ears
About those very troubled years

Whatever reason brings you here
To just reflect or shed a tear
I doubt that you will be the same
As what you were, before you came

Because you'll find these names in stone
Of those who died so far from home

Will be engraved for all of time
Upon your heart, as they are mine.

Chaplain Jim Stastny at The Wall: William Rassano, I will always remember

KRT, USAF, 388th Security Police Squadron, K-9, 1970-71

Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc. (USAF) <http://www.vspa.com>

Reflection about a law enforcement career
Words alone cannot portray,
Exactly how I felt that day.

To raise my hand and pledge to keep Safe
homes and schools and city streets.

Perhaps I could not really see
How much this role would mean to me,
Or how my actions would affect,
So many lives, in retrospect.

To be a model for the young,
A task that's never really done,
Or lend an arm to feeble feet,
Just long enough to cross the street.

To recognize each house and face
And know when things were out of place.
To memorize the statutes all,
Yet keep the spirit of the law.

To keep a watch through midnight dark,
Or try to save a failing heart.
To mend a family's broken ties,
Or hear the truth through spoken lies.

To champion the cause of right.
Protect the good and evil fight.
To apprehend the ones who'd prey,
Upon the weak, then run away.

No wealth, no fame, not one regret.
For never did I once forget,
Why, to that oath, I raised my hand.
To serve my God and fellow man

*I would like to dedicate this poem to my son,
2nd Lt. Kyle G. Yates, USAF.*

Brave guardians who always stand
As beacons in the night
Securing peace with vigilance
Preserving all that's right.

Day after day they carry on
Committed to the law
Patrolling streets and walking beats,
Protecting one and all.

And should the force of tyranny
Endanger freedom's light
The ones who wear the Blue Beret
Step up to join the fight

From Air Force blue to jungle green
And desert cammy too
The Airmen of the Blue Beret
Forever, proud and true.

Howard Yates... The Patriot © 2011

The fear of battle churns inside
As now I gaze upon the tide
Of red with shouldered muskets gleaming,
From the distant hills they're streaming.

Line by line they march unscathed
For neither side has loosed their fray
And all the while generals muse
O'er each the other's gallant moves.

Now standing firm to hold this ground,
While cannon shots burst all around,
I wait amid this sea of blue,
And pray my aim is sure and true.

With sons and neighbors side by side
We mean to turn this crimson tide
And send our message loud and clear
To George, that all his house may hear.

The throne of Britain may be yours
From English cliffs to Scottish moors
And you may o'er the empire reign
But our resolve shall never wane.

We'll stand upon this sovereign ground
In one accord against the crown
And we shall from this moment be
A nation born, forever free.

Howard Garrison Yates

For Shelia Cain's Dad

The piper's tune is like a prayer,
But says much more than words can share.
Each note proclaims Amazing Grace,
And lifts our hearts towards Heaven's Gates.

So now our piper plays his tune,
An intercession just for you.
A tune that's played from heart and soul,
To seek His touch and make you whole

There is a band of tried and true
With members far and wide
They come from every walk of life
But share a common pride

They chose to heed their country's call
And sacrifices make
They traveled to a foreign land
Whose freedom was at stake.

Some spent their nights in solitude
And listened with intent
While others braved the noon time sun
Whose heat would not relent.

Though many times the enemy
Would hope to find them weak
Those modern day centurions
Were always at their peak.

While some may question what they did
The history books will teach
When sky cops took the watch in Nam
Their walls were hard to breach.

From those of us who made it home
To those who gave their all
In gratitude we bow our heads
Their honor to recall.

Memories 1

