

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Greg Cain, Life Member #62
Binh Thuy 67-68

The reunion is nearly upon us in Las Vegas. The host hotel is the Stratosphere, located at 2000 Las Vegas Blvd (on the Strip) during October 7-11, 2015. Additional information and the agenda are posted on the website. The Flyer and Registration Forms also follow this article. We are looking forward to seeing our old friends and greeting new ones. Get your reservations ASAP!

Send in your registration form and entry authorization for Nellis AFB, then reach out to contact your Brothers and Sisters to make arrangements to have some personal time together at the reunion. Catch up on news and share memories.

Some VSPA members in the Central and Northeast states had a mini-reunion at Wright Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio the weekend of (4/23 to 4/26/15). I would urge you to try and set up a mini-reunion with the people in your area. It helps to keep in touch, to advance news of events in your area to attend or contribute to, as well as checking up on each other.

If there are active veterans groups in your area, try to establish contact with them and get involved in community efforts to help each other. Be aware of what's going on with Bills in Washington D.C. regarding Agent Orange and the registry for children of Agent Orange victims. These topics can be found easily on the internet.

Homeless Veterans are still in an unacceptable situation! We have to keep pressure on the government. Here in Buffalo, NY, my best friend (a Marine grunt) and I dreamed up an event to help the cause. Three years ago, returning from a vacation, we formed the web site www.kitesforvets.com. The event encouraged people to "Come Fly a Kite for Homeless Veterans". We formed a committee, obtained local business donations to support it, and received donations of kites and food. We reserved a park on the Niagara River with a fairly steady breeze and invited the public to bring their kids and grandkids to fly free kites. We sold hot dogs, burgers and pop and accepted donations. What a great time! The event has grown better each year and has raised thousands of dollars. The money was given to three Veteran's coalition groups who put the money to very good use. You can do it too. See me or call for information.

I wish you all the very best. Be well!



Vietnam Security Police Association

21st Annual Reunion

Las Vegas – **October 7-11, 2015**

Nellis AFB, Nevada

The reunion will be held at the Stratosphere Hotel, Casino & Tower, 2000 Las Vegas Boulevard South, Las Vegas, NV 89104-2597. **The Stratosphere is located on the Strip.** The contract room rate varies with \$50 per night Sunday through Thursday, \$95 Friday and \$105 Saturday, plus taxes and a resort fee of \$17.99 per night. The \$50 room rate is good for three days before and three days after the reunion. You will have to specify your choice of a smoking or non-smoking room. The resort fee includes Admission to the Stratosphere Tower, Admission to the Fitness Center, Free in room WIFI access for three devices, 20% discount on all services at the Roni Josef Spa and Salon, ALL DAY thrill ride pass for \$25 (a savings of \$9) and 2-for-1 tickets to see the PIN UP Show.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS: Call Group Reservations at 1-800-998-6937 **between 0700 and 2200** (Pacific Time) and refer to our Group: **Vietnam Security Police Association 2015** and/or the **GROUP CODE: C-VSPA**. They will ask for a credit card and charge \$50 plus tax for the first night at the time you make the reservation. You must provide 72 hour notice of cancellation prior to your check-in date to receive a full refund. If you encounter any difficulty with hotel reservations, reserve the room, obtain the confirmation number, contact the Reunion BRAT at 1-360-663-2521, explain the problem and they will correct it for you. **Check-in time is 3:00 PM and check-out time is 11:00 noon.** Guests arriving before 4:00PM will be accommodated as rooms become available. ***The room rate is locked in for us, but there will be a deadline of 9/07/2015. After that date, rooms will be space available only.***

AIRPORT INFORMATION: Book your flight to “McCarran International Airport” (airport code: **LAS**) in Las Vegas, Nevada.

REUNION REGISTRATION: The registration fee will be **\$185 per person**, which is only \$20 more than our 2006 reunion in Las Vegas when we were not on the Strip. PLEASE USE THE REGISTRATION FORM and the NELLIS AFB Entry Authorization Request when you register to attend.

AGENDA (generally accurate, but this is still subject to change due to base operational requirements):

- Reception dinner buffet, Wednesday evening, October 7th
- VSPA business Meeting, Thursday morning, October 8th (afternoon and evening open)
- VSPA Sisterhood gathering of wives and companions, Thursday morning, October 8th (afternoon/evening open)
- VSPA Board of Directors meeting, Thursday, October 8th (time to be determined)
- Nellis AFB, 99th SFS Demos, briefing and BBQ with the troops, Thunderbird Museum, Threat Center “Petting Zoo” Friday, October 9th (evening open)
- Feed the Dawgs at the 99th SFS Kennels, VSPA K9 with the 99th handlers and their families, Saturday 1100, October 10th (morning and afternoon open if you are not attending Feed the Dawgs)
- Banquet dinner with guest speaker, USAF TOP COP, BG Jamerson, awards and raffle, Saturday evening, October 10th
- Memorial service, Sunday morning, October 11th
- Hospitality Suite stocked with snacks & beverages will be open as much of the time as possible.
- VSPA BX Store will be open as much as possible.

If you have a question or need some more info about this reunion, please contact VSPA President Greg Cain gjcain@roadrunner.com or VSPA Sisterhood President Sheila Cain smgervase@yahoo.com or, call them at (716) 771-1157. We hope to see you at this 21th Annual VSPA Reunion!

“We Take Care of Our Own!”



VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION



REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
Nellis Air Force Base
Las Vegas, Nevada
October 7-11, 2015

NAME _____

RVN or Thai base _____ Squadron _____ Years 19 _____ to 19 _____
(Do not list bases outside of Vietnam or Thailand)

RVN or Thai base _____ Squadron _____ Years 19 _____ to 19 _____

Home Address _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Name(s) of your guests(s) _____

Banquet meal selection: BEEF _____ CHICKEN _____ VEGETARIAN _____

List any special needs: _____

In case of emergency, notify: _____

Is this your first VSPA Reunion? YES: _____ NO: _____

REGISTRATION FEES

Are your annual VSPA dues current? Dues Renewals Only\$15 = \$ _____
(Not for new members - to join the VSPA, please see "VSPA Membership" on the instructions page).

Number of persons attending the Reunion including you # _____ X \$185 = \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED = \$ _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 7, 2015

SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS, AND MADE PAYABLE TO:

THE REUNION BRAT
16817 Mountainside Drive East
Greenwater, WA 98022
(360) 663-2521 TheReunionBRAT@hotmail.com

We must also have your complete full name as it appears on your state driver's license or military ID card so that you can be allowed onto NELLIS AFB with our VSPA Entry Authority List.

A Confirmation of Registration and an Itinerary will be mailed to you by September 15, 2015. A \$20 per person cancellation fee will apply to all cancellations received within 30 days of the event. Cancellations received within 10 days of the event will be non-refundable. Call Group Reservations at the Stratosphere Hotel 1-800-998-6937 no later than September 7, 2015 to make your hotel reservations. You must mention that you are with the Vietnam Security Police Association 2015 **GROUP CODE: C-VSPA** to receive your group room rates. The room rate is available three days before and after the reunion should you choose to extend your stay. Parking is FREE (refer to Reunion Flyer for additional information).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE REGISTRATION FORM

1. The information that you provide on this form is critical for a successful reunion. All name and base information will be placed on your reunion identification badge. Guests will also receive reunion identification. The reunion ID will serve as your identification throughout the reunion and must be worn, especially while we are in all military or government facilities.
2. **PLEASE PRINT** or type all information **clearly**. Do not use abbreviations on any portion of the registration form.
3. **RVN OR THAI BASE INFORMATION**: Please list only those bases where you served in Vietnam or Thailand. When listing bases, **do not abbreviate**. When listing squadrons, please indicate Air Police, Security Police, or specific detachments. The information will be used on your reunion ID.
4. **HOME ADDRESS and MAILING ADDRESS**: This is where we will mail your confirmation.
5. **NELLIS AFB ENTRY ACCESS FORM**: Please make sure we have your full name as it appears on your ID card (**military ID or Driver's License**) for yourself and all guests. This information is MANDATORY for access to Nellis AFB. **YOU WILL NOT BE ALLOWED ON BASE IF YOU DO NOT PROVIDE THIS INFORMATION.**
6. **TELEPHONE AND EMAIL ADDRESS**: Your contact information is vital to a successful reunion. You will also receive a copy of this roster upon arrival at the hotel.
7. **NAMES OF YOUR GUESTS**: Please provide the first name, middle initial and last name of your guest(s) on the Registration Form as it appears on the ID (**military ID or Driver's License**) they will be using to get on Nellis AFB as this information will be our VSPA Entry Access List.
8. **RENEWAL OF ANNUAL DUES**: VSPA members only - you can renew your dues at the time of registration if they are not current. VSPA membership must be current in order to attend the reunion or bring a guest.
9. **VSPA MEMBERSHIP**: If you are not a member of the Vietnam Security Police Association, please do not send \$15 with this registration form. For information on how to become a member, contact Paul Shave at 505-831-9401 or email him: Paul_Shave@hotmail.com. You'll have to submit a completed application form and a DD-214 showing service in the USAF as an Air Policeman, Security Policeman or an Augmentee in Vietnam or Thailand 1958 to 1976, and a discharge under honorable conditions. \$15 dues must be sent in with your application.
10. **REUNION COST**: The registration fee is \$185.00 per person.



Guest List Procedures

99th Security Forces Squadron

Nellis AFB, Nevada

SUBJECT: Request for Visitor Access

1. Request a Visitor Access Pass for the following individual(s) for entry to the installation: The Vietnam Security Police Association will be visiting Security Forces facilities and Military Working Dog (MWD) training areas from October 7 - 11, 2015.

Please follow the example below:

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

<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
------------------------------	--------------------	------------------------------	---------------------

<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
------------------------------	--------------------	------------------------------	---------------------

<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
------------------------------	--------------------	------------------------------	---------------------

<u>Last Name, First Name</u>	<u>Telephone #</u>	<u>State/Driver License#</u>	<u>DOB mm/dd/yy</u>
------------------------------	--------------------	------------------------------	---------------------

2. I will inform my visitors that they must have current proof of insurance, proof of registration and a current/valid driver's license. Additionally, they were briefed that while on this installation all personnel and the property under their control is subject to search.

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

AUTHORITY: 10 U.S.C. 8012, 44 U.S.C. 3101.

PRINCIPLE PURPOSE: The date of birth is used for further identification of the individual and for retrieving information from files. Routine use could include disclosure to other investigatory authorities.

DISCLOSURE IS VOLUNTARY: Failure to provide the information to include date of birth will result in an individual being unable to gain entry onto NELLIS AFB.

**A NEW CHALLENGE COIN
WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE REUNION
IN LAS VEGAS!**



The Brotherhood & Sisterhood Challenge Coin honors the brotherhood that we share as members who served as USAF Air Police, Security Police and augmentees in Vietnam and Thailand between the years 1958 and 1976. The coin shows the colors of the Vietnam Service Ribbon and the flag of Thailand, the updated years of service for membership eligibility (1958 thru 1976), our motto and the shield logo of the VSPA. The

reverse side of the coin honors the VSPA Sisterhood with their logo and their motto. This coin not only honors the Sisterhood for the first time in our history, it also reflects our awareness and thanks for all that they do for us. The wives and family members who take care of us deserve this honor as reflected in comments from so many of our members. The following quote from Jim Costello typifies the comments that we hear from our members:

“Our heartfelt thanks to you, and the Sisterhood for the Sisterhood cookbook, the beautiful purse [from Sherry Nelson], and especially the love and support you send along with it. Rosemary was very happy. The cookbook is exceptionally done from cover to cover. I have already looked at the recipes, and am anxious to start preparing all of them.

I also read the forward the ladies had written. It evoked many memories, and emotions for me. I thank God for blessing my Brothers with such wonderfully loving wives and families throughout these many years. With all we have put them through they have remained at our sides. Steadfast and strong with little or no understanding of what was happening during the long nights when words were not needed. Simply, a touch of a hand was comfort enough during the times they cried with us, and while we were lost in our thoughts of long ago. The Sisterhood of the VSPA has been there for us.

My Brothers and I share the bonds of a war in a far away land. The Sisterhood also shares the same bonds as we the Brotherhood. The battles and memories came home with us, and were laid upon your shoulders. You have quietly fought and sacrificed with the war we brought home to you, whether already married, or after. If not for the Sisterhood, our association would not be what it is today. My heartfelt thanks to all the ladies, none of us would have made it this far without you. God Bless!”

The Brotherhood & Sisterhood Challenge Coin is in production and will not be available until the reunion. It has been completely paid for through donations from two of our members and will be sold as a fund raiser for our association. After the reunion, remaining coins will be available through the BX.

RECIPES & MEMORIES

THE VSPA SISTERHOOD COOKBOOK

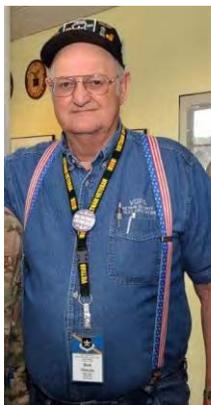


Our fundraising cookbook was delivered last year to members at the 20th Anniversary Reunion in Shreveport. 219 copies of the cookbook were sold at the reunion. Remaining copies are still available in the VSPA BX for \$15 plus \$5 shipping. Better yet, buy one at this year's reunion in Las Vegas for \$15 and avoid the shipping cost.

Recipes & Memories is dedicated with thanks to the men we love and contains the recipes they enjoy. I send my heartfelt thanks to all who participated by submitting 340 recipes and some great photographs. You have contributed to the preservation of our history and a fund raising effort that will benefit the members and programs of the Vietnam Security Police Association. I also extend my personal thanks to the members of the VSPA Sisterhood for the support that we provide to each other so that we may continue *Taking Care of Those Who Take Care of Their Own*.

Lise Gattis, Editor of the Sisterhood Cookbook, Member of the VSPA Sisterhood

RECIPIENTS OF THE WARRIORS MEDAL OF VALOR, 2014



Bud Owens - Life Member #56 – For service to Veterans and the VSPA. He served at Binh Thuy Air Base in 1966-67 and had been the VSPA Service Officer for several years, providing assistance to our members who need advice regarding filing a claim with the Veteran's Administration. Bud is the Past Department Commander of the DAV for the State of New Hampshire. When he is able to attend reunions with his wife, Bette, he provides current information at the business meeting regarding the VA and the claims process as well as recent updates to laws affecting Veterans benefits. He received the Mike Daoust Bayonet Award in 2008. He and Bette received the Safeside Above and Beyond Award in 2010. Bud and Bette are members of the Pease Greeters and have personally greeted over 600 flights of military personnel

who are deploying to or returning from the war zones in and around Southwest Asia. He has identified Security Forces Defenders in transit and, on behalf of the VSPA, presented VSPA Challenge Coins to each Defender as they passed through the old Pease Air Force Base enroute to defend our air bases.



Dave Pierson - Life Member #299: For service to Veterans and the VSPA. Dave served as a Security Policeman in Operation Safeside at Binh Thuy Air Base while assigned to the 821st Combat Security Police Squadron. He has maintained a sustained effort to support veterans and their families in the Carson City, NV area. In 2007, he helped organize and carry out a program to honor Nevada's Fallen Veterans and their families. The event, called, "You Can't Say No, You Gotta Go" provided support to Nevada's

Fallen Veterans. The event raised \$70,123 in donations and auction proceeds. He coordinated with the Nevada Air National Guard to arrange a Huey helicopter for display and tours. The purpose of the event was to ensure that Nevada's Fallen Veteran's families would not lose utilities nor have other vital services disconnected. If a fallen Veteran's family needs money for gas, electric, water or telephone bills, they only have to make one phone call and a check is forwarded. Dave is a life member of the VVA and was heavily involved when the Vietnam Traveling Wall was in Carson City in 2012. He was on the set-up committee, served as a Wall Guard and manned the information booth. The event was a huge success and his activities during that week were documented with an article in VSPA's Guardmount. Dave served as a member of the Safeside Association's Board of Directors, representing his own unit, the 821st Combat Security Police Squadron. According to his peers in Safeside, he helped guide the Association, ensuring their success with his direct involvement. His community involvement is also outstanding. He is a Docent for the Nevada State Museum in Carson City and is a Legislative Guide in the State Capitol. He also participates in Veteran's Day events at local elementary schools each year. As with many of our Vietnam veterans, he never received the deserved recognition when he returned from the conflict. Dave is a proud, patriotic American veteran, whose service to the Vietnam Security Police Association, the Safeside Association, his local community and the State of Nevada is indicative of his character and dedication. He has certainly

distinguished himself in service to fellow veterans and will continue to do all that is humanly possible to make a difference in the lives of those who served our nation. He is the current Safeside Membership Liaison for the VSPA and truly lives up to the motto, "We Take Care of Our Own."



Richard Garcia - Life Member #82: For Service to Veterans and the VSPA. He enlisted in the Air Force in 1967. After training at Lackland, he was assigned to FE Warren AFB, Wyoming in missiles. He served in heavy weapons at Phan Rang AB RVN in 1969-70. He was discharged in 1971 while serving in Bangor, Maine. He has provided distinguished service to the VSPA since 2001 and has been the VSPA Treasurer since 2008, managing all funds, reimbursements and accounts payable to

vendors. He was an outstanding asset to Hector Ramos when he was Vice President of the VSPA, always ready to take on a task. He was an essential committee member for planning the 2007 DC Parade. He received the Mike Daoust Bayonet Award in 2011 for his daily work on behalf of the VSPA. He personally manages the donation of cash funds at each reunion that are collected from members as a donation to the host squadron to support Defenders and their families. He is also an active member of VVA Chapter 779 and the American Legion. He recently retired from his position as an accountant with the Episcopal Church where he was the billing & collections manager a monthly cash flow of \$20 MILLION DOLLARS so that he could continue serving as our unpaid, volunteer Treasurer.



Van Digby - Life Member #59: For service to Veterans and the VSPA. He joined the Air Force as an Air Policeman in 1964. He served at Kirtland AFB then Phan Rang AB, 1967 - 68. After Vietnam, he was assigned to Beale AFB in Marysville, California for six months and then discharged in September, 1968. He worked for General Motors Bay City for 34 years. His military service continues to this day as a member of the Veterans Council Color Guard, participating in over 400 military funerals in different

capacities, honoring those who have served our country. He takes great pride in folding the flag. He then presents it to a family member of the deceased Veteran, which is sometimes very difficult because he often knows the family. He is also the Color Guard Commander of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 492. The color guard attends Memorial Day Ceremonies in many places and participates in parades. Recently, he had the honor of participating in the opening and closing ceremonies for the traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall.

He was Past President Mike Daoust's neighbor. When Mike passed away in November of 2002, Van went next door and retrieved the entire VSPA BX, moved it to his basement and took on the responsibility of managing the BX for the VSPA. He manages the BX on a year-

round basis from his own home and the basement of his daughter's home. He and his wife, Joyce, pack the entire BX and transport it to each reunion venue so that our members can have the opportunity to buy items at a reasonable cost from a central point. With the exception of a two-year period when Joyce's sister was dying from cancer, Van has managed the BX since 2002, a total of 12 years. The BX has grown from a very small operation in 2002 to an on-line store with an inventory that exceeds \$25,000. Van ensures that a very full BX is a one-stop shopping area full of memorabilia at each reunion. The BX operates at a very low overhead and profit margin in order to remain self-sustaining and to provide an extraordinary value for our members. He received the Mike Daoust Bayonet Award in 2007.



Robert Throneburg, Life Member #875: For Valor under fire. Our final recipient arrived at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in October of 1966 and was assigned to K9. Just after midnight on the morning of December 4, 1966, a large force of Viet Cong attacked Tan Son Nhut. Approximately 60 mortar rounds hit the base, and a Viet Cong guerilla force estimated to have included more than 75 saboteurs infiltrated the base perimeter. Three members of the 377th Air Police Squadron were killed defending Tan Son

Nhut Air Base during this attack: A2C George M. Bevich, Jr., A2C John M. Cole, and A2C Oliver Riddle. Three sentry dogs, Cubby (612E), Toby (206F), and Rebel (519X), were also killed. Fifteen American servicemen were wounded but thousands of lives were saved. When daylight returned, a sweep of the base was conducted. Unfortunately, K-9 teams were not included in the daylight patrols.

The enemy attackers had been forced to hide and wait for nightfall before they could try to escape. Just before total darkness fell again that night, Sentry Dog Nemo (A534) and his handler, newly promoted A2C Robert A. Throneburg were posted on Kilo-5. Suddenly, Nemo alerted and Throneburg released him to attack the Viet Cong, who had evaded detection throughout the day. Nemo took on two of them, taking both to the ground but a shot was fired and Nemo went down. Nemo had been shot through his muzzle; the bullet destroyed his sinus area and exited his right eye. Throneburg opened fire but was overwhelmed by the force of the attack – he, too, was shot and fell to the ground.

Other Air Police eventually arrived on the scene, and even though grievously wounded, Nemo would not let any of them near A2C Throneburg. Nemo continued to protect A2C Throneburg as he had been trained, and shielded his handler from anyone trying to approach the team. Nemo's previous handler, A2C Leonard Bryant, was quickly summoned to the scene of the attack and was able to secure Nemo and transport him to the kennels. The story does not stop there. As many of you know, Nemo was saved and traveled throughout the United States. A2C Throneburg was transported to a base hospital for urgent care of his wounds and then evacuated to a hospital in Japan where he recovered from his wounds. The Air Force did not notify his wife, Patricia, because he had not been killed. She heard about the attack on radio and television, and later learned that Robert and Nemo had both been wounded when she was contacted by a local radio station and asked for comments.

A MESSAGE FROM JANET PARKER, CHAIR OF THE WARRIORS MEDAL OF VALOR COMMITTEE, TO THE 2014 RECIPIENTS OF THE WARRIORS MEDAL OF VALOR:

Congratulations to the 2014 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 483rd 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 last 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.
- c. Outstanding service to the military and/or Veterans.



You may submit the nomination by including his name and your justification for why this member deserves the medal. Please include as many **details** on his service as you can.

Nominations must be submitted to me at the following email address: janetmm62@gmail.com no later than **August 30, 2015**. The Warriors Medal selection committee will receive nominations for the award **until August 30**. The 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 VPSA Reunion Banquet in October.

Thank you for your service and WELCOME HOME.
Janet Matthews-Parker, Daughter of VSPA Life Member #127

NHA TRANG “GANG ACTIVITY” AT THE WALL



From Nha Trang Air Base to VSPA reunions, five Life Members of the VSPA “Nha Trang Gang” and three members of the VSPA Sisterhood planned for a year to gather in Washington, D.C. to wash “The Wall” on July 18, 2015. VSPA Nha Trang Gang Membership Liaison, Larry Fleming, and his battle buddies Cliff Gregory, Bill Motta, Al Gerard, and VSPA Photographer Terry Hall were joined by



VSPA Sisterhood Members Martha Fleming, Linda Gerard and Mary Gregory. They drove in from Texas, Arkansas, Pennsylvania and New Jersey to wash The Wall and, thereby, preserve the history of our service and the memory of the brothers we lost in Vietnam and Thailand. They were guided in their effort by VSPA Wall Wash Coordinators, Gary Jones (South Carolina), Willie Squires (Virginia) and Jim Stastny (Maryland), who have been washing The Wall since 2006. They all agree that washing The Wall is an honor and a commitment from the heart.



If you are interested in washing “The Wall”, please use the roster at the end of this issue of Guardmount to contact Gary Jones or Chaplain Jim Stastny for available dates when the VSPA can wash The Wall. Parking is free. Briefing is at 0615. You will be finished by 0800.





BROTHERS IN ARMS

By Bill Marshall, Phu Cat 68-69
VSPA 2nd Vice President



Vietnam and Thailand veterans share common memories as they reflect on their time in a war zone, hours of endless boredom, moments of sheer terror, times of lighthearted humor, sharing goody packages from home, reminiscing about the land of the big BX and the friendships that we all made in this war. Bonds that we felt would endure a lifetime with all good intent of staying in touch when we all made it back to our homeland. I am sure some of us maintained those special relationships, but most of us returning from S. E. A. wanted to leave all that happened behind simply because few people were interested in what we did and how we felt. Time has a way of smoothing that path as one blends back into the fabric of civilian life. Those good friends that we had were busy doing the same thing, putting it all behind them. Then one day a memory burst forth of those special friends who we separated from. Wondering whatever happened to so and so, where would he be?

This is where my story begins. In early 2000 after entering the computer age my first searches were for the Vietnam War. Those searches led me to understand much of what I left, when I chose to put it all behind me. The one search that revealed an organization called the Vietnam Security Police Association left me speechless. Once I signed on, I found the brothers I left behind. No, I did not know a single one of the names I read, but it did not matter, I had touched my past. I devoured the site reading every story, learning about the brothers who did not make it back, events that took place after I left, but most of all a place where I could call home to the past. I immediately joined the organization and learned that a reunion was being held in Dayton, Ohio. I attended not knowing a single person, but left with a whole new set of friends that shared the same experience as I did while there and after my return. This particular reunion was cathartic for me in coming to terms with a part of my life that I had not shared. While I did not find my good friend at this reunion, it put me on the path to find him. Phu Cat was a very small base and with the multitude of Security Policemen who moved in and out of country over the course of the war, they would have numbered in the thousands. Realizing this could resemble finding a needle in a haystack, I persevered in my search. The individual that I was looking for hailed from Massachusetts. He had one year left on his enlistment and planned to leave the service and pursue a career in the arts. With little information I did that standard search, first checking to see if he was a member, then searching the state where I thought he joined. I always read the Bulletin Board on the VSPA web site hoping I might find a clue there from someone who had been at this small base, no luck. Several years passed when one of our members, Pat Dunne, posted on the Bulletin Board about a Vietnam Security Policeman he knew who had

written a stage play about the Vietnam experience. I immediately got in touch with Pat and learned that this man was John DiFusco, my good friend from Phu Cat. Needless to say “the dots were connected” as I found him living in a community approximately 50 miles from where I resided.

I was able to locate him through many articles about his acting, directing and writing a play called *Tracers*. John put together a group of actors who were all Vietnam Vets. He conducted workshops that led to the creation of the play that follows a band of Nam brothers through their trials and tribulations, getting through boot camp and their experiences finding themselves in a war zone.

The play premiered at The Odyssey Theatre in Los Angeles, California with sold out audiences and highly acclaimed reviews. Word spread of this original play and actor-director Gary Sinise approached John to bring *Tracers* to Chicago’s Steppenwolf where it won several Jefferson Awards. In 1984/85, John re-worked *Tracers* and directed its New York premier at The Public Theatre; again, with a cast of all Vietnam Veteran actors. The show ran for six months, was published as ‘One of the Ten Best Plays of the Year’ and John received The New York Drama Desk Award. Through the 80’s, John toured with *Tracers*, going from London to Australia, and the USA.

John and I first communicated by email, followed by phone calls where we filled in the years since our good-byes from Phu Cat. In 2007 we arranged to meet at a mutual location that happened to be near a theatre that was presenting his play. Since I had not seen the play we decided to have dinner first then attend the show. Spending that time together before the show allowed us to pick up from where we said our good-bye 40 years ago. Sitting next to John during the performance of *Tracers* was an amazing experience, reliving experiences that we had survived but were told in John’s words, scripted and performed in a very dramatic manner. While I had seen several Vietnam films, (*Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket*, etc.) they all paled in comparison. *Tracers* was more of a cerebral and real expression of the Vietnam experience as witnessed by those of us who were there.

Reminiscing with John, we spoke of those long nights on the base perimeter, remembering the cold beers and long talks after our nights on perimeter post. During one of those talks John expressed that he wanted to pursue the arts and perhaps an acting career which he did after completing his Air Force tour. I learned that after college he studied and pursued a career as a writer while acting in local stage productions. John went on to conceive, co-write, direct and act in the plays *Tracers*, *Walking thru the Fire* and *The Long Way Home*. His achievements have been recognized with the Los Angeles Drama Critics Award, L.A. Weekly Awards, NAACP Awards, Drama Desk Award, to name a few.

John and I have continued to enjoy a relationship which originated in a war long ago that continues today based on our mutual respect for each other. We both travel different roads with varied interests but we are and will always be brothers and friends.

Tracers continues to be produced around the country. I highly recommend that you experience this show should it come to a theatre near you.

My hope in writing this story is to recognize how one Vietnam brother used his first-hand war experience to bring it alive on the stage. Others share their memories in other ways...like with brothers at reunion gatherings. If you have not attended a reunion or taken time to search for a former Vietnam brother, may this inspire you to do so.

Our next reunion is scheduled for October, 2015 in Las Vegas. Check the details in this issue of Guardmount or go to the VSPA website: VSPA.com

MY VIETNAM STORY

By Art Rodgers, Jr. Life Member #315
Tan Son Nhut 68 - 69

After graduating from high school in 1965, my draft number was getting close and, frankly, haunting me. I knew time was running short; either volunteer for the Air Force or risk being drafted into Uncle Sam's Army. My uncle was a career airman. My brother and brother-in-law were both serving in the Air Force. My choice was clear and a family tradition of sorts. I, too, joined the Air Force. I was an immature kid who needed some structure and purpose, and I would later discover that the Air Force was exactly what I needed.

I am from Louisville, Kentucky. Anti-war sentiment was alive and well in my hometown and throughout the United States. I trusted my country and was immersed in its rich history. I believed that the sacrifices made by those in prior wars were for me and my family to be able to live free. I would shop with mom at the local grocery store and see the vast choice of food, and on the way home I would notice the children playing in the school yard. This gift, this freedom was made possible by those men and women who wore our country's uniform and bore the cost of a free nation. I loved my country then, as now. And, besides, I liked taking baths, knew nothing about illicit drugs, and aspirin was my only pill of choice. I didn't know how to be a coward and did not want to learn. I remembered the words in President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address in 1961 when he said, "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty." Although I was young and naïve, those words inspired me and far outweighed the hippie voices.

I was accepted into the Air Force in October of 1965 and went to Lackland AFB for basic training. Off came the hair. Everybody was screaming at us. There was little time to eat, little sleep, we ran everywhere and had to receive those pesky shots. I knew if I just kept saying, "Sir, yes Sir!" and worked with the other scared kids who were growing up quickly like me, that I would become an airman.

After basic and receiving that hard-earned one stripe, I was assigned to Eglin AFB and the 4420th Security Police Squadron (TAC), home of the Air Commandos. My first job at Eglin was sweeping the floors at our Air Police building. Not the most glorious job but I did it. My mother instilled in me the importance of being the best at whatever I did. I obtained my 77150 skill level and worked the main gate, base patrol, provided missile security and training for junior airman. I was eventually a Sergeant (a three striper that is now called a senior airman) when I received orders for the 377th Combat Support Squadron (PACAF) APO San Francisco. Crap, I was going to Vietnam!

I returned to Lackland on 19 August 1968, for the AZR 81150 Course, a preparatory course of combat training prior to going to Vietnam. I arrived at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, South Vietnam, on 15 October 1968 assigned to the 377th Security Police Squadron whose motto was, "Proven in Combat". After exiting the plane and walking to the terminal, I noticed holes in the tower that were obviously made during previous attacks. Some airman riding in a jeep yelled, "New meat". That didn't bother me and I knew this wasn't a trip to Disneyland.

After entering the terminal, other airman and I were ushered to an area for security police. A medic told us to face the wall and drop our pants. We received a Gamma Globulin shot and I discovered very quickly that this was no ordinary shot. The injection took about a minute due to the thick molasses substance and a large golf ball size lump formed under my skin.

I remember telling the guy beside me, "What the f---? I have been off the plane 30 minutes and I feel like I've already been shot." It took days for the swelling to dissipate.

A little about Tan Son Nhut (TSN) Air Base would be appropriate to fully understand the role it played in the war. TSN was the command center of the entire allied war effort in South Vietnam. General William Westmoreland, Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command - Vietnam (COMUSMACV), and William Momyer, Commander of the 7th Air Force, were both headquartered at TSN. The Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) was also headquartered there as was "Pentagon East" the nickname for the MACV headquarters.

I finally made my way to the barracks area and settled into my new home for the next 12 months. The barracks was located next to the Army heliport which made sleep difficult, but manageable after a time. My roomie was a red headed trooper named William McSherry, a likeable down home country sort of guy from North Carolina. For my first couple of nights, I rode on a SAT team and became familiar with the logistical structure of the base. I was assigned to security and worked from sundown till sunrise. After a week, I was assigned to Alpha Bunker One on the base perimeter, working with two other security policemen. The bunker was an old French bunker modified with steel plates and mesh wire to deflect rocket propelled grenades and small arms fire. We also had claymore mines strategically positioned in front of the bunker. We arrived on post via a deuce and a half truck, carrying an M-60 machine gun, M-16's, two hand grenades each, slap flares, radio, flak vest, steel helmets, camouflaged uniform and sufficient ammunition. There was a cleared, lighted, fenced area in front of the bunker known as a "free fire zone" which was a lesson learned after the TET offensive a few months earlier.

I was a small part of base security charged with defending TSN during night time when attacks were more likely to occur. Our security was comprised of bunker security, tango observation towers, K-9, sat teams, heavy weapons, and base contingency procedures. We called ourselves the Alpha Sector Night Hawks and had a patch made, which we all proudly displayed.

TSN experienced incoming rockets on May 12, 1969. One rocket landed close to my bunker causing me and my fellow airmen to feel the rush of air as the rocket exploded, knocking us all to the concrete floor of the bunker. The next rockets landed on the flight line causing no damage. As the night turned to day, we returned our weapons to the armory before returning to the barracks. On one such return to the armory, I was confronted with one of the happiest moments in my career when I saw this incredible man that I went to high school with in Louisville. Standing right there in front of me was not an ordinary human being, but a truly

unique person who I had known all my young life. I considered him to be my best and most trusted brother, Sgt Stephen Curry, who is also a VSPA Life Member. Steve was assigned to the 377th Security Police Squadron and I knew that sharing this Vietnam experience with him would be very special.



Steve worked in the armory for a short time before volunteering for the heavy weapons sector. He started working base perimeter security operating a V-100, officially known as "Victor Six". I was asked to volunteer to operate an armored personnel carrier about this time, known as an M113A1, which I accepted. It was nice having your home town, high school buddy and best friend working with you in a war zone, especially with all the uncertainty. Steve was always cool and composed under pressure, never nervous and made those around him better warriors.

I worked with another memorable character named Terry Austin, a big robust airman never without a smile or good humor. Terry worked on one of the Victor units and, like most of the heavy weapons airmen, we frequently met on perimeter road as we supported the airmen in the bunkers and those working K-9. Terry was just a good man and I, along with others, was deeply saddened to hear of his passing. At his last VSPA meeting, Terry gave me an old Alpha Sector Night Hawk patch. (RIP Terry! You did your duty well).

Ray Rash is another VSPA member who worked in heavy weapons and today holds the rank of Colonel by declaration of the Governor of Kentucky, the honorable Stephen Brashier.

The aforementioned airmen will attest that I am rich indeed with special friends. I felt fortunate to be surrounded by such competent patriots who would never waiver from their assigned duty and always perform professionally. My journey from floor sweeper to heavy weapons sergeant on an APC had come full circle - all my training and time was all for a good reason, at that time and that place.

Steve and I found time to work in the PX, would hang out, and on rare occasions see the sights of Saigon. We visited the USO in Saigon. They had the best hamburgers and ice cream, almost like being home. We both took pictures and observed the culture of this unknown, faraway place. On one such sojourn to Saigon, we met another home town friend, Bryce Glover, an Army grunt. We (Steve, Bryce, McSherry and I) made a day of it taking pictures and enjoying a facsimile of normal living. On other visits to Saigon we observed street-side black market vendors, human waste in the gutters, blue taxi's as they weaved through city streets and motorcycles by the thousands. The offerings of sexual liaisons came with the chant of, "Number one boom boom." (Whatever that meant?) Okay, so I knew what that meant and was lured into that lascivious world that I was vaguely familiar with. Thanks to Steve Curry, I was delivered from the evil that was tempting and alluring. You can always tell a real friend when you've made a fool of yourself and he doesn't feel you've done a permanent job.

Another night patrolling the 12 mile perimeter at TSN: There is an axiom of truth that the whole is made up by the sum of its many parts. Every assigned post at TSN depended on each other, for the base security was solely that of Air Force Security Policemen. TSN was tested like no other on Wednesday, January 31, 1968 during the TET offensive when over 2,665 VC and NVA attacked and entered the base. On that fateful morning, the 377th SPS earned its motto, "Proven in Combat". I would be remiss in writing about TSN by not honoring the valiant warriors who lost their lives in defense of freedom. I remember and honor these men and their families, Sergeants Fischer, William Cyr, Charles Hebron, and Roger Mills. After the Tet Offensive many changes were made at TSN. Perimeter free fire zones were established, claymore mines were placed around vital bunker positions, a heavy weapons unit was created to aid SAT teams assigned to each security sector, perimeter vegetation and obstacles were removed, firepower and ammo distribution was increased, tango towers were strategically positioned, and communications were upgraded. All of those changes came with the overall realization that TSN was woefully unprepared for the TET 68 offensive and that being unprepared would never happen again. The tragic losses suffered at the O-51 bunker were not in vain and likely saved future airmen.

When my time in Vietnam was over, I found my way back to the States for discharge at Travis AFB. I stayed at Travis AFB for three days processing out. I remember being told to take off my uniform because there was anti-war sentiment in the general public. The date was 25 October 1969, and I was now a civilian on my way home to Louisville, Kentucky.

I used my GI bill and graduated from the University Of Louisville in 1977 while working for the Louisville Division of Police. With my BS in Criminal Justice, I worked as district detective for my last eight years on the Department. I then worked for the State Attorney General's Office for eight years before retiring.

What makes my life's journey so unusual is that Steve Curry worked on the Jefferson County Police Department. Later, our two departments would merge and become the Louisville Metro Police Department. We spent most of our life working together starting in high school, through Vietnam, and in our police careers with a parallel direction. Steve eventually retired from a second career on the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department. We remain best friends today, just as we were years ago. I am really fortunate to have him and his wife Judy in my life.

Steve has an impressive collection of Medal of Honor memorabilia and works with Veterans groups throughout Kentucky. I frequently converse with Steve and feel very blessed to call him my best and most trusted friend. I dedicate this story to Steve for his eyes experienced much of what I have just described. A man is never poor who has a trusted friend, and for this I feel very wealthy. For all my friends and their wives in the VSPA, thank you for your friendship.



Art Rodgers (Left) and Steve Curry and at VSPA Reunion
(Photo by VSPA Photographer, Steve Hall)

“IT'S A SMALL, SMALL WORLD”

By **PAUL SHAVE, VSPA MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN**
Life Member #666, Binh Thuy 68-69

Disney had it right!! It is a small, small world out there!! And I have experienced it firsthand here in Albuquerque.

Stories abound about people who knew each other in high school bumping into each other 20 years later, 5 states away on a street corner when they were rushing for a cab ride. Or, maybe that statement that “we are related to Kevin Bacon by six degrees of separations” must surely be true!!

My small, small world started about three years ago when my wife, Suzanne, and I were working as greeters at the church. That day, I had driven my car that had some stickers on the back along with my disabled Veteran plate.



Then, there was the bumper sticker that Steve Hall sent to me that says, “Beaucoup Dinky Dau.”



Because of these stickers, I have had more than a few people stop to talk to me about military service (mine and theirs). I guess they are confused when they see me wearing a Navy ball cap but I tell them I ran from the AF to the Navy for some reason unknown to me..... Some of those who approached me were current and former SP's, so I guess it was old home week for some of them and me.

While my wife Suzanne and I were “working” as greeters at church, a person entered and came up to us. He asked if we knew who the car with the Vietnam stickers belonged to. I admitted it was mine and we talked for a few minutes. He asked where I had been. I told him I was in the delta at a small air base near Can Tho. I was surprised when he said that he knew it well and then asked if I might be interested in coming to a sampling of Vietnamese coffee on Wednesday morning at his house. He said that there would be a couple of other “Vietnam Vets” there. I gladly jumped on the invite and learned how it really is a small, small of a world.

The person who invited me, Don, attended Goshen College and now is a retired professor from the University of Arkansas. He is a retired professor of “Rural Sociology”. He became involved with Vietnam in the 50's doing Alternate Service to the Military as a Conscientious

Objector to Military Service, first assigned to a Missionary Leprosy hospital near Ban Me Thuot. Later, he spent nearly two years in Saigon living with a Vietnamese family as interim administrator of the Mennonite Central Program in Vietnam. When he first went to Vietnam he worked with the minorities of the Central Plateau (Montagnards). His first time back to Vietnam after 1975 was in 1997. After working in the Central Plateau, he organized work camps in the Mekong Delta and in Nha Trang. He was also a consultant with the faculty at Can Tho University, making his very familiar with Can Tho.

Can Tho University is a very different place than when I saw it just after Tet in 1968. Back then we drove about 90 miles an hour past a very bombed-out burning hulk that once was a college, but had been taken over by the Viet Cong who were then pushed out by the Air Force and the Army.



The first person I met at Don's Wednesday Morning Coffee Klatch was Phan The Phiet. Phiet was an O-1 Bird Dog pilot assigned to Binh Thuy as a VNAF forward air controller. Phiet was one of the many who were up in the area flying in the final hours of the fall of Vietnam.



Phiet had taken off from My Tho and landed in the airport at Long Xuyen where he reasoned that he might be safe from the Communists because of the Hoa Hao control of the area. He and a friend actually hoped to take off the next morning for Bangkok, but his airplane had been vandalized, leaving no fuel or battery. When the end finally came in Saigon and then when Can Tho fell, he eventually made his way up to his family up in Saigon, but because of his background as an officer in the VNAF he was singled out eventually and told he had to go to a "Re-education Camp". Phiet was sent to a camp with many others in the area of North Vietnam close to the Chinese border. He suffered through seven years in the camp. They shifted him and the others every few months. He had very limited contact with his wife. When the North Vietnamese thought that he had been sufficiently "Re-educated", he was released and returned to Saigon and his wife. After a while, he was able to apply to go to the United States as long as he had a sponsor. He was able to work with Catholic Charities and was subsequently sponsored by Bobbie.



Bobbie has an interesting background. He was one of the last enlisted persons in the U.S. Air Force to obtain his wings and then become an officer. He flew A-37 Dragonfly's (plane on the left) in Vietnam. While stationed in Thailand, Bobbie flew T-28's (plane on right), flying missions into Laos. He also taught Thai pilots about the T-28 and served two tours in Southeast Asia.

While Bobbie was stationed out of Binh Thuy, he was very involved with the VNAF 116th/122 Liaison Squadron. When he went back to Vietnam in 1997, Bobbie became involved with Catholic Charities and was very active in helping settle Vietnamese refugees to Albuquerque. Because of his unique position, he had access to lists of Vietnamese who had applied to come to the US. He had at one time written to the VNAF squadron commander at Binh Thuy stating that he could assist any of the former VNAF personnel from Binh Thuy if they wanted sponsorship here in the US. He eventually saw Phiet's name and requested to be the personal sponsor for Phiet and his family. Bobbie worked tirelessly, not only with Phiet's situation, but with the many others who wanted to come to the Albuquerque area. He was able to assist Phiet coming to Albuquerque and getting set up for life in here the high desert. Bobbie is still VERY active with the Vietnamese community here in Albuquerque.

Don, who is fairly fluent in the Vietnamese language, met Phiet quite by accident because of our small, small world. Upon his arrival in Albuquerque, Don would see a person who looked Vietnamese drive by, and when he saw the name "Phan" on the license plate, he knew his neighbor must be Vietnamese. So Don went over, introduced himself, started a dialog with him and eventually invited him for coffee. Phiet told Don about Bobbie and soon they were all having coffee together every Wednesday morning.

These are the people who were in the coffee klatch before I had started. Then, while at church, another friend, Fred, heard about the Wednesday morning coffee klatch and asked if he could come along. Fred has a very interesting background, himself. Like Don, he went to Goshen College, but he had spent his time working in Ethiopia. He also spent time working in the Indian reservations of the US Southwest along with his wife. He also had a child born when they both worked in the jungles of Brazil. Eventually, he and his wife settled here in the Albuquerque area.

Wednesday mornings are really lively and a heck of an education for me!! We cover many subjects, even the bread over there and how involved the history of Vietnam is, up to and including the customs of everyday life there. We have had discussions about the war and the lasting effects before, during, and after the war. Aside from the GREAT Vietnamese coffee that is served, I am able to get a heck of a history lesson. Don knows Vietnamese history all the way back to when the Chinese first started to come to Vietnam. I have learned many interesting facts and side stories of the area.

I served four years in the Air Force with assignments in Korea and Vietnam, and then 16 years in the Navy, including some time with Navy SEALs. Compared to the other men at coffee and their life experiences, I feel that I have led a pretty sheltered life!!



I hope you enjoyed my small world. Knowing these guys has helped me a great deal, especially as I continue to have physical issues and related back surgeries. I encourage you to stay in touch with each other and to find someone in your area who can relate to your time in Vietnam or Thailand.

As your membership chairman, I am always looking to talk to members, answer questions and to maintain our membership records in the database. Whenever someone moves, it really helps if they let me know that they have moved, changed phone numbers or email addresses. All of my contact information is below and in the roster at the back of this issue of Guardmount. Please contact me, even if it's just to talk about how I became Life Member #666 and why, as a member of Binh Thuy's Devil Flight, it means so much to me.

The information at the bottom of each page is a snapshot of our current membership. We have come a long, long way since 1995 with 67% of our membership now being Life Members. I can't help but wonder who will be Life Member #1,000.



TIME TO RENEW THOSE VSPA DUES

It is time to renew your VSPA yearly dues....or, better yet, pay a one-time fee, become a Life Member and never pay dues again! It's easy to pay dues or re-up an expired or expiring membership. If you've been putting it off trying to find time, take a few minutes now and make it happen. Just go to VSPA's Homepage (<http://www.vspa.com>) and on the top menu, click the menu and select: "About/Join/Dues/Help", then select the appropriate link. You can also pay your dues when you register for the reunion



Paul Shave, Life Member #666
Binh Thuy Devil Flight 68-69
VSPA Membership Chairman
Paul_Shave@hotmail.com
505-831-9401

ATTENTION THAILAND VETERANS!

Membership eligibility rules have changed for Security Policemen who served in Thailand. As of our last reunion, members overwhelmingly approved a change to our Bylaws that would allow Thailand Veterans who served in Thailand after May 15, 1975 and through the end of 1976 to apply for membership in the VSPA. The change in Bylaws recognizes the highly dangerous service of Security Policemen who remained behind to protect the people and assets during the drawdown of forces. The change also recognizes that Thailand was surrounded by three countries (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) that had fallen to Communist control, that Thailand was accepting refugees fleeing from South Vietnam, and that Security Policemen, Thai forces and other US personnel remained vulnerable to attack while surrounded by hostile countries. Members also approved a free one year membership for those Thailand Veterans who had previously had their applications denied. For details related to the Bylaw change, refer to the minutes of the Annual Business Meeting beginning on Page #36).

If you know someone who served during that period, please contact them and provide the contact information for VSPA Membership Chairman, Paul Shave, at the following email address and phone number:

Paul_Shave@hotmail.com 505-831-9401

LEOSA - HR 218 - UPDATE PART 4

The Law Enforcement Officer's Safety Act and AFM 31-125

(Please refer to prior issues in 2014 for previous updates)

By Steve Gattis, VSPA President Emeritus



ATTENTION

VSPA MEMBERS

If you served at least 10 years and retired as Air Policemen, Security Policemen or OSI Agents: The 926C LEOSA Identification Card for retired personnel to carry concealed weapons, pursuant to the Law Enforcement Officer's Safety Act is now being issued. The company handling ALL applications from retirees is Defense Consulting

Services and is owned by retired Chief Frank Crowder. If you qualify, please click on the following link to find additional details, answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs), instructions and forms.

<http://www.leosaonline.com/>



AN UPDATE FROM KIM BAYES-BAUTISTA, AKA QUEEN MOTHER

Hello VSPA Family,

I am checking in to provide an update on my doctoral research. I have finished all of my course work and am now in the proposal part of the journey. I narrowed the focus of my study to post 9/11, enlisted combat veterans diagnosed with PTSD. The title of my dissertation is AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY OF MORAL INJURY IN POST 9/11, FORMER ENLISTED COMBAT VETERANS DIAGNOSED WITH POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER.

I have not started my research yet as there are still academic hoops to jump thru to get to that point. My professor says researchers should practice an “elevator speech” meaning if someone asked you about your research topic, how could it be described on a short elevator ride. Here is mine: “I am investigating the phenomenon of moral injury in post 9/11, enlisted combat veterans diagnosed with PTSD. Everyone has their own belief system of what is morally right and wrong. Moral injury is the perceived violation of a person’s moral code or ethical standards, resulting in psychological distress. Moral injury is similar yet distinct from PTSD.” (I talk fast so I can probably get this out in two floors!)

I continually see moral injury in my clinical practice with combat veterans. Some examples of moral injury might be betrayal of self-standards (“I didn’t do enough”), injury and/or death of civilians (intentional or unintentional death of children, innocents, etc.), disproportionate violence (excessive force, extreme brutality), and/or command decision failures (needless injuries or deaths caused by poor command decisions). In the recent blockbuster film, *American Sniper* (Eastwood, et al, 2014), the scene where Kyle was visibly shaken after nearly killing a child who was about to pick up arms against U.S. service members illustrates how moral injury might occur. Psychological consequences are understandable when morally conflicting choices must be made.

I use treatment strategies to address these issues. Treatment combines imaginal exposure and cognitive restructuring techniques and incorporates methods to specifically address moral injury and traumatic loss (Steenkamp, Litz, Gray, Lebowitz, Nash, Conoscenti, Amidon, and Lang, 2011, p. 106).

I’ll be back from the field in the future to write more but until then keep me in your prayers.

Kim Bayes-Bautista AKA Queen Mother

Reference:

Steenkamp, M., Litz, B., Gray, M., Lebowitz, L., Nash, W., Conoscenti, L., Amidon, A., and Lang, A. (2011). A brief exposure-based intervention for service members with PTSD, *Cognitive and Behavioral*

Practice, 18(1), 98-107.



Sisterhood President Sheila Cain and VSPA President Greg Cain



Web Master Don Poss and Larry Poss, our Web Server Host



VSPA Affiliate Member Jeff Wedding, Son of Robert Wedding. Jeff presented a challenge coin and reunion patch to every VSPA member at the reunion.



Erlyce Pekas and her husband, Myron

The VSPA joined with the Department of Defense in the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the war in Vietnam. The DOD sent a 50th Anniversary flag that was on display along with the VSPA flag during our reunion activities at the hotel and at Barksdale AFB.

(All photos courtesy of VSPA Photographers Steve Hall and Terry Hall)



Lise Gattis presents the VSPA Sisterhood Cookbook



Rachel "Mom" Lehman, Mother of Millard Lehman, KIA Binh Thuy 66. She is Mom to everyone and has attended every reunion since 2004.



Bill Harris presents the VSPA flag that he carried throughout Vietnam to the commander of the 2nd Security Forces Sq., our host squadron



Newly elected President Greg Cain presents the President's Award to Pete Piazza in recognition of his two years of service as our president.



Joyce Digby receives the Sisterhood Award for her daily work to manage the VSPA BX.



Roberta Smith receives the Sisterhood Award for her daily work as the Sisterhood Chaplain, making contact with VSPA members and Sisterhood members in need.



Lise Gattis receives the Sisterhood Award for her three-year project to create the VSPA Sisterhood Cookbook.



Erlyce Pekas, Editor of Guardmount, accepted an award for our Guardmount printer and publisher, Steve Nelson (below) who has been a superb partner in our effort to publish Guardmount. She presented the award to him in Phoenix, Arizona. (Photo courtesy of Erlyce Pekas)



Van and Joyce Digby
Our BX Managers

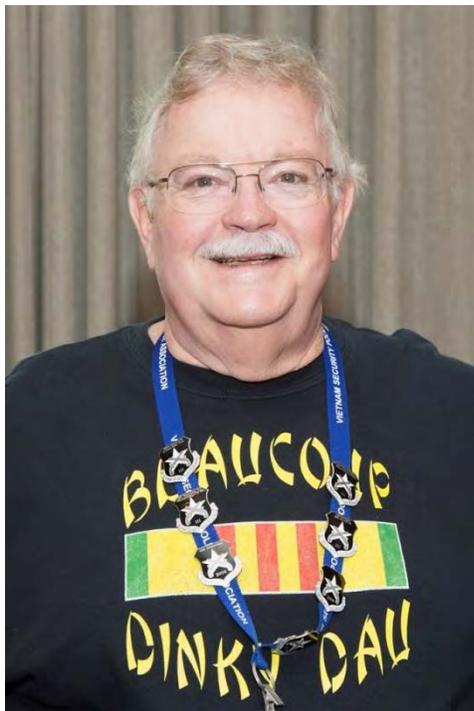


Jack "The Old Cowboy" Smith
Our newly elected Vice President



Before and after photos of our BX operation that had hundreds of items of memorabilia for sale.





THE SALUTE

By Steven Hall, VSPA Photographer
Life Member #639, Binh Thuy 68-69

Newly elected President John F. Kennedy inspired the imagination of America's youth in January of 1961, during his inaugural speech. His words were a simple and direct challenge, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." I had been raised to believe that the strong had a moral obligation to support the weak, so when America called upon its youth to help the people of South Vietnam retain their freedom from the tyranny of Communism I was among those who responded to that challenge by enlisting in the military.

My first duty assignment as a newly trained USAF Security Policeman was at Naha Air Base, Okinawa. During my eighteen-month tour on Okinawa, I volunteered to go to Vietnam. I went directly from Okinawa to Binh Thuy AB, in the Mekong Delta. By the

time I completed the consecutive deployments, I had been out of the United States for two and a half years. When I arrived home, America had changed dramatically due to sharp political differences and the rejection of traditional moral values. In colleges and universities across the nation, freewheeling professors were indoctrinating young, impressionable minds in the nihilistic principles of Marx and Lenin. By 1969, the moral fabric of America was as shredded as the Stars & Stripes that flew over the ramparts of Fort McHenry or Khe Sanh.

Earlier in the decade, leftist professors and administrators had become firmly entrenched in the country's universities. Parents who paid huge sums of money for their children's education discovered that the kids they sent off to university, returned home as radicalized, self-absorbed ingrates. Students were taught that anyone over the age of thirty were slaves to a corrupt socioeconomic system and therefore could never be trusted. Young, impressionable minds were easily converted to believe that there was no moral code given to us by a Divine Creator (indeed, there was no Divine Being at all); therefore, each individual was free to live according to their own self-defined moral code. They were taught that Judeo-Christian morals and values were old-fashioned Puritanical rubbish to be tossed onto the scrap-heap of human history. The proverbial barn door had been thrown wide open and the animals were on the loose. But, the soul is not so easily deceived and even an imperfect conscience demands a substitute to fill the void created by the denial of God. With the renunciation of moral boundaries, the neophyte nihilists sought to fill the void with unfettered sex and "mind expanding" drugs. They were to discover they needed a great deal of both to stifle the nagging truth that they had entered into a spiritual realm of self-inflicted torment.

By embracing the nihilist doctrines of the Left, many young men found a way to free themselves from an obligation to help those in need. Draft-aged men could now, with clear consciences, escape military service by securing a college draft deferment. Those who could not afford college or who flunked out often went "underground" or fled to Canada to dodge the draft and evade imprisonment.

Intent on justifying and expanding their anti-war position, radicalized Leftists labeled any person supporting the war in Vietnam as a “war monger”. Military members, especially those returning from Vietnam, were treated with open contempt and unsuppressed disrespect. Attempting to deflect the shame of their own cowardice and self-absorption, the radicals commandeered what they considered the moral high ground by accusing Vietnam veterans of being murderers, rapists and baby killers. Recruited by Leftist agitators, they gathered in seething mobs at airports and military installations, hurling insults, blood, urine and feces at the returning Veterans. The denigration didn’t necessarily stop there, for once home an individual vet was often ignored by former friends and neighbors. Even in traditionally supportive Veteran’s organizations such as the American Legion and the VFW, World War II and Korean War veterans were known to shun the returning Vet and discount his service. Many of the Vietnam Vets were highly decorated heroes, deserving the same honor and recognition given to Veterans of past conflicts. However, due to the constant bellowing of self-righteous radicals, support for returning Vets had been cowed. Sadly, it would be years before that recognition would be extended.

For me, returning home was an experience as jarring as the cultural shock I experienced when arriving in Vietnam. “*The World*”, as Vietnam Vets referred to America, had been transformed into something foreign and debased. The morals and values that had once been the strength of the American culture had been unceremoniously dumped, granting permission to narcissistic half-adults to live their life out in social and moral anarchy. Many of America’s young people were merely overindulged pseudo-intellectual children, struggling to liberate themselves from the chrysalis of a moral system that had securely enfolded them during their adolescence. Rejecting that morality, they took flight into the polluted atmosphere of a lifestyle that had for millennia proven to be degenerate and self-destructive.

In the end, it was the protestors & draft dodgers themselves who revealed the hypocrisy of their own actions, for once the military draft was converted into a lottery draft, the fear-factor for draft-aged men declined markedly. Most no longer had to worry about the prospect of having their life-plans interrupted by military service to a country that had given them the very freedoms they demanded and were indeed exercising. As the fear of being drafted diminished, the demonstrations and marches waned in frequency and intensity. They no longer had reason to gather in angry mobs, burning their Draft cards in acts of false-bravado, while screaming, “Hell no, we won’t go!” Having lost their *raison d’être*, they nonetheless continued to sink deeper and deeper into the self-inflicted hell of drug addiction and meaningless sex. It would be years before many would drag themselves out of their depravity. Some, never would. As the 60’s generation spiraled into moral decadence and spiritual decay, a new generation was being enticed into a life of Sex, Drugs and Rock & Roll. Even Nietzsche, the renowned Nihilist feared “that the decline of religion, the rise of atheism and the absence of a higher moral authority would plunge the world into chaos”. (<http://www.philosophy-index.com/nietzsche/god-is-dead/>) His fears, it seemed, were coming to fruition in America.

I doubt that returning Vietnam Vets had any expectations of being carried jubilantly upon the shoulders of a grateful nation, but we certainly didn’t expect to be so callously denounced. It didn’t take long for me to figure out that I should just keep quiet about my past and get on with my life. However, when Saigon fell to the Communists in 1975, I experienced a deep sense of loss and betrayal that weighed heavily on me for months. The personal sacrifice of those who served, the suffering of those wounded and especially the lives of those who died, seemed in vain. I just would not admit to myself that all who had been maimed and killed suffered for nothing. The more I struggled with the issue, the more I closed down and withdrew.

A short time after the Communists took over South Vietnam, large numbers of Vietnamese refugees were resettled in the United States. I wanted nothing to do with them; they were a reminder of a difficult time in my life, a time that I had yet come to grips with. In addition, I knew all too well that corrupt Vietnamese politicians and high-ranking military leaders made a significant contribution to the collapse of their own country. As I saw it, they traded the lives and freedom of their own countrymen for personal profit from drug sales and black market trade. Since I couldn't determine which of them were among the corrupt, I didn't trust any of them. It wasn't that I treated them with disrespect; I just tried to ignore them.

Ironically, the majority of the refugees settled not only in Orange County, CA where I live, but also in my neighborhood and my church. Vietnamese children became schoolmates and close friends of my children and as the number of new arrivals grew and the demographics in the area changed, Vietnamese priests were assigned to my parish. The Vietnamese presence was a constant reminder of the sacrifice and loss of a war that had gone so wrong. It had become impossible for me to ignore their presence and even more difficult to ignore my own maligned attitude toward them. My moral compass was working, but the needle was pointing me in a direction I was trying to ignore.

It took a long time, but as I came into contact with more and more Vietnamese, I slowly appreciated them as a people with shared faith and values. I knew the corrupt leaders were still living among them, but I understood that the vast majority of them were very good people who had become displaced from a country they loved. I began to recognize and understand *their* loss. They may have escaped to freedom, but their hearts and souls were still in the land they loved, a homeland that they had little hope of ever seeing again. Adjusting to life in an unfamiliar culture had to be immensely difficult. Their ability to be economically self-sufficient depended upon learning a complex, new language and America's liberal, fast paced lifestyle was a looming threat to their traditionally conservative family values. I gradually became aware that even though they were safe from the brutal Communist regime in their homeland, they were unquestionably victims of that war.

Still, I was battling my own demons. The effects of PTSD would come and go. I would vacillate from being confident, outgoing and happy to being sullen, depressed and withdrawn. I was on an emotional roller coaster that affected every facet of my life. It would be years before my condition was diagnosed and I received counseling for PTSD through the VA. To this day, I am amazed at how my wife and children dealt with my ups and downs.

After the political and economic debacles of the 1970's, Ronald Reagan was elected President. His vision for America gave the country a robust economy and the gift of renewed national pride. While Leftists in the government and the media viciously attacked him and his policies, his positive leadership gave renewed hope to the hearts and minds of most Americans. He bolstered America's military strength around the world, causing the collapse of the Soviet Union and, for the first time, the President of the United States publically recognized Vietnam Veterans for their service to America. It was recognition that had been a long time coming by a man who "talked the talk *and* walked the walk". After so many national failures, this was a man I could call my President. His positive attitude and strong leadership ushered in a long awaited recovery to the nation and the world.

A furthering of my personal recovery came unexpectedly during the spring of 1988. I needed to go to the DMV to renew my driver's license. As I walked toward the building from the parking lot, I noticed a thin Vietnamese man in his late forties standing by himself outside the building. I nodded as I walked by; he nodded in return. On coming out of the DMV I noticed he was still there. As our eyes met, I said him in Vietnamese, "Hello, are you well?" Needless to say, he was very surprised to hear an American speak to him in his own language. With a huge

smile on his face he responded in Vietnamese, “Yes! Are *you* well?” While I struggled to remember what little Vietnamese I had learned, I was able to relate to him that I was in Vietnam during the war. He indicated that he, too, had fought in the war. Since that was about as far as my Vietnamese would take our conversation, we shook hands and I turned and walked to my truck. As I drove by him on my way out of the parking lot he snapped to “Attention” and presented a perfect hand salute. I was astonished, but managed to return his salute. Even though we could barely communicate verbally, I fully understood his intent. He was not only thanking me for my service to Vietnam, he was also honoring me as a brother. It was the first time anyone had personally expressed gratitude to me for having served in Vietnam. I was overwhelmed and I am not ashamed to admit that I had to pull over to wipe the tears from my eyes.

Life has a fascinating way of presenting you with just the right “gift” when you least expect it. Oh, and my moral compass? I’m paying more attention to it, now.

Last January, I marched in the Tet Parade to celebrate the coming of Spring in Little Saigon which is located in Westminster, California, near my home. I was joined by my VSPA Brothers Jim "Buddha" Lebowitz and Ernest Govea. We met some QC's who immediately greeted us with open arms. There were about five or six of us who are VSPA members who marched in the parade. It was a lot of fun and we met other Vietnam Vets from the Army and Marines. We had a Dinky Dau time!! The photo below is of us with our QC friends, right before we set off marching in the parade. (Interestingly, Paul Shave’s friend, Phiet, marched in the same parade, although I did not know it at the time).



PERSPECTIVE – From Janet

Thank you for your indulgence once again as I continue with the *Ramblings of an Air Force Brat*. Since last August, I relocated, started a new job, and really started a new life. I will admit I was stressed. Luckily, I have a great family and dear friends who helped me more than they will ever know. You are among those closest to my heart.

We all go through periods of change and reflection. As I started this new job, even though I am still a paralegal, I am now working on the other side assisting plaintiffs. I worked at my former job for 15 years. I really have had to adjust my perspective.

What I have discovered is that changing one's perspective is challenging and not easy. But it can also be fun. Learning new things and how to look at things differently helped my focus. The events of the last year played a significant role in my ability to change my perspective. Some of those events were hurtful. As I worked through that part, I took a closer look at who I am.

What I found is that I did not want to change who I am but how I approach my life. I did not want to give up trust and kindness for anger and bitterness. With the help of my sweet friends and my loving family, I did not have to give up myself to move forward. As usual, my reflections and self talk turn to those "Sargisms". My favorite, "You gotta do what you gotta do." And as usual, Sarge was right. What he shared with me about his training and experience is like an instruction book for me at times.

I think in the last *Ramblings* article I made it clear that I don't care much for change. I had to change my perspective on that too. Many beautiful things in this world are the result of fire, compression, or pruning. Silver is not attractive at all until it is touched by flames that reveal the inner treasure. Diamonds are just lumps of coal until they are compacted severely. Roses bloom best when they are pruned regularly. This is true for us. I also found this:

After a Bible study with a group of ladies, one of them visited a silversmith to ask about the process of refining silver. The gentleman described the process fully. When he finished, she asked, "...do you sit while the work of refining is going on?" He replied, "Oh, yes, madam, I must sit with my eye steadily fixed on the furnace, for if the time necessary for refining be exceeded in the slightest degree, the silver will be injured." Author Unknown.

Periodically, lives are filled with heartaches, disappointments and tears. It could be the end of a marriage, the diagnosis you hoped would never be spoken, the death of a loved one, or being separated from your family, or be in an unfamiliar strange, dangerous place. These trials reveal the silver, the diamond, or our blooming from inside. I look at change differently now. Maybe it comes with experience, age, faith or effort, but it is a difference that made me more comfortable and much happier.

My Pollyanna tendency caused me to look for a lesson in circumstances leading to this point of my life. If I can find a lesson in patience, I have grown. If I have found an opportunity to forgive, I have relieved my burden. If I can find something good in my frustration, I have realigned my outlook. I know you all have many circumstances, present and past, good and bad that will cause you to reflect too. What about your perspective? How has it changed to enable to put one foot in front of the other, day by day and move forward?

Again, I want to say how blessed I am by family and friends. Welcome Home! Janet





SARGE'S CAFÉ UPDATE

Sarge's Café served lunch to the Restoration Academy kindergarten class during vacation bible school the week of June 15, 2015. We had a great time and the kids loved having corn dogs, watermelon, pizza, snacks and candy. These events give me an opportunity to talk to the students, administrators and volunteers about Sarge, why Sarge's Café exists, and to give the adults some insight into the role of the Vietnam Combat Security Policeman. I always leave with a full heart and feeling blessed that I get to do this.

The donation from the VSPA will be providing sack lunches for Restoration Academy students for the 2015-2016 school year. We provide these lunches for the students who don't have lunch. We are also building our relationship with the Back Pack Buddies ministry at Helena United Methodist Church.

As we move forward, we are looking to broaden our marketing campaign and seeking additional venues and groups to serve. Please see our new website, www.sargescafe.com for more information and updates. Thank you for your support, for honoring Alvin "Sarge" Matthews, Life Member #127, and THANK YOU for your service.



WELCOME HOME,
With love and hugs from Sarge's daughter
Janet and his wife, Patricia.

**BUSINESS MEETING
20TH ANNUAL VSPA REUNION
SATURDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2014**

1. Call to Order at 0909 hours by President Pete Piazza.
2. Moment of silence for departed comrades 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. Also, at the request of President Pete Piazza, 17 non-member Security Policemen who had stood their final Guardmount were recognized for their service.
3. Invocation – Chaplain Jim Stastny
4. Pledge of Allegiance – Vice President Greg Cain
5. Introduction of elected officers by name, squadron and place of residence:
 - William Piazza, President; LM #141; Del City, OK, Cam Ranh Bay 66, Bien Hoa 67-68, Phu Cat 70-71.
 - Greg Cain, Vice President; LM #62; West Seneca, NY; Binh Thuy 1967-68.
 - Bill Marshall, Second Vice President; LM #85; Westerville, OH; Phu Cat, 1968-69. Unable to attend.
 - Jerry Nelson, Secretary; LM #120; San Antonio, TX; Phu Cat 821CSPS, Phan Rang 821CSPS, Tuy Hoa 821CSPS, 69-70
 - Richard Garcia, Treasurer; LM #82; Massapequa, NY; Phan Rang, 1969-70.
 - Kelly Bateman, Historian; LM #118; Wimberly, TX; Ubon K-9, 1970-71. Unable to attend.
 - Steve Gattis, President Emeritus; LM #49; Glen Rose, TX; Cam Ranh Bay, 1968-69.
 - Don Poss, Communications Director; LM #37; Hemet, CA; Da Nang K-9 1965-66.
 - Phil Carroll, Past President; LM #336; Gladstone, OR; Takhli and Nakhon Phanom K9, 1970-71. Unable to attend.

DECLARATION OF A QUORUM BY PRESIDENT PIAZZA WITH SIX MEMBERS OF THE BOARD PRESENT.

6. Approval of the minutes of the previous annual business meeting - The minutes were previously published in Guardmount. Motion to Approve by Dan Manuel 2nd by Ted Whitlock. Approved.

PRESENTATION OF A VSPA PLAQUE TO JOE SPENSER: Joe must leave early and will not be able to attend our annual awards banquet. Therefore, we are going to present this award now, in front of his peers. **We honor Joe Spenser** for his effort to preserve our history and

the memory of our fallen brothers by traveling from Alabama to Washington, D.C. to wash "The Wall" and thereby, preserve the memorial to our brothers who did not survive the war.

7. REPORTS by the President, Board Members, Appointed Staff and Committee Members.

- 7.1 Board of Directors Report** by President Pete Piazza – We discussed items of concern to the Board and have included them under NEW BUSINESS.
- 7.2 Guardmount Report** – Out of sequence by Erlyce Pekas so that she can attend the VSPA Sisterhood meeting. Erlyce expressed her appreciation for everyone who submitted stories and articles for Guardmount. This is her fourth year as Editor. She always sends a hardcopy of Guardmount to those who have written something that was published in Guardmount. She thanked the VSPA members present for the honor of being the Guardmount Editor for the last four years because her relationship with the VSPA since 2004 has changed her life. She expressed special thanks to Steve Gattis for his efforts to edit and proof read each issue of Guardmount. She 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. Motion to Approve by Ray Rash. 2nd by Van Digby. Approved.
- 7.3 Treasurer's Report** by Richard Garcia. Report attached to the file copy of the minutes. Amount in checking account: \$23,202.49. Amount in savings account: \$70,501.07. Motion to receive the financial report by Art Cook. 2nd by Duke Windsor. Approved.
- 7.4 Membership Chairman's Report** by Bill Marshall. He could not attend. His report was presented by our new Membership Chairman, Paul Shave. Report attached to the file copy of the minutes. Total number of VSPA members 1305, including 884 Life Members who have paid their dues for life. Motion to Approve by Claude Hebert. 2nd by Jack Smith. Approved.
- 7.5 BX Sales Report** by Van Digby. Van spoke about the new items in the inventory, including the cookbook prepared by the VSPA Sisterhood as a fundraiser for the association. The cookbook is \$15 at the reunion and will make a great Christmas gift. The VSPA Sisterhood Cookbook will be available in the BX after the reunion for \$20, including shipping. Motion to Approve by Bob Nichols. 2nd by Mike DeTuccio. Approved.
- 7.6 Web Site Report** by Don Poss, Communications Director, briefed on several initiatives that he is working for the VSPA. He is currently working on a Safeside picture history and requested those members having pictures that want to be a part of the program, please forward them to him. Additionally, he is currently constructing a detailed map of Phu Cat AB, RVN, which will allow zoom capability to any areas of interest for members.

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 the coming highly contested elections of 2014. 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 and bulletin boards. Motion to Approve by Ted Whitlock. 2nd by Ray Rash. Approved

- 7.7 Historian's Report:** Kelly Bateman was unable to attend. He is packing all VSPA historical and archive information to send to our new Historian, Steve Shelt.

SECURITY FORCES MUSEUM UPDATE: Presented by Ken Neal, VSPA Liaison to the Security Forces Museum and Member of the SF Museum Foundation – Report read by Steve Gattis due to Ken losing his voice. (Report Attached).

The Board of Directors voted in their meeting to conduct a one-year campaign to raise funds in support of the Security Forces Museum Foundation at Lackland. Articles and updates will be written for Guardmount. Members may donate to the Museum through the VSPA by using PayPal or by writing a check to the VSPA and designating funds for the Museum Foundation that our Treasurer will track. We will then make a donation to the Security Forces Museum Foundation at our 2015 Reunion in Las Vegas. Motion to Approve by Duke Windsor 2nd by Al Barnett. Approved

AS OF THIS PUBLICATION, THE MUSEUM IS NOW OPEN. See Article in this issue of Guardmount.

- 7.8 KENNEL MASTER'S REPORT:** Presented by Kennel Master Jim Stastny: K-9 members were able to spend an enjoyable day during the reunion at the Barksdale Kennels with Security Forces K-9 members. Activities included demonstrations, BBQ and great fellowship. A great time was had by all attendees.

NEMO'S WAR DOG HEROES MEMORIAL by Bill Cummings – Presented by Kennel Master, Jim Stastny:

Special thanks to Kelly Bateman and Ernie Childers for their endless hours and dedication. We continue to work with the AF and DOD kennels to keep the history of our era in the "sights". We work with handlers of our era on the records of their partners and work with a production studio for factual information and photographs

used in on-going media projects. We would like to thank VSPA members and friends for supporting our fundraising efforts since 2005. Additionally, we would like to thank the 377th SPS for their continued support.

OLD DAWGS & PUPS BRIEF by Bill Cummings - Presented by Kennel Master Jim Stastny:

1. More than 9 years supporting our deployed K-9 troops
2. Supported 420 MWD teams as of September 22, 2014
 - a. Mission – Base Security, FOBs and Outposts and OTW Explosive Teams
 - b. 114 Kennels – staffed by 65 units
 - c. 11 Southwest Asia Countries
 - d. Services:
 - i. 2 Civilian
 - ii. 3 Navy
 - iii. 15 Army
 - iv. 400 Air Force
 - v. We've lost 3 handlers – 1 in-country (Suicide) and 2 at home (MVA)
3. Deployed From:
 - a. 66 Stateside Bases – Air Force, Army and Navy
 - b. 11 Outside Conus – Air Force and Navy
4. Repeat Deplorers:
 - a. 2 timers – 31
 - b. 3 timers – 11 Personnel (2 are with us this weekend)
5. Expenditures: \$93,319 in equipment and supplies sent down range!
6. Equipment: 2,149 Pieces (Beds, Food & H2O carriers, cooling Vests and hoses)
7. Leading Sponsor: Leatherman Tool Company
 - a. Donated: \$63,014.00
 - b. Surges/Muts: 145 Surges
81 Muts
213 Flashlights
75 Knives
55 Wave Dog Toys
8. VSPA Financial Support: Over \$18,500.00 (Individuals and raffles) 2006-2011.
9. Special Thanks – Don and Larry Poss for creating and maintaining the Old Dawgs & Pups Website.

Motion to Approve by Art Senecal 2nd by Dan Vinson. Approved.

7.9 Safeside Liaison Report: Presented by Safeside Liaison David Pierson:

Safeside Reunion in 2015 at Moody AFB, Georgia - Dates: April 8 thru 11, 2015

In August 2014, we held our first Executive Board Meeting at Moody AFB, GA with our new Board of directors from the 820 BDG and their squadrons. All organizations are now involved in the management of the Association.

Colonel Paul Kasuda, Commander, 820 BDG, was presented a Safeside Legacy Award for this tireless support for the Safeside Association. His efforts have resulted in an increase of active duty members joining the Association.

Motion to Approve by Gary Jones 2nd by Bill McGraw. Approved

7.10 Service Officer's Report - Bud Owens was unable to attend due to some health issues. He remains available to assist our members with VA claims.

7.11 Scholarship Committee Report by Jim Lebowitz. Seven applications were mailed to applicants. Only two were returned. They were so outstanding that the committee recommends awarding two scholarships this year. The \$1,000 Annual J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarships are awarded to:

Adam Thorne, the son of VSPA Life Member Brian Thorne.

Breianna Pottberg, the granddaughter of VSPA Chaplain Steve Janke.

Motion to Approve by Mike DeTuccio 2nd by Al Barnett. Approved.

8. Old Business -

8.1 REUNION SITE SELECTION FOR 2016:

- a. Sites are selected two years in advance so that planning by the VSPA and the host Security Forces Squadron can begin early and they have time necessary to adapt to active-duty operational requirements. Nellis AFB, Nevada was selected in 2013 as the site for the 2015 reunion. Davis-Monthan AFB, Tucson, Arizona was selected as the backup location in case the 99th Security Forces Squadron at Nellis AFB could not host our reunion due to the impact of other operations and deployments. **Our 2015 reunion will be October 7 - 11 at Nellis AFB, Nevada which is located in Las Vegas, Nevada.**
- b. As in the past, the 2016 reunion will be held in October, the Wednesday through Sunday before the Columbus Day holiday (which is always the second Monday in October). The 2016 reunion will be held **October 5 thru 9, 2016.** The site selection process will be conducted by VSPA President Pete Piazza and Vice President Greg Cain.

- c. President Pete Piazza explained past reunions and the bylaw requirement to choose by alternating regions in the CONUS: WEST, CENTRAL and EAST and THAT WE MUST CHOOSE A LOCATION IN THE EAST FOR 2016.

BASES AVAILABLE IN THE EAST:

Hanscom AFB, MA
JB McGuire-Dix, NJ
Wright-Patterson, OH
Dover AFB, DE
JB Langley-Eustis, VA
JB Andrews, (D.C. area) MD
Arnold AFB, TN
Seymour Johnson, NC
Shaw AFB, SC
JB Charleston, SC
Moody AFB, GA
Robins AFB, GA
Maxwell/Gunter AFB, AL
Keesler AFB, MS
Columbus AFB, MS
Tyndall AFB, FL
Eglin/Hurlbert AFB, FL
Patrick AFB, FL
MacDill AFB, FL

BASES UNAVAILABLE OR UNACCESSABLE IN THE EAST:

Pope Field, NC (now a part of Ft. Bragg)

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

d. Presentations and voting process - VSPA President Pete Piazza, and VP Greg Cain.

1. **Primary Site for 2016 is MacDill AFB, Tampa, Florida**
2. Secondary Site for 2016 is Joint Base Andrews, Maryland

8.2 ELECTION OF OFFICERS – The slate for Board of Directors is:

Greg Cain, President
 Jack Smith, Vice President
 Bill Marshall, 2nd Vice President
 Jerry Nelson, Secretary
 Richard Garcia, Treasurer
 Steve Shelt, Historian

All candidates are unopposed. 54 ballots were mailed to our Sergeant-at-Arms, Keith Young. One ballot was sent to Steve Gattis from a member who is living temporarily in Ecuador. Motion to approve the election of the new Board of Directors for the term of office which will be for the next two years by Paul Sigler; 2nd by Jim Lebowitz. Motion approved by acclamation. The next elections will be held in 2016.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 50th ANNIVERSARY of the VIETNAM WAR – a DOD Partnership. Steve Gattis reported that the VSPA has been recognized by the DOD as a Commemorative Partner. We have received a Commemorative flag that we displayed along with the VSPA flag in our group photo taken in the hangar at Barksdale AFB. This is a 13 year program based upon a Presidential proclamation and Department of Defense Program to honor our service in Vietnam and Thailand. The photograph of our members will be placed on the DOD 50th Anniversary Web Site.

9.2 MEMBERSHIP – Dates of Eligibility – A Recommended Bylaw and Constitution Change by the Board of Directors. Information presented by Steve Gattis.

Dates for eligible membership in the VSPA are currently from July 1, 1958 to May 15, 1975, to include the Mayaguez and those who were involved in Operation Eagle Pull in support of the Mayaguez Operation. Originally, membership was open to those who served in Vietnam and Thailand during the dates established for the Vietnam Service Ribbon. We changed the dates to include our own historical information based upon facts provided by members who had served in Vietnam earlier than the established dates, whether as members of an ADVON or by

providing aircraft security for dignitaries, and because several of our members had been sent TDY from Clark Air Base to assist in the evacuation of Saigon in April, 1975. We also knew of documented attacks on Thailand bases and wanted to include those who were involved in the Mayaguez Operation, up to and including May 15, 1975 because Security Policemen were involved in the security and recovery of Knife 13, the helicopter that had crashed, killing 18 Security Policemen who were on board and enroute to the rescue staging area at U-Tapao RTAFB.

PROBLEM: We allow membership for those who served in Thailand during the Vietnam War, prior to May 15, 1975. However, we have had to deny membership to Security Policemen who arrived in Thailand after the fall of South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The country of Thailand was surrounded by three hostile countries that had fallen to Communist control. All Air Force personnel and assets were at extreme risk due to the internal politics of Thailand, the surrounding hostile countries, and all of the bombing missions that had been launched from Thailand into North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The Thai Monarchy and the Royal Family fled the country during a student uprising. They sought asylum in fear of a coup. The interim leader of Thailand made an official request for the United States to stop flying any type of missions out of Thailand and to withdraw all forces from Thailand. Air Base Defense was essential during the drawdown that started in the summer of 1975, with air base operations, aircraft and people being relocated to other countries (i.e. the 8th TFW from Ubon was sent to Kunsan AB, Korea). Some units deactivated and distributed aircraft, personnel and equipment to various locations in the United States. However, Royal Thai Air Force Bases did not close, nor did Don Muang International Airport where we had Security Policemen and K9. Airmen at Don Muang lived in a secure hotel and could not wear their uniform off base. Some base operations involving US Air Force personnel closed by the end of 1975 while others did not close until mid-1976. However, we cannot determine whether individual Security Policemen were sent TDY or PCS to other bases, RADAR sites or other facilities in Thailand like Don Muang Airport, remaining in place for Air Base Defense and security of our personnel pending the closure and departure of their specific mission by the end of 1976.

PROPOSAL: That the VSPA change our Bylaws and Constitution to include Thailand service through 1976, so that we can recognize the service of Security Policemen who remained behind to protect the people and assets during the drawdown of forces, recognizing that Thailand was still accepting refugees fleeing from South Vietnam, and that Security Policemen, Thai forces and other US personnel remained vulnerable to attack while surrounded by three Communist countries. The change will also allow us to increase our membership. If approved, the dates of membership eligibility will be July 1, 1958 to December 31, 1976.

Motion to Approve by Ray Rash. 2nd by Paul Baker. Approved.

PROPOSAL: That those Thailand Security Policemen who had previously applied for membership and were deemed ineligible due to our previous Bylaws, be contacted and provided a one year free membership. Hopefully, this will increase our

membership and allow the VSPA to honor the service of those Security Policemen.
Motion to Approve by Don Poss. 2nd by Mike DeTuccio. Approved

9.3 ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIPS – These are non-voting, non-dues paying honorary memberships in the VSPA in recognition of specific service to the VSPA.
Information presented by Steve Gattis.

Since 1995, we have awarded 10 honorary, non-voting, non-dues paying memberships in the VSPA. We have always considered them a very high honor. As you know, Mom Lehman, Erlyce Pekas and Larry Poss are Associate members who attend our reunions. Another one of them is our point of contact next year at Nellis AFB, retired MSgt Tim Waage, who designed our commemorative badge. Your Board has voted to recommend two more to receive this honor for their commitment to our history, for teaching that history to Defenders of today and for being living examples of our motto: “We take care of our own.”

LIEUTENANT COLONEL SCOTT FOLEY: For living our history and motto “We take care of our own” while hosting Law Enforcement Memorial Week activities and the SF Ball for one year at Eglin AFB, two years at Langley AFB and one year at Lackland AFB. He was our guest speaker in 2013, traveling from Texas to North Carolina at his own expense. He gave an invitation to the VPSA when he spoke at the reunion and then followed up with additional postings on the VSPA Bulletin Board. His effort to preserve our history is more than apparent as he extends open invitations for VSPA members to visit Lackland and his squadron. He has hosted VSPA Historian, Steve Shelt, to speak to troops on three different occasions. The presentation of this honorary membership in the VSPA will be made at Lackland AFB in conjunction with 2015 law enforcement memorial week activities. Scott Foley has again extended an open invitation to VSPA members to attend the 2015 Security Forces Ball at Lackland AFB, Texas.

RETIRED COL JOE, our guest speaker this year. He attended our reunion in 2007 with Affiliate Member, then BG Mary Kay Hertog. He was a member of her staff and is personal friends with Frank and Joan Pilson. They highly recommended him as a guest speaker because of what they knew about him and his career as an enlisted Security Policeman, an NCO and then as an officer who rose to the rank of Colonel before retiring. He has planned to be our guest speaker for over a year, and rather than flying in on orders from the Air Force, he flew round-trip from his home to Shreveport at his own expense, in tribute to our service as well as the memory of Joan Pilson. He also refused to allow the VSPA to pay for his room. He was impressed with our brotherhood and very supportive in 2007. His financial and personal commitment to the success of our 2014 reunion demonstrates his commitment to our motto of “We take care of our own.”

Motion to Approve by Mike DeTuccio. 2nd by Jack Smith. Approved

Editor's Note: The following information was provided by VSPA Secretary Jerry Nelson who is also the President of the Safeside Association. All Vietnam Era members of the Safeside Association are members of the Vietnam Security Police Association. This year, while meeting at Moody AFB in April, our Safeside members honored one of our own, BG Richard Coleman (retired), with the creation of the Brigadier General Richard A. Coleman Award. BG Coleman served an enlisted tour in Safeside. Several years later, he served as a Security Police Lieutenant in charge of security under fire during the evacuation of Saigon. BG Coleman received the inaugural award. The second award was presented to an active duty Safeside member assigned to the 820th Base Defense Group at Moody AFB.

SAFESIDE ASSOCIATION

BRIGADIER GENERAL RICHARD A. COLEMAN AWARD



General Richard A. Coleman served the United States Air Force for 6 decades, enlisting in 1956 and retiring in 2000. He is a combat veteran of the Vietnam War, and led joint, combined and interagency forces in numerous contingencies, to include serving as the air movement Commander, Joint Task Force Safe Passage. General Coleman performed duties across many diverse professions, to include Military Training Instructor, Small Arms Instructor, Operations Officer, five times Squadron Commander, Group Commander, and culminating as the Director of Security Force and Commander of the Security Forces Center, United States Air Force. As the Director of Security Forces, United States Air Force, General Coleman was responsible for the oversight of over 30,000 active duty and Reserve component Security Forces, serving our Air Force worldwide. While working directly for the Air Force Joint Chief of Staff, General Ronald Fogleman, and with the assistance of his own outstanding staff, General Coleman planned and executed many initiatives directly affecting our career field, to include the mounted horse patrol, brassards, combat airmen initiative, “every airman a warrior”, consolidating the Security Forces career Field, incorporating CATM in the career field and changing the entry requirements in the MWD positions. Additionally, the MWD breeding program was brought about by him convincing the Comptroller General to fund the program. He also consolidated his staff and opened the Security Forces Center at Lackland AFB, TX . Additionally, he envisioned building an organization not tied to a weapon system. With General Fogleman’s approval and support, he and his staff fought to obtain funding, multiple AFSC authorizations, staffing and equipment and that resulted in the formation of the 820th SFG. The unit was stood up at Lackland AFB, TX in March 1997 by the Chief of Staff United States Air Force, the only Security Forces unit in the history of the Air Force to be born this way. Today, the 820th BDG is the Air Force’s premiere Force Protection unit, deployable anywhere in the world at any time. General Coleman’s outstanding service of 44 years, leadership in both combat and peacetime military operations and valor exemplify the ideals of the Safeside heritage, and create a lasting legacy that all should emulate.

Editor's Note: To demonstrate the high caliber of Security Forces airmen who have followed in our footsteps and those of our Safeside brothers, the following is included as recognition for the missions performed by Security Forces Defenders, both inside and outside the wire.

SAFESIDE ASSOCIATION

BRIGADIER GENERAL RICHARD A. COLEMAN AWARD

is presented to

MASTER SERGEANT MICHAEL D. MURPHY

MSgt Michael D. Murphy distinguished himself with outstanding service to the 820th Base Defense Group, the 822nd Base Defense Squadron and the Safeside Association. His level of dedication and achievement is particularly noteworthy.

MSgt Murphy led Air Force Central Command's largest Air Force Office of Special Investigation/E Detachment, Bagram's only Air Force combat unit, managing 41 Airmen and \$39 million in assets. He marshaled 99 combat missions, 752 Information Intelligence Reports resulting in the capture of 33 insurgents. During operations, the team captured the Wing's #1, #4 and #8 high value targets and halted the Taliban's freedom of movement. He was awarded the US Army 101st Division Combat patch and was the 820th BDG Flight SNCO of the Year. While pressuring the Hezbollah Islamic Group, their leader surrendered, and their key financier/facilitator was neutralized. He drove AFOSI's highest priority, resulting in identification of 1,800 subjects, 219 targets, 29 IEDs and 7 weapon caches. Under his leadership, the team foiled 114 rockets/fuses/mines/missile attacks – reduced Bagram's attack rate to 4 year low! He led the 455 Air Expeditionary Wings #1 team, fusing 2 units/8 agencies and managing 101 warriors. He handled 86 war-time tasks. His strong leadership pushed the success of 2 wings, which resulted in the 455 AEW Meritorious Unit Award and the Air Force Verne Orr Award. As a result of his superb leadership and outstanding performance, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. He is clearly one the Air Force's very best warriors!

It is with great pleasure that the Safeside Association presents the Brigadier General Richard A. Coleman Award to MSgt Michael D. Murphy.

SPECIAL MOMENTS IN TIME

FOR VSPA MEMBERS



Pete Villarreal receives the BG Coleman Award for his work with the VSPA, Safeside and active duty Defenders.



Gary Jones receives the Sgt Major Frink Award (named after VSPA member Sgt Major Robert Frink, Safeside) for his inspirational work with the VSPA, Safeside and active duty Defenders.



Willie Squires (Left) and Jim Stastny (Right) received Quilts of Valor that were presented to them on June 6th at The Wall by a retired Army Major General and the Quilts of Valor volunteers who made the quilts to honor them for their service and sacrifice for our country.

CONGRATULATIONS & WELCOME HOME!

NOTE: All Officers and Staff are unpaid VSPA members who volunteer to serve their brothers in the association. Officers were elected in 2012 for a two-year term. Staff members were appointed to assist and advise the officers of the association as needed.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

PRESIDENT: Greg Cain; Binh Thuy 67-68; gjcain@roadrunner.com 716-771-1157

VICE PRESIDENT: Jack Smith; Tan Son Nhut 68-69; skycop67@yahoo.com 614-879-6835

2nd VICE PRESIDENT: Bill Marshall; Phu Cat 68-69; billmarshallvspalm85@gmail.com 614-623-3568

SECRETARY: Jerry Nelson; Safeside Phan Rang, Phu Cat, Tuy Hoa 69-70; jrmel1423@aol.com 210-273-4777.

TREASURER: Richard Garcia; Phan Rang 69-70; cal400@optonline.net 516-799-9205

HISTORIAN: Steve Shelt; Phu Cat & Pleiku 67-68; sshelt1102@gmail.com 706-231-5056

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: Don Poss; Da Nang 65-66; Blackie 129X

DonPossLM37@vspa.com 951-325-7244

PAST PRESIDENT: William "Pete" Piazza; Cam Ranh Bay 66, Bien Hoa 67-68, Phu Cat 70-71;

WPIAZZA@aol.com 405-670-3101 or 405-921-8900

PRESIDENT EMERITUS: Steve Gattis; Cam Ranh Bay 68-69; SGattis-LM49@vspa.com 254-898-2647

APPOINTED STAFF:

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN Paul Shave; Binh Thuy 68-69; Paul_Shave@hotmail.com 505-831-9401

MEMBERSHIP ASSISTANT Janet Matthews-Parker; Sisterhood VP; janetmm62@gmail.com 205-663-7662

K-9 KENNEL MASTER Jim Stastny; Korat 7071; Boots 645M; jimstastny@verizon.net 301-482-2659

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS Keith Young; Binh Thuy, Phu Cat 70-71; kcy9540@aol.com 716-549-0715

SERVICE OFFICER Bud Owens; Binh Thuy 66-67; betbudowe@comcast.net 603-7781990

BX STORE MANAGERS: Van and Joyce Digby, assisted by daughter and son-in-law Kim & Brent Budzinski—MAIL ORDER available by phone 989-667-9117 or email: jad403@att.net or van403@att.net (** Please note these are new email addresses for Van and Joyce **)

CHAPLAIN Steve Janke; Cam Ranh Bay 69-70; Kobuc X448; Jank953208@aol.com 201-507-9038

CHAPLAIN Jim Stastny; Korat 7071; Boots 645M; jimstastny@verizon.net 301-482-2659

CHAPLAIN Bill Cooley; Cam Ranh Bay 7172; Mingo 30A0 BCAJ@gvvc.com 830-899-7542

CHAPLAIN Jeff Kerkhoff; Tan Son Nhut 72-73; (no email); 626-3386846

GUARDMOUNT EDITOR: Steve Gattis; Cam Ranh Bay 68-69; SGattis-LM49@vspa.com 254-898-2647

GUARDMOUNT ASSISTANT EDITOR: Erlyce Pekas; erlyce@msn.com 602-574-7089

SAFESIDE LIASON Dave Pierson; Binh Thuy 69-70; swampur@att.net 775-883-7647

PARALEGAL Paul Sigler; Cam Ranh Bay 6566; parazig169@att.net 918-336-3595

WEB ADMINISTRATOR Larry Poss; Associate Member; larry@larryposs.com 702-501-7677

WEB MASTER Don Poss; Da Nang 65-66; Blackie 129X; DonPossLM37@vspa.com 951-325-7244

K-9 WEB MASTER Monty Moore; Da Nang, Phu Cat 68-70; Kobuc X448, Giant A905, Blackie 129X k9@vspa.com 512-639-0005

WEB QRT Troubleshooter Gary Jones; Udorn, Safeside Phan Rang, Da Nang, Tan Son Nhut; 1965; 68-69; 71-72; gjones003@sc.rr.com 843-851-7427

WEB ADOBE PDF TECH Greg Dunlap; Da Nang 6869; Blackie 129X; blackey@sonic.net 707-576-9683

BB FLIGHT LEADER Bill Marshall; Phu Cat 6869; billmarshallvspalm85@gmail.com
949-388-5664

PHOTOGRAPHER Tony Morris; Cam Ranh Bay 69-70; htmorris@gmail.com 219-322-4418

PHOTOGRAPHER Steve Hall; Binh Thuy 68-69; hallstudio@att.net 714-634-1132

PHOTOGRAPHER Terry Hall; Nha Trang 67-68; TerryHallPhotography@comcast.net
856-981-5071

PHOTOGRAPHER Lou Reda; Phan Rang 68-69; loureda202@gmail.com 419-668-7591

VSPA SCHOLARSHIP Jim “Buddah” Lebowitz; Bien Hoa 66-68; jlz9107@earthlink.net

REUNION HOSPITALITY Sheila Gervase-Cain; Sisterhood President; smgervase@yahoo.com
716-771-1157

BINH THUY LIAISON Lew Goldberg; Binh Thuy 68-69; ojdiddoit@yahoo.com 417-877-7888

CAM RANH BAY LIAISON Trent Nentrup; Cam Ranh Bay 68-69; trent.nentrup@gmail.com
812-341-2235

NHA TRANG LIAISON Larry Fleming; Nha Trang 68-69; Ldfleming569@gmail.com
254-898-2140 Home; 254-396-4091 Cell.

NKP LIAISON George Conklin; NKP 1970-71; K-9 Ango 0K31; nkpk970@gmail.com
406-781-2269

PHAN RANG LIAISON Please contact Paul Shave if you are interested in being the liaison.

PHU CAT LIAISON Ron Arthur; Phu Cat 67-68; cobranam68@aol.com 660-678-3501

PLEIKU LIAISON Pat Dunne (Hawk); Pleiku 1968; hawk51044@aol.com 954-923-9001

TAN SON NHUT LIAISON Charles Penley; Tan Son Nhut 67-69; Rebel A531 cpenley@chartertn.net
423-245-6863

UBON LIAISON Jim Watson; Ubon 68-69; Fritz X704; jimwatk9@ca.rr.com 626-806-8463

WASH “THE WALL” IN WASHINGTON D.C. COORDINATORS: Gary Jones (See WEB QRT Troubleshooter Above) and Jim Stastny (See K-9 Kennel Master Above)

VSPA SISTERHOOD:

PRESIDENT Sheila Gervase-Cain; smgervase@yahoo.com 716-771-1157

VICE PRESIDENT Janet Matthews-Parker; janetmm62@gmail.com 205-663-7662

SECRETARY Erlyce Pekas; erlyce@msn.com 602-574-7089

CHAPLAIN Roberta Smith; rps.jackie@yahoo.com 614-879-6835

CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY Pam Talbot; lilacroller1@comcast.net 815-935-2139

.....

USAF AIR POLICE and SECURITY POLICE Vietnam and Thailand Veterans - Welcome Home!

If you served in the USAF Air Police, Security Police, K-9, Safeside, or as a Security Police Augmentee in Vietnam or Thailand between 1958 and 1976, there’s a great brotherhood looking for you. With more than 1,300 currently active members, the Vietnam Security Police Association is where you belong.

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

If you’re qualified and interested in membership, read more about the VSPA and how to join our brotherhood by going to our website: www.vspa.com. WELCOME HOME TO THE VSPA!

REUNION REMINDER—Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nevada October 7-11, 2015

EDITOR'S NOTE: My dear brothers and sisters of the VSPA,

It is with deep regret that I relinquish the reins as Editor of your *GUARDMOUNT* newsletter. I have had some personal medical problems, and my mother recently suffered a stroke, requiring me to be at her bedside in northern Minnesota. I may undergo surgery in the near future and will keep you posted on that as well. I DO intend to accompany Mom Lehman to the next reunion in Las Vegas.

I have been honored to be your editor for the past five years, but I find that I cannot do it justice at this time while I face personal challenges. Your President Emeritus, Steve Gattis, assembled, published and edited this issue of *Guardmount* and will take over effective immediately. He has created several issues of *Guardmount* in the past and I will assist him as I am able. You should be very proud of Steve. He has always assisted me with editing and steps in wherever and whenever he is needed, despite his own personal responsibilities and heavy workload. I am proud to call him my dear friend.

Please send your stories and photos to Steve Gattis SGattis-LM49@vspa.com from this point on. I plan to handle the administrative part of the job, and will continue to leave my address on the return address area of *GM* so I can handle mail outs and returns, etc.

I love you all. My honorary membership in the VSPA means the world to me. Thank you for your support and contributions for the last five years. I will continue to do what I can to support all of you.

Sincerely,

Erlyce Pekas, Assistant Editor, *GUARDMOUNT*

Associate Member of the VSPA and Secretary of the VSPA Sisterhood

Erlyce Pekas, Assistant Editor
Vietnam Security Police Association
P.O. Box 22035
Phoenix, AZ 85028
Email: erlyce@msn.com or SGattis-LM49@vspa.com