



# GUARDMOUNT

## VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION

*"We Take Care of Our Own"*



### SPRING/SUMMER EDITION – 2021



### The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual VSPA Reunion is coming

### United States Air Force Academy

&

### Hotel Elegante Conference & Event Center

### Colorado Springs, CO

### OCTOBER 6-10, 2021



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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

**JERRY NELSON, CMSGT (RETIRED)**  
PRESIDENT, LIFE MEMBER #668  
PHAN RANG, PHU CAT, TUY HOA 69-70



My VSPA Brothers and Sisters,

Wow, what a wild and turbulent year we experienced in 2020. America was badly hurt by the COVID-19 pandemic that resulted in America shutting down. Most families across our great nation were hurt by the disease, loss of jobs and in many cases income. Our Association, along with many others, was directly affected and a very small number contracted COVID-19. Due to the limitations on safety and travel restrictions, we were forced to postpone our 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion in Colorado Springs, Colorado. That is the first and only reunion that has not been held as scheduled. It was a difficult and unfortunate decision; however, one that considered the safety of our members and families and had to be made. Our member's safety was and will always be our first priority. We are so thankful that the members affected by COVID-19 survived.

I am delighted to announce that 2021 holds a lot of promise. Due to the development of vaccinations, we seem to be turning the corner. The CDC opened travel restrictions, if you are vaccinated, for domestic travel. As a result, our 2021 reunion is back on the calendar for October 6 – 10 in Colorado Springs. I have contacted the 10<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron Chief and have written to the squadron commander so that we can resume the formal planning process that we had postponed from last year. We will be conducting Board of Directors meetings to ensure that all Board members are actively involved in the planning and execution of the plans.

We will be conducting an election this year, since it was not held in 2020. I would like to thank each member of the Board of Directors for volunteering to serve another year due to the pandemic. They have been a true source of strength during the tough period of 2020. We will have several exciting events planned for this year's reunion and I encourage everyone to start making your plans now. Information on hotel and travel will be provided shortly. Contracts are in place and the Reunion Brat will be helping arrange those activities. I am asking, at this time; please do not make travel reservations yet. This is a result of an added degree of caution; there will be plenty of time to make travel reservations at a later date.

I very much look forward to seeing everyone at the Air Force Academy for a great reunion. It is my honor to serve you. If I can be of assistance, please call me at 210-273-4777.

Jerry





## THE VSPA SISTERHOOD

Sheila Cain, Sisterhood President



*Dear Sisters and Brothers of the VSPA,*

*It is with great joy that we are able to get back to life.  
The new "normal". Of course, I'm sure it will be a bit different*

*than the past.*

*We all have had a difficult time getting through the pandemic and I hope that everyone's family is safe and healthy.*

*The Officers and Board of Directors have done an outstanding job keeping the VSPA on track during this time.*

*Sadly, we could not have a reunion last year, but one is being planned for 2021 in Colorado Springs, Colorado.*

*It should be a great time with events planned for all. I look forward to seeing you all.*

*As always, if any Sister or Brother needs anything I am happy to be of service to you. Feel free to contact me at any time 716-480-9101.*

*God bless you all.*

*Loyalty,  
Sheila Gervase-Cain  
Sisterhood President*

*Wife of  
Greg Cain  
Binh Thuy 67-68*

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### Memorial by Lee Rini

All gave some and some gave all  
when they answered their country's call  
Far away they went across the sea  
So that you and I could be free  
So young they were, just barely men  
to leave their homes to try to win  
To fight oppression and villany  
to protect this land for you and me  
The wars are brutal, with wounds unseen  
hidden inside the wounds still bleed

So many friends lost to enemy shells  
in distant jungles and mountains they fell  
Their faces etched within our minds  
kept in our hearts throughout all time  
We honor and remember those that have fallen  
who answered the call and are now in heaven  
No medal or award can comfort the loss  
of those who fought and paid the cost  
As we honor those fathers and sons  
we'll carry on until the battle is won





# 2019 VSPA Reunion Washington, D.C.







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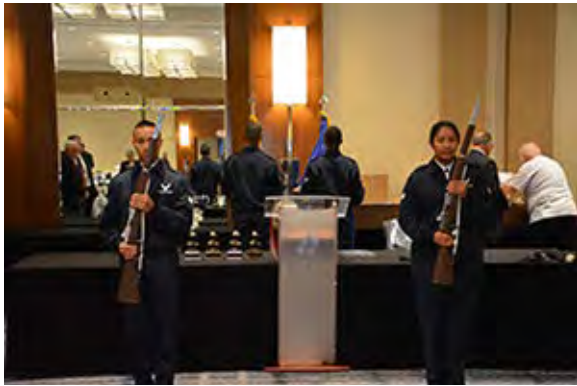
# 2019 VSPA Reunion Washington, D.C.







# 2019 VSPA Reunion Washington, D.C.







# 2019 VSPA Reunion Washington, D.C.





## “He’s just a dog”

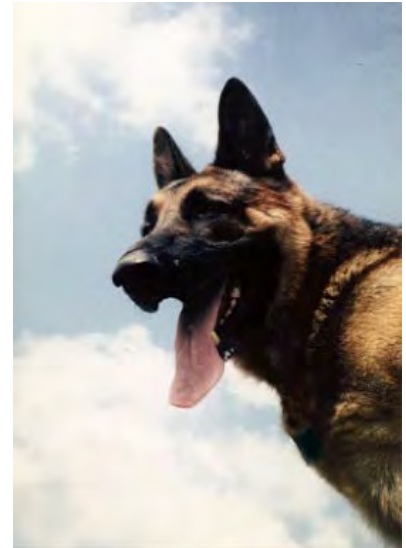
Greg Dunlap, 366th SPS Da Nang – 68-69



How many times have you heard that statement? Or it’s just a cat, or a parrot, even a turtle? Yes, they are just an animal. Heck, we even eat some of them. Whoever gave a passing thought to the cow or chicken the last time you drove through the fast food line?

“We’re having fish and chips tonight!!” *Sure sucks to be that cod but serves him right for getting caught so easily.* For most of us we take animals into our lives, love them while they are with us, and then feel fleeting sorrow when we watch them go over the rainbow bridge. And for those we consume? There’s no remorse, unless you’re a vegetarian but let’s not go into debating that school of thought.

Unless you’re one of the lucky few who after going into the Armed Services, put themselves into a position so they could call themselves, “**DOG HANDLERS!**” I’m proud to state that I can say that I was one of those lucky ones.



I enlisted in the Air Force in November 1965. After basic training and Air Police tech school I arrived at Oxnard AFB in Southern California in early 1966. Later on in 1966 I transferred into K-9 and became a dog handler with my first dog, Rex K044. Military service dogs are known by their name and service number, which is unique to each dog. You can imagine in a large kennel there can be a few Bear’s, Chief’s, King’s etc. Giving each their own service number keeps them separate. Rex K044 was an older dog that had broken in more than his share of new handlers, he knew I was young and dumb so he forgave me my mistakes.

In early 1967 the Air Force sent me off to Dog Handlers School at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas. There I was paired up with another Rex only he was Rex 688E. I had 6 months with Rex K044 behind me so even though Rex 688E was an untrained dog, we evened each other out.

In April 1967, I returned to Oxnard AFB with Rex 688E and we worked together for the next 7 months till around the end of November orders came in for me. I was going overseas, to Da Nang, Vietnam where although I didn’t know it yet, I was going to be paired with the dog that I would end up remembering all the rest of my life.

Blackie 129X was whelped in February 1962 in Leominster, Massachusetts. The Air Force acquired him on June 30, 1963 for \$180. He weighed 95 pounds then. He was sent to the Sentry Dog Training Facility at Lackland AFB and received his first handler and trainer, Al Watts. He was lucky in that respect, Al Watts was one of those people who could train dogs to do anything, and he put all his knowledge into making Blackie the best sentry dog he would become to be. Al and Blackie later were then assigned to a very unique group called Top Dog45.

In 1965 the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Regular Army units were infiltrating bases all over South Vietnam and causing havoc in their wake. Someone at the Pentagon, (probably an NCO because officers didn’t identify with ground units) came up with the idea of sending Sentry Dogs over there to combat this and Top Dog45 was initiated. Al Watts and Blackie 129X were part of the first Military Working Dog



Teams to go into Vietnam; and wherever a group of teams went, they made a statement! That statement was so impactful, that today it is said that wherever there was a base patrolled by Sentry Dogs, there was no longer a successful infiltration attempt performed. The VC and NVA didn't stop trying to infiltrate, they just were no longer successful as they were before. Because now, there were guarded, by Sentry Dog teams. And Blackie and Al were one of those.



The first group of Top Dog handlers went over to Vietnam mostly on a TDY (Temporary Duty) assignment of 120 days. They were then given the option of staying or rotating back to the base they were assigned to prior. The person who was the Assistant Kennel Master opted to rotate back to their prior stateside base and Al Watts being the next senior person there, was then to assume the duty of the Assistant Kennel Master. That meant that he had to find someone to handle Blackie 129X.

So while walking around the APO Al spotted this skinny kid coming back from the chow hall and seeing as he was an Air Police person, Al stopped him and asked him

if he liked dogs. Don Poss didn't know what to say so he said the first thing that came into his head, "sure I like dogs, who don't?" Don Poss didn't know it then, but he just volunteered to be a Dog Handler with that statement. For the first two days that Don went out on duty with Blackie, he had to keep the muzzle on him at all times. Blackie didn't like being used to break in a new troop and kept trying to bite Don every chance he got. Al Watts would have to go into Blackie's kennel, put the leash and muzzle on him, walk him out and hand the leash over to Don. It's a good thing that nothing happened those first nights because if Don had to release Blackie on a capture, there's no telling who he would have gone after first.

Don and Blackie became a team eventually and Blackie wormed his way into Don's heart like he did with everyone who he let handle him. Dog Handlers were a "macho" minded group and having one of the biggest bad-ass dogs in the kennels just made one strut around a little bit more. Plus Blackie had a unique thing that he would do. He'd carry your helmet!! You could toss it on the ground in front of him and he'd pick it right up. And once he had it, he'd be happy. Off the two of you would go and it didn't matter how far out you had to go, he was happy carrying that helmet. Of course from the exercise that gave his neck and jaw muscles we used to joke that he could probably crush cannon balls in his mouth. But you also took grief from everyone because of it. The Marines used to tell me that I was wearing a bucket of dog slobber on my head for a helmet.



He also played games with the people who worked in the kennels during the day. One of their jobs was to feed the dogs and collect the feed bowls afterwards to clean them. Well Blackie didn't always want to give up the bowl. Some of the time they would just beg and plead with him and he'd eventually let them retrieve the bowl but then there were other times when **HE WANTED TO KEEP IT**. Then the broomstick would come out and the fight would start. There would be times when I would come to get him to go out on post and there would be a scarred and mangled broomstick hanging on his kennel door. He'd be sitting inside looking content, and **STILL WITH THE FEED BOWL!!** I swear he'd almost be laughing.

In January of 1967 Don Poss rotated back to the States and Blackie was deliberately kept in his kennel for a period in order to get him stir crazy enough that he'd be ready to go out with anyone who was dumb enough to enter his kennel and try to put a leash on him. But even after being cooped up for weeks, he still put up a resistance to a new handler. It took me 5 attempts to get into his kennel and take him out. The first 4 times he chased me out! Another time a person later attempted to enter his kennel and put a leash on him and was not so lucky as to escape unharmed. I'm told that he still has the scars on his butt where Blackie bit him.

Blackie ended up serving 5 years in Vietnam. Originally he was at Da Nang and later he ended up at Phan Rang. He was handled by Al Watts, Don Poss, David Porter, myself (Greg Dunlap) and lastly by Clarence Dedecker. While he was with Clarence Dedecker he had a condition strike him that required surgery to correct. It occurred again and being unrepairable this time, he was put down in November of 1970.

I wrote a series of stories about my year with him and those can be found at:  
<http://www.vspa.com/k9/dn-stories-greg-dunlap.pdf>



Blackie 129X and myself in front of the kennels





## SF MUSEUM HAPPENINGS

By Mel Grover, 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron  
Tan Son Nhut AB, RVN 1967-68  
President, Security Forces Museum Foundation



Your museum is alive and growing as we speak. Despite the COVID-19 closure, progress has not stopped in the continual upgrade of exhibits and displays. The museum also remains a popular site for all kinds of events. Recently, the museum served as the wedding site for one of our new Defenders and his bride. This first of its kind event joins the retirements, conferences and commanders calls that continually use our auditorium. We are in demand and enjoy the exposure.

In the exhibit area things are moving along at a fast pace. The foundation just purchased new display cases to upgrade our displays, particularly in the badge and shield area, CATM and Training exhibits. A planned upgrade of the display for women in our career field is in development. The SAC (Cold War) exhibit is nearing completion of its upgrade. It will include an entry controller armed with the carbine. A new display of our Top Cops and Chiefs is in the works. The transportation area has reorganized and updated, and includes an ATV, some of the horse patrols and our boat contingent.

One of the more dramatic upgrades covers the 1041<sup>st</sup> Safeside experience in Southeast Asia. Original artifacts from the unit are on display as well as photos of the deployment and training. A movie of their training is being converted into modern day media to add to the story of this unit. The current 820<sup>th</sup> Base Defense Group (grandson of the 1041<sup>st</sup>) helped with some of their memorabilia. The 820<sup>th</sup> is also going to assist us in upgrading the Southwest Asia experience.

We are awaiting the arrival of a kiosk so we can properly honor our Defenders who have earned the new Combat Action Medal. The number is so great that we could not include them on the other award panels we have in the Hall of Honor. The possibility also exists that we can add all the medal recipients of this modern device, including those who have earned the AF Commendation Medal with "V" Device.

We continue to add to our archives both documents, photos and items. We are planning on adding to our library and properly cataloging them so we have a very accurate and up to date history of our career field.

A recent project in the very early developmental stages is that of procuring a hologram of the career field, which we can also use on the road to carry our story beyond the museum walls. More on this in the future

As always, every week the new class entering the Security Forces Academy spends time in the museum to introduce them to the career field, its history and heritage. We also receive family visitors every week following Basic Training graduation. Many are parents of our next class wanting to learn about the career field their new Airman is entering. Foundation members act as docents during these visits to acquaint all about his storied career field.

**Vietnam Security Police Association**  
**26th Reunion**  
**Colorado Springs, Colorado – October 6-10, 2021**  
**United States Air Force Academy**

The 2021 VSPA reunion will be held at the *HOTEL ELEGANTE*, located at 2886 S Circle Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80906. The contract room rate is \$135 per night, plus tax for one or two people, \$145 for three people, \$155 for four people. The room rate includes a hot breakfast (for TWO) with an additional fee of \$10 per person for breakfast for a third or fourth person in the room, as shown. The rooms include a refrigerator. The room rate is locked-in; however, for the three days before and three days after the reunion, the room rate is based upon room availability. You must book early to ensure that rooms are available. **DON'T WAIT!** Complimentary airport transportation is available to and from COLORADO SPRINGS MUNICIPAL AIRPORT **ONLY**. The airport in Denver is 55 miles away and has shuttle service available for a separate fee. Hotel SELF-parking is FREE. RV Parking is subject to a charge of \$35 per night. Use the following link to see more information about this beautiful hotel: <https://www.hotelegante.com/>

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS:** Call Phone *toll-free* 1-800-981-4012 by **Sunday September 5, 2021**. You must identify yourself as a member of the **Vietnam Security Police Association** or reference Group reservation #2739313. All reservations must be guaranteed and accompanied by a first night room deposit or guaranteed with a major credit card. **The deadline for reservations is September 5, 2021. After that date, rooms will be space available only and AT THE HOTEL'S PREVAILING RATE. Make your reservations early!** Check-in time is 3:00 PM and check-out time is 11:00 AM. If you encounter any difficulty with hotel reservations, reserve the room, obtain the confirmation number and contact the Reunion BRAT at 1-360-663-2521. Explain the problem and she will correct it for you.

**AIRPORT INFORMATION:**

Book your flight to COLORADO SPRINGS MUNICIPAL (**AIRPORT CODE: COS**). Some airlines do not fly into Colorado Springs or require transfer flights. You may also book to DENVER INTERNATIONAL (**AIRPORT CODE: DEN**) which is approximately 55 miles away. **YOU MUST BE AWARE OF AIRLINE COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS. BRING A MASK!**

**REUNION REGISTRATION FEE:** To be determined and posted at a later date based upon completion of bus contracts and final scheduling of tours and optional events.

**AGENDA:** The agenda is generally accurate, but is subject to change due to Air Force Academy operational requirements for the 10<sup>th</sup> SECURITY FORCES SQUADRON:

- Wednesday, October 6: On-site Registration and Reception Dinner at the hotel.
- Thursday, October 7: Optional Tour for the Sisterhood with time for lunch. Spouses are welcome to attend. **EAT A FREE BREAKFAST BEFORE YOU BOARD THE BUS.** Dinner and evening are open for squadron and base dinners or gatherings.
- Friday, October 8: **EAT A FREE BREAKFAST BEFORE YOU BOARD THE BUS** for a tour of the USAF Academy. Lunch will be with the 10<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron Defenders. Dinner and evening are open for squadron and base dinners or gatherings.



- Saturday Morning, October 9: EAT A FREE BREAKFAST BEFORE the 1000 hours VSPA Business Meeting. Afternoon open.
- Saturday Morning, October 9: EAT A FREE BREAKFAST BEFORE the 1000 hours VSPA Sisterhood gathering of wives and companions. Afternoon open.
- Saturday Evening, October 9: 1730 hours: Banquet dinner with guest speaker, awards and raffle.
- Sunday Morning, October 10: EAT A FREE BREAKFAST BEFORE the 0900 hours Memorial service, reading of the names. End of reunion.
- The Hospitality Room will be stocked with FREE snacks & beverages and will be open as much as possible.
- The VSPA BX Store will be open as much as possible.

### **CRITICAL INFORMATION!!! PLEASE READ!!!**

#### **ROOMS IN THE AREA WILL GO FAST DUE TO AN ACADEMY CLASS REUNION AND A FOOTBALL GAME AT THE ACADEMY!!! MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY!!!**

Our hotel has been inspected TWICE! The first inspection occurred last year by VSPA Life Member Jim Costello and his wife Angie. They live locally and stated that the hotel is large and beautiful. The second inspection just occurred, was highly detailed, including contract space verifications and a stay in the hotel by VSPA Vice President Larry Fleming and his wife, Martha. Their report was OUTSTANDING! The Fleming and Costello families have attended numerous VSPA reunions and know our requirements in detail.

We conducted a survey of members who attended our last reunion in Washington, D.C. We have spoken with many of our members about fatigue and the length of time for our tours. Members who attended our last two reunions expressed concern regarding early start times, as well as fatigue and the extended day while on base. More and more of our members have difficulty walking; however, some walking may be required on Friday due to the Academy facility. Therefore, our planning for events will reduce walking time at the Academy. The tour on Thursday is a shopping tour for the Sisterhood and will necessarily include some walking. Our goal is to provide an opportunity for a reunion with less physical demands and more time to visit with each other.

*If you have a question or need some more information about this reunion, please contact VSPA President Jerry Nelson [JRNEL1423@aol.com](mailto:JRNEL1423@aol.com) or call him on his cell phone at (210) 273-4777. We hope to see you in Colorado Springs, Colorado for our 26<sup>th</sup> VSPA Reunion! It will be so great to see you after having to postpone the reunion last year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.*

**“We Take Care of Our Own!”**

# 2021 ELECTION OF VSPA OFFICERS CALL FOR BIOS AND PHOTOS

The VSPA's By-Laws call for elections of officers every two years, with all current members being given an opportunity to vote. Current members may vote in person by attending the business meeting at the annual reunion, or by mailing in a written ballot, which will be printed in the next issue of Guardmount. Each member may submit only one ballot. There are six positions up for election: President, Vice President, Second Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Historian. The other positions on our board of directors (President Emeritus, Past President and Communications Director) are permanent positions as recognized by our Constitution and By-Laws. All other positions in the VSPA are staff positions appointed by the president and board based upon expertise and willingness to serve the members of the VSPA. Elected officers will be confirmed and installed after the voting is completed at the reunion in October. The term of office of all positions is two years. The positions do not receive a salary and are entirely on a volunteer basis.

VSPA members have until **August 13, 2021** to declare their intention to run for an elected VSPA position and must submit a bio and photo for publication in Guardmount. Each person who runs must have been a regular member or life member in good standing for at least two years prior to the election. Board members must have the ability to attend future business meetings that are held at our annual reunions. They must communicate via the Internet and by phone on a regular basis, and must make the commitment to provide the time necessary to serve in the position - none of these are ceremonial positions.

If you want to run for an office on the VSPA Board of Directors, you'll need to submit a photo and one-page biography. Send your bio and photo to VSPA's Guardmount Editor, Mike Kennedy, electronically ([mike3sps@verizon.net](mailto:mike3sps@verizon.net)) or by surface mail (14766 Foxfield Lane, Fontana, CA 92336) soon enough so that he receives your information by **August 13, 2021**. The bios and a ballot will be made available in the next issue of Guardmount.

The duties of the elected board positions below are from the VSPA By-Laws:

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

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



**VICE PRESIDENT and SECOND VICE PRESIDENT** - The duties of the Vice President and the Second Vice President shall include, but not be limited to:

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

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

- A. Officiate when required in the absence of the President and Vice President.
- B. Serve as an elected member of the Board of Directors.
- C. Serve as a member of the Membership Committee.
- D. Be the clerk of the organization.
- E. Be the custodian of all business-related non-financial records and materials, with the exception of: those records which are created and maintained by the VSPA Historian, the VSPA Membership Chairman, the VSPA Treasurer and VSPA Communications Director Don L. Poss; or those records which are required for performance of the duties of the registered agent and liaison with VSPA's tax accountant and tax attorney. All such records shall remain property of the organization.
- F. Take minutes and keep permanent records of the proceedings of all annual Business Meetings and meetings of the Board of Directors.
- G. Prepare and distribute election ballots, if necessary and as required.
- H. Ensure that only members in good standing vote on organizational business. The Secretary will be assisted by the Membership Chairman and the Sergeant-at-Arms.
- I. Serve as official organization correspondent.
- J. Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to his care and turn over the folder to his successor.

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

- A. Serve as an elected member of the Board of Directors.
- B. Act as Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee if the committee is necessary.
- C. Be the Chief Financial Officer of the organization.
- D. Be the custodian of all financial records of the organization.

- E. Receive and be responsible for the collection of all monies due and payable to the organization.
- F. Have custody of all organization funds, and shall provide for the safekeeping, retention, disbursement, and investment in a manner acceptable to the Board of Directors.
- G. Receive donations on behalf of the organization.
- H. Issue letters in acknowledgement of all donations as required by tax codes.
- I. To work with the President to make such reports and returns as are required by Federal, State and local governments, the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution, and these By-Laws, including the disbursement of appropriate taxes and fees.
- J. Maintain accounts appropriate to the structure and activities of the organization and in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and principles.
- K. Keep a current folder that includes all official correspondence, records, and official materials assigned to his care and turn over the folder to his successor.

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

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





# CHESTNUT

by Steve Gattis

12<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron  
Cam Ranh Bay AB, RVN 68-69



What's in a name? Memories, history, Arlington National Cemetery, the U.S. Capitol, a legacy of honor, heroism, everlasting brotherhood, two tours in Vietnam, a VSPA memorial scholarship, a brother and his family.



## JACOB JOSEPH CHESTNUT, MSGT, USAF (RETIRED)

United States Air Force Security Police  
U.S. Capitol Police Officer KIA, July 24, 1998



The following is the text of the memorial service held for our J.J. on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol during our 2019 reunion.

### Introduction by Steve Gattis

Members of the Vietnam Security Police Association, I am honored to introduce Chief Steven Sund, the Chief of the U.S. Capitol Police, who has escorted Mrs. Wenling Chestnut, the wife of one of our own, to be with us today as we honor the memory and service of her husband, Retired MSGT Jacob J., Chestnut, who served our country with honor and distinction. She is accompanied by her son, William.



### Memorial Ceremony by Jerry Nelson



We knew him as J.J., a member of the Vietnam Security Police Association who wanted to attend our 1998 reunion here in Washington, D.C. He had signed up to attend the reunion with his wife and children. When J.J. was taken from us on July 24, 1998, his wife and children, who are all Affiliate Members of the VSPA, honored him by attending the reunion with us. Some of our members who are here today met them and attended a VSPA organized graveside memorial service at Arlington National Cemetery with his children.

There are about 200 Members of the Vietnam Security Police Association who are here today, including wives and family who have traveled from all over the United States, and one - all the way from Vietnam. Our members served as U.S. Air Force Air Policemen and Security Policemen and Augmentees in Vietnam and Thailand during the years 1958 to 1976.

J.J. also served in the United States Air Force as an Air Policeman and Security Policeman. He served with us in the Republic of South Vietnam as a member of the 12<sup>th</sup> Air Police Squadron, Cam Ranh Bay Air Base in 1966 and again in the 633<sup>rd</sup> Security Police Squadron, Pleiku Air Base 1968-69.

After his retirement as a Master Sergeant in the Air Force, J.J. became a U.S. Capitol Police Officer where he could continue to use his career experience in law enforcement and security to protect the people and assets of our great country. As we all know, J.J. was tragically killed in the line of duty on July 24, 1998. He is the only U.S. Air Force Defender and Vietnam Veteran who served his country twice and then gave his life while serving at an entry control point in this building, a job he knew so well from his years in the Air Force, and in a second career that allowed him to protect the U.S. Capitol, his fellow officers and all of the people inside.

It is an honor to come here today, to stand upon the grounds of the U.S. Capitol, to pay tribute to this man who has become so much a part of the VSPA history. This memorial service is actually a continuation of the honor and tradition of the Vietnam Security Police Association, where our brotherhood and sisterhood not only allow us to remember J.J. but encourages us to gather each year to take care of our own, to reach out to each other to let them know that we care.



Therefore, it is so fitting that, today, we remember these words from Robert Laurence Binyon:

“At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we will remember.”

We remember Jacob J. Chestnut, the man loved and known as J.J. This man who has become an inspiration for us because of his sense of duty to Country, and so familiar to us because of our annual J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship awarded to descendants of VSPA members.

Wenling, the Vietnam Security Police Association has a tradition that we adopted to honor men like J.J., men who served our country with valor and honor. We would like to present you with a medal for J.J., the Warrior’s Medal of Valor from the Native American Nations of the United States of America.

The Warrior’s medal was created and crafted by a Native American Chief who served in Vietnam. The medal may be awarded to any deserving Vietnam Veteran and is not limited to Native Americans. Our ability and opportunity to award the Warriors Medal of Valor has been approved by a Tribal Council and made possible by Alvin Matthews, the man many of us in the VSPA knew as SARGE. He was a Life Member of the Vietnam Security Police Association and was the first Chairman of the VSPA Committee for the selection and presentation of the Warriors Medal of Valor.

MSgt. Matthews returned from Vietnam to work as an instructor at the Security Police Academy where he shared the hard lessons learned in Vietnam. He was the first VSPA member to receive the Warriors Medal of Valor for his service in Vietnam. He received his medal from a tribal Chief while attending a Cherokee Powwow in 2005. He subsequently worked to make it possible for the VSPA to present the medal to members of the VSPA. Alvin and his daughter, Janet Matthews, made all of the arrangements to present the Warriors Medal of Valor at our reunions in 2006 and 2007, and personally financed the awards for our members. The presentation is an honor for all recipients. When MSgt. Matthews passed away in 2008, members of the VSPA contributed funds in his name to ensure that the Warriors Medal would continue to be funded and awarded to deserving members of the VSPA. His daughter Janet continues to honor her father as the Co-Chair of the VSPA Committee for the selection and presentation of the Warriors Medal of Valor.

Janet Matthews please come forward and present the Warriors Medal of Valor for Jacob J. Chestnut to his wife, Wenling.



The officers of the VSPA Sisterhood would like to present you with the pins that represent their Sisterhood and those who live by their motto, “Taking care of those who take care of their own.” Their president,

Sheila Cain, will present those pins along with our reunion pin for this 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion that specifically honors J.J. There are additional reunion pins for your son and grandson.





In closing, I would like to read a poem that means the world to us, as it recognizes our combined experience as Defenders and Warriors who fought for this country. The poem is titled:

### FALCON'S REST

Lay aside your shield,  
And stack your weapon.  
Enter into the Falcon's rest.

Wet bunkers and barbed wire,  
Are no longer your quest.  
Enter into the Falcon's rest.

Soaring with brothers past,  
You are safe at last.  
Enter into the Falcon's rest.

Know at last your race is run,  
And be proud of your duty done.  
Enter into the Falcon's rest.

You, oh warrior, were among the best.  
You stood proud and passed the test.  
Welcome now into the Falcon's rest.



Heavenly Father, we thank you for all who have arrived at this ceremony safely. We ask that you bless us and J.J.'s family with the knowledge and peace that comes from our cherished brotherhood and sisterhood. Bless the U.S. Capitol Police and keep them safe. Bless our military and the Defenders who have followed in our footsteps, and may this day be remembered as one of reverence, with dignity and respect for one of our own, Jacob J. Chestnut. In your name, we pray....AMEN.

Chief Sund and Wenling, please remain with us for a group photo, which will conclude our ceremony.

Thank you.





### **A GIFT FROM THE HEART OF AN ARTIST AND HIS SISTER**

What began as a memorial service in 1998, a visit to the Peace Officer's Memorial in 2007, and then our memorial service in 2019, eventually led months later to the presentation of a heartwarming tribute by an artist, Samuel Blackwell. He is a seven-year Navy Veteran who lives in Seattle, Washington. It was my honor to interview him via telephone to discuss his career as an artist and his inspiration for the painting.

Samuel created the painting as a way of healing during VA care for a service related brain tumor. He had been an art major in college when he enlisted in the Navy as an electronics technician and wanted to serve his country just as his father had during World War II and his brother who served in Vietnam. Samuel knew about Jacob J. Chestnut and could feel what was going on as the Chestnut family experienced the pain from when J.J. was killed. Samuel explained that he came from a very large family and that he was one of eight children. He had experienced loss and wanted to use his love, heart, all of his thoughts and skill as an artist to create a memorial for the family, from their perspective as victims and what they were going through. He knew that J.J. was a Vietnam Veteran as well as a Capitol Police Officer. As a fellow Veteran, Samuel wanted to create a gift from his heart. He sent the painting to his sister, requesting that she locate Wenling. His sister, the Reverend Edith Robinson is a minister in Maryland. She searched for information on the Internet, eventually finding the website for the Vietnam Security Police Association that showed our tribute to J.J. and the scholarship that we established in his name. She proved the everlasting value of our web site by contacting me via telephone, requesting that we arrange for a meeting with Wenling so that she could present her brother's painting to the Chestnut Family. Samuel's painting of Wenling and her family at the funeral and memorial service for J.J. recognizes the tragic loss of J.J. when he was assassinated while working an entry control point in the U.S. Capitol Building. Samuel



wanted to preserve the love between J.J. and Wenling, their children and extended family. Once you know the joy of meeting Wenling, William and her grandson, young Jacob, you can see and feel the pain of their loss as shown in the painting by Samuel. As some blessings are meant to be, Edith and Wenling live in the very same community in Maryland, which made their meeting easy and enjoyable, with the promise of friendship.



## MESSAGE FROM JANET MATTHEWS, CHAIR OF THE WARRIORS MEDAL OF VALOR COMMITTEE, TO THE 2021 RECIPIENTS OF THE WARRIORS MEDAL OF VALOR:

Congratulations to the all previous recipients of the Warriors Medal of Valor. Sarge would be proud to have you included in this special group. For the new members of the VSPA, be assured that Sarge would seek you out just so he could say, “Welcome Home, Welcome to the VSPA.” Not all of you had the chance to meet Sarge, though I hope you have heard about him. Alvin W. Matthews, MSgt, USAF retired, served in the 483<sup>rd</sup> Security Police Squadron at Cam Ranh Bay Air Base in the Republic of Vietnam from January 1971 to January 1972. He was an instructor at the Security Police Academy before he retired from the Air Force in 1980. He found the VSPA on the Internet and like many of you, he kind of watched from a distance before deciding to join or attend a reunion. It is an honor to say that he is Life Member #127. Sarge posted his final Guardmount on January 4, 2008, his 66th birthday. His resting place is plot number 111 at Cedar Hill Cemetery, Scottsboro, Alabama, a plot he specifically selected to honor his Brothers. We have some wonderful memories of our Sarge. I am so glad that he found the VSPA. He loved this association, he loved his Brothers, and I know he is proud of the continued commitment and growth. He would definitely tear up at the thought that you continue his dream of honoring his VSPA Brothers with this medal.

### *The Warriors Medal of Valor Request for Nominations*

Sarge and the Nominations Committee established the following criteria for consideration: The nominee must be a member in good standing of the VSPA plus any one or combination of the following:



- a. Valor (recognized or unrecognized by the Air Force) for service as an Air Policeman, Security Policeman or Augmentee in Vietnam or Thailand.
- b. Outstanding service to the members of the Vietnam Security Police Association. The Nominations Committee may consider the nomination of a civilian or member of the military, who is not a member of the VSPA, if they have provided outstanding and extraordinary service to the VSPA.
- c. Outstanding service to the military and/or Veterans.

You may submit the nomination by including the name and your justification for why this member deserves the medal. Please include as many **details** on their service as you can. Nominations must be submitted to me at the following email address: [janetmm62@gmail.com](mailto:janetmm62@gmail.com) no later than **August 13, 2021**. The Warriors Medal selection committee must have time to review the nominations, make the selections, engrave the medals and prepare the certificates. The medals and certificates will be presented at the VSPA Reunion Banquet in October. Thank you for your service and WELCOME HOME!

Janet Matthews, Daughter of VSPA Life Member #127



**Vietnam Security Police Association**  
**J.J. CHESTNUT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP**

<http://www.vspa.com/t-rip-chestnut-1998.htm>

Jim Lebowitz, Life Member #241, Bien Hoa AB – 66-68

**Deadline: October 1, 2021**

The VSPA has established a scholarship in memory of J. J. Chestnut. J.J. was a career Security Policeman who served in Vietnam and after completion of his military career became a member of the U.S. Capital Police. In 1998 while on duty he was killed by a deranged individual who shot several others. He was brandishing a weapon and was attempting to gain access to sensitive areas at the capital building. J.J. is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

All VSPA members, spouses, children, grandchildren, step-children/step grandchildren, and great grandchildren are eligible to compete for this scholarship. Normally one \$1,000.00 award is given annually. The award will be granted to those seeking education beyond the high school level and may include trade schools, community colleges, junior colleges or four-year college or university.

The deadline for submission of scholarship applications the first day of October each year. The basis for the award will be Grade Point Average (GPA), recommendations and the applicants response to one of the below listed topics.

VSPA members should request applications on behalf of applicants via the public bulletin board on the VSPA Web Site or by contacting Jim Lebowitz at 949-855-8901. Relatives of deceased members may also request applications.

Please complete the biographical data and recommendation. On a separate piece of paper, please respond to one of the following questions, in 500 words or less:

1. In what instances do you feel that the United States is justified in taking military action?

*Or*

2. Many people feel that the military today is alienated from the general population? How can this alienation be eliminated or prevented?

Submit the completed application via e-mail to [jimlebowitz@yahoo.com](mailto:jimlebowitz@yahoo.com) or regular mail to:

Jim Lebowitz  
2144 Ronda Granada  
Unit G  
Laguna Woods, CA 92637

# Vietnam Security Police Association J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship Application

## APPLICANT'S BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of VSPA member: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of school currently attending or last attended:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current degree/education level: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of school currently or planning on attending:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Grade point average: \_\_\_\_\_

- Note:**
1. Please attach a copy of your most current transcripts.
  2. Recommendation of school official, principal, university administrator, department chair, or guidance counselor.

Name of applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments concerning applicant's qualifications and potential:

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Title of person making recommendation

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





**ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
25<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL VSPA REUNION  
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2019**



1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 1010 hours by President Jerry Nelson
2. **MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR OUR DEPARTED BROTHERS INCLUDING:**
  - A. The 111 Air Policemen, Security Policemen and Augmentees who did not survive the war in Vietnam and Thailand.
  - B. All VSPA members listed at Life Member #111 which was established as a tribute to those who did not survive the war and those members of the VSPA who died as members in good standing.
3. **INVOCATION** – Chaplain Jeff Kerkhoff
4. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – VSPA 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Jaime Lleras
5. **INTRODUCTION OF ELECTED OFFICERS** by name, squadron and place of residence:
  - Jerry Nelson, President; LM #668; San Antonio, TX; Safeside Phu Cat 821CSPS, Phan Rang 821CSPS, Tuy Hoa 821CSPS, 69-70.
  - Larry Fleming, Vice President; LM #131; Glen Rose, TX; Nha Trang 1968-69.
  - Jaime Lleras, Second Vice President; LM#887; Surfside Beach, SC; Binh Thuy 1970.
  - Charlie Blood, Secretary; LM #372; Pineville, LA; Udorn K9 1970-71.
  - Richard Garcia, Treasurer; LM #82; Massapequa, NY; Phan Rang, 1969-70.
  - Steve Shelt, Historian; LM #157; Evans, Georgia; Pleiku 67-68.
  - Don Poss, Communications Director; LM #37; Hemet, CA; Da Nang K-9 1965-66.
  - Greg Cain, Past President; LM #62; West Seneca, NY; Binh Thuy 1967-68.
  - Steve Gattis, President Emeritus; LM #49; Glen Rose, TX; Cam Ranh Bay, 1968-69.

**DECLARATION OF A QUORUM BY PRESIDENT NELSON WITH ALL MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT.**

**PROCEDURAL CHANGE:** In accordance with Robert's Rules of Order, all reports presented by appointed staff and members of the Board of Directors will be approved by voice rather than a motion and second, unless the item requires an action to be taken. This change was suggested by members in the interest of saving time due to motions and seconds that were routinely required in the past that added unnecessary time in an already lengthy meeting.

6. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** of the previous annual business meeting. Rather than taking the time to read them during this meeting, we published the minutes in Guardmount.  
Yes by all.
7. **MEETING AGENDA – SPECIAL PRESENTATION** – The agenda has been updated and prioritized to allow for a special presentation by Retired Colonel Marty Strones who served at Bien Hoa Air Base during Tet 1968. His presentation will focus on his numerous return trips to Bien Hoa at the request of the government of Vietnam to assist in the location of mass graves that were created

after the attacks on Bien Hoa Air Base during Tet of 1968. THE PRESENTATION WAS OUTSTANDING!

## 8. OLD BUSINESS

### 8.1 REUNION SITE SELECTION FOR 2021:

- a. Sites are selected two years in advance so that planning by the VSPA and the host Security Forces Squadron can begin early and have the time necessary to adapt to active-duty operational requirements. The reunion site for this reunion in Washington, D.C. was selected in 2017, with Joint Base Andrews, Maryland as the Primary Base in the Washington, D.C. area. The alternate base was Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. **The confirmed dates are October 9 – 13, 2019.**
- b. As in the past, the 2020 reunion will be held in October, the Wednesday through Sunday before the Columbus Day holiday (which is always the second Monday in October). **The dates are October 7 – 11, 2020.** The sites selected at our 2018 Reunion were:
  1. **Primary Site for 2020 is Peterson AFB, Colorado Springs, Colorado** (flexibility requires that we include contact with other bases in the area: including Shriever, Buckley and the Air Force Academy). **The 2020 Reunion was postponed to 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The final 2021 location (due to OpTempo) will be the Air Force Academy.**
  2. **Secondary Site for 2020 was Kirtland AFB, Albuquerque, New Mexico.** That location is now VOID due to the Albuquerque Balloon Festival being held at the same time which impacts the availability of hotels.

We were aware of events that could cause potential scheduling conflict issues for all units in Colorado Springs (All Air Force event for ALL Air Force Commanding Generals and/or Security Forces Commanders), and Kirtland AFB (Albuquerque Balloon Festival that will impact hotel availability); therefore, a third site was selected by the membership for the 2020 Reunion.

3. **Backup Site for 2020 is Tinker AFB, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma**

**INFORMATION UPDATE ON COLORADO SPRINGS: The 2020 reunion was postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19. All contracts are in place. The following are the minutes from our meeting in 2019.**

**The Reunion BRAT has requests for proposals out to hotels in the area. We are in touch with Security Forces units in the area for confirmation of major events that remain possible and could affect the availability of Security Forces Squadron support. At this time, we have not ruled out Colorado Springs and continue to move forward with reunion planning.**

- c. The site selection process will be conducted by VSPA President Jerry Nelson, Vice President Larry Fleming, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Jaime Lleras, Secretary Charlie Blood and Treasurer, Richard Garcia.



- d. President Jerry Nelson explained past reunions and the bylaw requirement to choose by alternating regions in the CONUS: WEST, CENTRAL and EAST regions and **THAT WE MUST CHOOSE A LOCATION IN THE WEST CONUS FOR 2021 because we are in the EAST this year and will be in the CENTRAL region next year.**
- e. Vice President Larry Fleming explained the new modified base selection procedure where available bases were listed on a ballot that was placed in the Reunion Welcome Packets. The purpose of the ballot is to save time during the business meeting by allowing members in attendance to select their top three choices, then submit the ballot prior to the meeting so that the time devoted to site selection was limited to the top three choices from the six bases that were available on the ballot. The ballot is shown below:

**VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION REUNION  
OCTOBER 9-13, 2019  
2021 BASE SELECTION VOTING BALLET**

**Active Duty USAF/Joint Bases in the US Western Region**

In an effort to expedite our Business Meeting this year, the executive board has decided to start the base selection early by providing you with an opportunity to vote for your top three (3) choices of where you would like us to hold our 27<sup>th</sup> reunion in 2021.

Please write a #1 in front of your first choice; #2 on your second choice; and a #3 on your third choice.

Your ballot will be collected from the Hospitality Room on **THURSDAY EVENING**. Once the selection forms are collected, the executive board will tally up the votes and present the top three bases chosen at the business meeting, Saturday. **At that point we will all vote for a primary base.** The base with the second most votes will be our secondary base.

**WESTERN REGION BASES AVAILABLE - MILES FROM AIRPORT TO BASE**

<input type="checkbox"/>	JB Lewis-McCord, WA Seattle-Tacoma	37 miles (Small SF Sq. - Army runs the kennels)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Fairchild AFB, WA	Spokane 6 miles
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hill AFB, UT - <b><u>33 VOTES</u></b>	Ogden 16 miles / Salt Lake 31 miles
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Nellis AFB, NV - <b><u>32 VOTES</u></b>	Las Vegas 16 miles (2nd highest reunion cost)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Luke AFB, AZ - <b><u>21 VOTES</u></b>	Phoenix 27 miles
<input type="checkbox"/>	Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ	Tucson 8 miles

***NOTE: Bases not considered for various reasons are listed on the back of this form.***

## Western USAF/Joint Bases Not Available Due Travel Concerns of Cost \$\$\$, Distance, & Weather

- Beale AFB, CA** — Too far: Sacramento Airport 44 miles / San Francisco 141 miles)
- Edwards AFB, CA** — (Too far: Los Angeles Airport 96 miles)
- Los Angeles AFB, CA** — (Systems only, no air assets, minor SF presence)
- Travis AFB, CA** — (Too far: San Francisco Airport 61 miles / Sacramento 43 miles)
- Vandenberg AFB, CA** — (Too far: Santa Barbara Airport 55 miles / Los Angeles 160 miles)
- Creech AFB, NV** — (Too far: Las Vegas Airport 54 miles - No longer regional Training Ctr.)
- Malmstrom AFB, MT** — (Weather)
- Mountain Home AFB, ID** — (Weather)
- Eielson AFB, AK** — (Distance and Weather)
- Clear AFS, AK** — (Distance and Weather)
- JB Elmendorf-Richardson, AK** — (Distance and Weather)
- JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI** — (\$\$\$, Distance and Weather)

### PAST REUNION SITE INFORMATION FOR REFERENCE ONLY:

- |   |                      |      |  |
|---|----------------------|------|--|
| • | Atlanta, Georgia     | 1995 | East   |
| • | San Antonio, Texas   | 1996 | Central  |
| • | Pensacola, Florida   | 1997 | East   |
| • | Washington D.C.      | 1998 | East   |
| • | Las Vegas, Nevada    | 1999 | West   |
| • | San Antonio, Texas   | 2000 | Central  |
| • | Hampton, Virginia    | 2001 | East   |
| • | Dayton, Ohio         | 2002 | Central  |
| • | San Antonio, Texas   | 2003 | Central  |
| • | Tucson, Arizona      | 2004 | West   |
| • | Valdosta, Georgia    | 2005 | East   |
| • | Las Vegas, Nevada    | 2006 | West   |
| • | Washington D.C.      | 2007 | East   |
| • | Albuquerque, NM      | 2008 | West/Central                                       |
| • | Phoenix, Arizona     | 2009 | West   |
| • | San Antonio, Texas   | 2010 | Central  |
| • | Dayton, Ohio         | 2011 | Central  |
| • | Destin, Florida      | 2012 | East   |
| • | Charleston, SC       | 2013 | East   |
| • | Shreveport, LA       | 2014 | Central  |
| • | Las Vegas, NV        | 2015 | West   |
| • | Tampa, Florida       | 2016 | East   |
| • | San Antonio, Texas   | 2017 | Central  |
| • | Tucson, Arizona      | 2018 | West   |
| • | Washington, D.C.     | 2019 | East   |
| • | Colorado Springs, CO | 2020 | Central <b>(postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19)</b> |

**f. The Reunion Dates for 2021 are October 6 – 10.**



1. Primary Site for 2021 is Luke AFB, Phoenix, AZ (postponed to 2022 due to COVID-19. The 2021 reunion will be held at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs).
2. Secondary Site for 2021 is Hill AFB, Ogden, UT
3. Backup Site for 2021 is Nellis AFB, Las Vegas

## 8.2 ELECTION OF OFFICERS

THE NEXT ELECTION WILL BE HELD AT THE 2020 REUNION (postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19).

## 9. REPORTS BY THE PRESIDENT, BOARD MEMBERS, APPOINTED STAFF AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

**9.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT** by President Jerry Nelson – Numerous conference calls were conducted by the Board of Directors throughout the last year to conduct business and prepare for this reunion. Those calls were highly successful in the reunion planning process. A Board of Directors meeting was held at 0800 hours on Friday, October 11. We discussed items of concern to the Board and have included applicable items in the specific reports or under **NEW BUSINESS**.

**9.2 KENNEL MASTER:** Presented by Kennel Master Jim Stastny: Jim thanked the Board of Directors for allowing him to serve as the Kennel Master. However, with his coming move from Maryland to Tennessee he will be retiring after the next year so that he can focus on family. He will remain to assist the new Kennel Master, Ken Smerecki (Life Member #678 Pleiku and U-Tapao 68-69) in the transition. Jim presented information on:

**FEED THE DAWGS PROGRAM:** The program has been terminated as a VSPA Program due to the retirement of Jon Hemp who managed the program and traveled throughout the country to provide steaks for handlers and their families at their respective kennels. The program has resumed on a regional basis under the leadership of active duty military working dog handlers who have expressed interest in continuing the program.

**OLD DAWGS & PUPS REPORT** by Jerry Nelson on behalf of Bill Cummings who was unable to attend. Since 2005, VSPA members have donated \$29,005 to the program. The Old Dawgs and Pups Program has sent over \$167,211.00 in equipment, including toilet paper, dog beds, rectal thermometers, light bulbs and dog supplies to support handlers, dogs and kennels down range. The total amount of support sent down range includes a cumulative donation of over \$75,309.00 in equipment donated by the Leatherman Knife Company. Bill reported that the Old Dawgs and Pups Program was terminated as a VSPA Program as of August 2018 and resumed under the leadership of active duty military working dog handlers who have expressed interest in continuing the program.

**9.3 GUARDMOUNT REPORT** – By Steve Gattis on behalf of our Guardmount Publisher, Mike Kennedy, who was unable to attend due to his wife, Debbie, and her severe medical concerns that required multiple hospitalizations. Steve expressed the appreciation of Mike Kennedy for everyone who submitted stories and articles for Guardmount. If you use Facebook, Mike is a

*Wishing all members of VSPA & the Sisterhood  
a great time at this year's reunion!*



*Welcome Home!*

daily contributor with his Pledge of Allegiance. He recently posted the graphic that he designed to honor VSPA members who were able to attend the reunion.

Erlyce Pekas and Steve Gattis will continue as Assistant Editors to Mike Kennedy. We only print and mail copies of Guardmount to those who do not have a computer. The cost for printing makes it impossible to print and mail to everyone. Therefore, due to cost, for the last several years, all other members receive their issue of Guardmount in PDF format through our VSPA web site. Don Poss sends mass email

messages when Guardmount has been posted. If you do not have a computer, PLEASE UPDATE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS. If you do have a computer, you can receive Guardmount online. Please give Paul Shave your updated email address for our database. Steve asked the members to continue sending stories, photos and articles for publication in Guardmount because it is their opportunity to preserve a piece of their history.

**SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING CELL PHONES:** If you have a cell phone but do not have a computer, you can still access Guardmount via cell phone. Additionally, for those of you who might not be familiar with PDF files and the Internet, if your children or grandkids have a cell phone, they can get Guardmount online for you.

**THE COST OF PUBLISHING GUARDMOUNT:** The printing, publication and mailing of Guardmount for members who do not have computers has continued to be prohibitively expensive at approximately \$2,500 to publish one time. During the last year, we printed and mailed one issue for purposes of the election in 2018. We published on-line three times: (SPRING/SUMMER and FALL/WINTER). However, we did not print an issue this year due to database problems and updates that completely changed the mailing process. Those problems have been corrected so that we can print and mail in the future if the VSPA can tolerate the expense, which at the current rate, will exhaust the entire VSPA Treasury in ten years if we do nothing other than publish Guardmount. If we realistically look at all reunion expenses in addition to printing Guardmount, we will exhaust the funds within six years.

**DECISION:** The Board has thoroughly evaluated the cost of publishing Guardmount. It is the recommendation of the Board of Directors that we no longer print Guardmount due to the exceptional cost that often exceeds \$5,000 per year. However, letters will be sent to members who do not have computers with instructions on how to locate a copy of Guardmount on-line at a library, with their children and/or grandkids, or via cell phone link to the URL for the current issue of Guardmount. The letter will be similar to what members receive in the mass email that Don sends for Guardmount on-line.

Motion to Approve by Hector Ramos; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rich Gano; Approved.

- 9.4 TREASURER'S REPORT** by Richard Garcia. Report attached to the file copy of the minutes. Amount in checking account: \$5,404.81. Amount in the savings account \$50,595.77. TOTAL as of Sept. 30, 2019 = \$56,000.58.

**DONATIONS FOR CONSIDERATION:**



**9.4a THE SECURITY FORCES FOUNDATION WAS ESTABLISHED TO SUPPORT ACTIVE DUTY SECURITY FORCES PERSONNEL AND THEIR FAMILIES DURING A DISASTER OR OTHER EMERGENCY:** Examples include an airman whose home was destroyed by a tornado near Tinker AFB and another who was affected by a hurricane. In past years we have passed the hat at the banquet to either assist the local squadron or another entity like the Security Forces Academy. We changed that last year and rather than passing the hat at the banquet, members approved the donation of \$1,000 to the Security Forces Museum. President Jerry Nelson presented that check to John Probst of the Security Forces Foundation.

This year, your Board of Directors unanimously decided to pass the hat at this meeting rather than at the Awards Banquet. All money collected at this meeting will be supplemented with VSPA funds for a combined total of \$1,500 to be donated to the Security Forces Museum.

Motion to approve by J.B. Clark; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Van Digby; Approved.

**9.4b FUND TO ASSIST VSPA MEMBERS WHO CANNOT AFFORD TO ATTEND A REUNION:** VSPA Life Member Sam Williams and his employer have each donated \$500 FIVE years in a row. We now have a total of \$5,000 to hopefully assist a VSPA member in financial need so that they can attend a reunion. This year, we were able to identify four people who needed assistance. After initially accepting the offer of assistance with registration fees, two of them had to decline due to medical problems. The other two were able to attend this year and we are thankful for all that Sam has done to take care of our own.

If you know of someone who might need assistance, please contact any member of the Board of Directors with information regarding the situation.

**9.5 MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN'S REPORT** by Paul Shave. Report attached to the file copy of the minutes.

19 New members since last reunion  
993 Life members  
3282 Line items in the database, this includes active, inactive, sisterhood, associate and RIP  
1368 Active members

**9.6 BX SALES REPORT** by Van Digby.

The BX continues to do very well for the members of VSPA, because of the support for all members. We will continue to bring new things and many are suggestions of the members.

This year we now have a deal with the service ribbon stickers with some of the bases in Vietnam and Thailand. Jim Jerome made a suggestion that he would like to see the service ribbon with the SP Shield and we have now made that available.

Phil Carroll made a donation of more of the K-9 patches and also a new patch, Vietnam War Veteran-Air Force Security Police with ribbon and bar. Thank you Phil.

Joyce and I would like to thank one and all for your support. We look forward to serving you as your BX Managers for years to come.

We will open, after the meeting for a while for you to make your final purchases. We have a lot of leather vests. If you are interested, Joyce will be happy to work with you and give you a good deal.

We will close the BX at 1600 so we can dress for the banquet.

#### **9.7 WEB SITE REPORT** by Don Poss, Communications Director.

1. The conversion of the old database is complete.
  - a. PDF has plus (+) and minus (-) buttons to change the viewable font size, and is easily printable and searchable for names.
  - b. PDF currently is sorted by membership names; however, when completed will also sort bases, squadrons and tour years.
2. All stories and photos are currently posted in the old HTML format. I have begun to convert nearly 1,300 stories and over 10,000 photos to PDF. This is an ongoing process and slow.
3. I am searching for members that have “faded away” and are MIA for 2-4 years. Some have passed away and there are dozens of men with the same name. We need DOB to confirm a death.
4. Relatives do not always inform VSPA of a member’s death. Soon a mass email will be sent out asking members to join the confidential DOB list, which currently has approximately 100 members on it. When you pass away VSPA would like to find out and the location of the burial or disposition of remains.

Steve Gattis added the following to the web site report, reminding all present that our status as a Tax Exempt Military Organization of War Veterans requires that we follow IRS Rules and Regulations regarding the prohibition of political activity in support of or against specific candidates for office. The VSPA does not pay income tax and all donations to the VSPA are tax exempt for donors. Our exempt status is the equivalent of the government and the public paying us to conduct our business on behalf of our membership. We cannot receive the benefit of tax exemption if we engage in political activity as an organization. Therefore, the VSPA and other organizations like the VVA cannot advocate for or against candidates for political office, especially during highly contested elections or the current volatile political climate. The VSPA must demonstrate compliance by removing political comments from our bulletin boards when members attempt to organize votes or begin speaking for or against candidates. Members are free to engage in whatever political activity they desire as long as it is not in conjunction with the VSPA and our tax exempt activities which include the web site, the bulletin boards and the VSPA private group on Facebook.

#### **9.8 HISTORIAN’S REPORT** by Steve Shelt. Please send copies of your assignment orders, promotion orders, after-action reports, news articles, old issues of Stars and Stripes, anything that might help in research or finding old friends.



**9.9 SECURITY FORCES MUSEUM UPDATE:** Presented by Jerry Nelson, member of the Board of Directors of the Security Forces Museum Foundation. Ken Neal is unable to attend. He is also a VSPA representative on the Board of Directors for the Museum and the Vice President of the Security Forces Museum Foundation Board of Directors.

1. Jerry presented information regarding the Museum Foundation's efforts to upgrade displays in various area of the museum, including the Hall of Honor area and the very successful event for the induction of VSPA Member, BG Richard Coleman.
2. The museum has expended a great deal of money for new display cases. They are currently replacing and remodeling the Southeast Asia Section and the Safeside Section.
3. There will be an electronic phone app that can be installed on cell phones that will be keyed to display information for each display in the museum. The new system will promote learning and enhance the museum experience.
4. Jerry also reported that he executed a VSPA membership approved agreement with the museum curator to loan the VSPA Guidons to the museum - NOT DONATE. The loan consists of our squadron Guidon flags for the squadrons that served in Vietnam and Thailand for display inside the Southeast Asia section of the museum. The flags are on loan only and NOT donated to the museum, making them retrievable for any VSPA event.

All guidons are here at this reunion for photos. However, they were installed and displayed in the museum on hidden dowels from the ceiling for the museum's 40th anniversary and AFSFA Reunion in September. The previously missing guidons have been located by Kelly Bateman.

1. The hat was passed and \$933.00 was raised for the museum.

**9.10 SAFESIDE LIAISON REPORT:** Presented by Safeside Liaison David Pierson: Safeside will have its reunion Nov. 7-9 at Moody AFB, Georgia. There will be a golf tournament on Nov. 6. The guest speaker for the reunion will be General Ronald Fogelman (retired) the former Air Force Chief of Staff who authorized and was present at the ceremony for the creation of the 820<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Base Defense Group.

**9.11 SERVICE OFFICER'S REPORT** – By Jaime Lleras. Information was presented regarding a VSPA Resolution in support of updating the date requirements for inclusion of certain illnesses due to Agent Orange. Refer to the attached resolution. The resolution will be sent to sponsoring members of Congress. The bill numbers are: House of Representatives HR-566 with 19 sponsors. Senate S-332 has three sponsors.

Motion by: Steve Flamm; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rick Gano; Approved.

**9.12 SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT** by Rick Gano who has assisted Committee Chairman Jim Lebowitz in the past. Jim was unable to attend this year due to back surgery.

Please encourage your children, grand children and great grandchildren to apply. The \$1,000 Annual J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship Program awarded two scholarships in 2018 based upon the two "best ever" applications.

This year we received two applications that were reviewed by Rick Gano and 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Jaime Lleras who was appointed by President Jerry Nelson to assist with the J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarships. The Scholarship Committee recommends that the J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship of \$1,000 be awarded to both applicants:

Addison Shelt and Hayley McKinney

## 10. NEW BUSINESS

**10.1 REUNION REGISTRATIONS: by Jerry Nelson.** This year, the Reunion BRAT and your VSPA Board of Directors experienced severe impact on planning and preparation by late and incomplete registrations which were due on September 2.

**10.1a** The impact on the Reunion BRAT is founded in the VSPA requirement that she prepare the Entry Authorization List that we submit to the base. This year, Andrews AFB needed that list earlier than normal so that they could check each name for valid entry. That database also affected her ability to create name badges, work with the hotel on meal requirements, room availability, handle last minute additions, assist members with cancellations due to medical issues, and schedule buses on contract for various events based upon the number of participants that varied consistently up until the last few days. The incomplete registrations required the Reunion BRAT to track down members for additional information that was either omitted, or the entire Entry Authorization Data Entry Form was not sent to the Reunion BRAT. In many cases, Board members had to do the tracking and contacting of members.

**10.1b** The impact on the VSPA Board and Reunion Planning Committee consisted of delaying plans with the base, including the meal at the base, working with outside entities who had approval authority over our ability to visit (like the U.S. Capitol, Arlington National Cemetery and Joint Base Andrews), and a variety of other problems that we had to resolve on behalf of our members by contacting them for the Reunion BRAT.

**THIS PROBLEM MUST BE CORRECTED FOR ALL FUTURE REUNIONS DUE TO THE LAST MINUTE WORKLOAD FOR ALL INVOLVED WITH PLANNING AND COORDINATING A SUCCESSFUL REUNION. THEREFORE WE ARE IMPLEMENTING AN EARLY BIRD CREDIT ON YOUR REGISTRATIONS OF \$25 IF YOU SUBMIT BY A SPECIFIC DATE. AFTER THAT DATE, THE FEE WILL INCREASE BY \$25. THIS WAS APPROVED BY ACCLIMATION OF ALL ATTENDEES.**

**10.2 REUNION SURVEY by Larry Fleming.** Larry presented information regarding the surveys that were placed in the Reunion Welcome Packets. It is critical that we receive these surveys. The surveys from the 2018 Reunion helped a great deal in the planning for this reunion.

INPUT REGARDING THIS REUNION: Vice President Larry Fleming requested members of the Board report on comments that they have heard regarding the reunion.

All comments from VSPA members have been very positive.

1. Food in the hotel for non-reunion related meals have been very good but expensive. The Reception Dinner food was excellent.

2. The Reception Dinner Room had too many columns that blocked vision. The banquet will be in a different, larger and open room.
3. There was some minor grumbling regarding too much walking, although those were events requested by members with two of them being optional.

**10.3 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS** – There are no candidates this year.

**11. AFFIRMATION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** The following is a legal requirement as a Tax Exempt entity and a major requirement for banking purposes with the authorization to sign checks for the Association during the coming year. This information must be included in the minutes of the annual business meeting.

**11.1 THE OFFICERS ARE:**

- President Jerry Nelson (authorized to sign checks)
- Vice President Larry Fleming
- Second Vice President Jaime Lleras
- Treasurer Richard Garcia (authorized to sign checks)
- Secretary Charlie Blood
- Historian Steve Shelt
- Past President Gregory J. Cain (authorized to sign checks)
- President Emeritus Steve Gattis
- Communications Director Don L. Poss

**11.2 AFFIRMATION OF APPOINTED POSITIONS** – By VSPA President Jerry Nelson: The existing appointed positions are hereby re-appointed for the next year, subject to future changes per the Constitution & By-Laws.

**12. INFORMATION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER:**

**12.1 Dennis Evans reported that the Texas Veterans Commission has a free book on the war in Vietnam and Thailand; however, you must appear in person at the Commission to receive the book.**

**13. EVENTS BEING HELD WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS:**

**13.1 Safeside Reunion at Moody AFB, Georgia - November, 6 – 9, 2019.**

**14. REMINDERS**

**14.1** The Awards banquet this evening will begin with a with a no-host bar at 1700, posting of the colors at 1800, followed by dinner, guest speaker, awards and raffles. ALL BANQUET SEATING COORDINATORS FOR THE VARIOUS BASES MUST MEET WITH THE REUNION BRAT AT 1630 FOR TABLE ORGANIZATION. WHEN THE TABLES ARE READY, THE DOORS WILL BE OPENED. PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO ENTER THE ROOM AND TAKE SEATS UNTIL THAT PROCESS HAS BEEN COMPLETED.



14.2 Reminder that a Worship Service will be conducted at 0800 Sunday by Chaplain Jeff Kerkhoff.

14.3 Reminder that our annual Memorial for our 111 begins at 0900 Sunday. The names of all Air Policemen, Security Policemen and Augmentees who did not survive the war in Vietnam and Thailand will be read at that time.

**15. CLOSING OF THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AT 12:45 hours.**

**MINUTES BY:**

**APPROVED BY:**

**Charlie Blood, Secretary**

**Jerry Nelson, President**



**CHARLIE FLIGHT  
3RD SPS  
BIEN HOA AB, R.V.N.  
JUNE 1970**

3rd SPS Charlie Flight Bien Hoa Air Base – Credit Robert “Deke” Decubellis



## FROM YOUR SERVICE OFFICER

Jaime A. Lleras, Life Member #887, Binh Thuy AB – 1970



### Congress Recently Expanded List of Presumptive Conditions Associated with Agent Orange – January 15, 2021

On January 1, 2021, Congress voted to authorize the expansion of the presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange. This expansion allows for bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinson's-like symptoms to be added to the presumptive list, thereby lowering the threshold required for veterans with these conditions to be found to have them service-connected. While the bill authorizing the expansion has become law, the Department of Veterans Affairs will need time to finalize internal regulations. While this takes place, veterans and their families interested in applying under the expanded list should begin locating copies of their medical records. If you're a Vietnam Veteran or the family member of one and would like to submit a new claim regarding any of the existing or the newly added conditions, please contact your local Disabled American Veterans (DAV) or American Legion Service Officer.

To review the list of presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange go to:  
<https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardous-materials-exposure/agent-orange/>

#### **HR 7105 – Removal of manifestation period required for presumptions of service connection for certain diseases associated with exposure to certain herbicide agents.**

SEC. 2011. COMPTROLLER GENERAL BRIEFING AND REPORT ON REPEALING MANIFESTATION PERIOD FOR PRESUMPTIONS OF SERVICE CONNECTION FOR CERTAIN DISEASES ASSOCIATED WITH EXPOSURE TO CERTAIN HERBICIDE AGENTS.

(a) In GENERAL. – Not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall provide to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Veterans' Affairs of the House of Representatives a briefing on preliminary observations of the Comptroller General, and not later than 240 days after the date of such briefing, provide such committees a briefing and submit to such committees a final report, on the efforts of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide benefits, including compensation and health care, to veterans-

1. who during active military, naval, or air service, served in the Republic of Vietnam during the period beginning on January 9, 1962, and ending on May 7, 1975; and
2. in whom chloracne, porphyria cutanea tarda, or acute or subacute peripheral neuropathy have manifested.

(b) ELEMENTS. – The report required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) A description of how the Secretary establishes a service connection for a disease described in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) manifesting in veterans, including the number of veterans described in paragraph (1) of such subsection who have filed a claim for a benefit associated with a disease described in paragraph (2) of such subsection.

(2) A description of how claims adjudicators of the Department of Veterans Affairs determine service connection for a disease described in subparagraph (C) or (E) of section 1116(a)(2) of title 38, United States Code, when documentation proving the presence of the disease during the manifestation period set forth in such subparagraphs for the disease is not available.

(3) A description of the expected effect of repealing the manifestation period from such subparagraphs,

including the expected effect on the number of claims for benefits the Department will receive, an estimate of the cost to the Department of such repeal, and a review of the scientific evidence regarding such repeal.

(4) A review of all claims submitted to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of such title that are associated with a disease described in subsection (a)(2), including the type of proof presented to establish a service connection for the manifestation of the disease based on exposure to an herbicide agent.

(5) Recommendations on how the Department can better adjudicate claims for benefits, including compensation, submitted to the Department that are associated with a disease described in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) for veterans described in paragraph (1) of such subsection.

(6) An assessment of such other areas as the Comptroller General considers appropriate to study.

**Jaime A. Lleras, VSPA Service Officer**



Cartoon by VSPA Member Larry Sutherland - RIP 2002



**NOTE:** All Officers and Staff are unpaid VSPA members who volunteer to serve their brothers in the association. Officers were elected in 2018 for a two-year term and extended for one year due to COVID-19. Staff members were appointed to assist and advise the officers of the association as needed.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

**President:** Jerry Nelson; Safeside Phan Rang, Phu Cat, Tuy Hoa 69-70; [jrnel1423@aol.com](mailto:jrnel1423@aol.com); 210-273-4777  
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**Wash "The Wall" In Washington D.C. Coordinator:** Gary Jones (See WEB QRT Troubleshooter Above)

## **VSPA SISTERHOOD:**

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**Correspondence Secretary:** Jean Logan; [jeanwattlogan@aol.com](mailto:jeanwattlogan@aol.com); 530-790-7482

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## **DONATIONS AND ESTATE PLANNING BEQUESTS TO THE VSPA**

The VSPA is an IRS recognized 501(c)(19) military association whose membership is over 95% War Veteran. Therefore, all donations are tax deductible. Donations, Employer Matching Funds and Estate Planning are an essential part of our lives that provide for our families as well as the entities that have meaning in our lives. Donations and Employer Matching Funds provide resources to support our VSPA daily activities and annual operations. Planned giving in the form of a bequest to the VSPA in your will or trust ensures the future of our mission while also expressing your commitment to that mission and our brotherhood. Because the VSPA is a tax-exempt charitable association, your bequest may also reduce estate taxes. As an alternative, you may also make a gift that may avoid probate by naming the VSPA as a beneficiary on an IRA, insurance policy, other retirement plans or securities.

When making your donation or bequest, you may designate that the funds be used by our general fund in support of our mission, or you may specifically designate that the funds be used by one of our programs like the Jacob J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship Fund to provide educational scholarships to our members and their descendants, or to assist a member in need. You and your employer can make the arrangements for your donation and their matching donation by sending your donations in a check made payable to the Vietnam Security Police Association.

Your attorney or financial planner can make the arrangements for your estate-planning bequest. Our Treasurer, Richard Garcia, will provide you, your employer, and/or your estate with a letter of acknowledgement for tax purposes.

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### **IN-COUNTRY VET**



**WHERE WAS I DURING WOODSTOCK?...**

### **IN-COUNTRY VET**



**SOME THINGS JUST TAKE TIME!**

In-Country Cartoons are printed by permission of the creator Phil Fehrenbacher, Army Veteran in Vietnam, 68-69. His cartoons depict the experiences and memories of veterans who served in South Vietnam. We may not have experienced all of the situations depicted, we can all relate to the memories.





Bien Hoa Air Base – Sunrise on the East Perimeter (Mike Kennedy, 3<sup>rd</sup> SPS – 69-70)



Bien Hoa Air Base – Twinkle III Flare over the East Perimeter (Mike Kennedy, 3<sup>rd</sup> SPS – 69-70)