



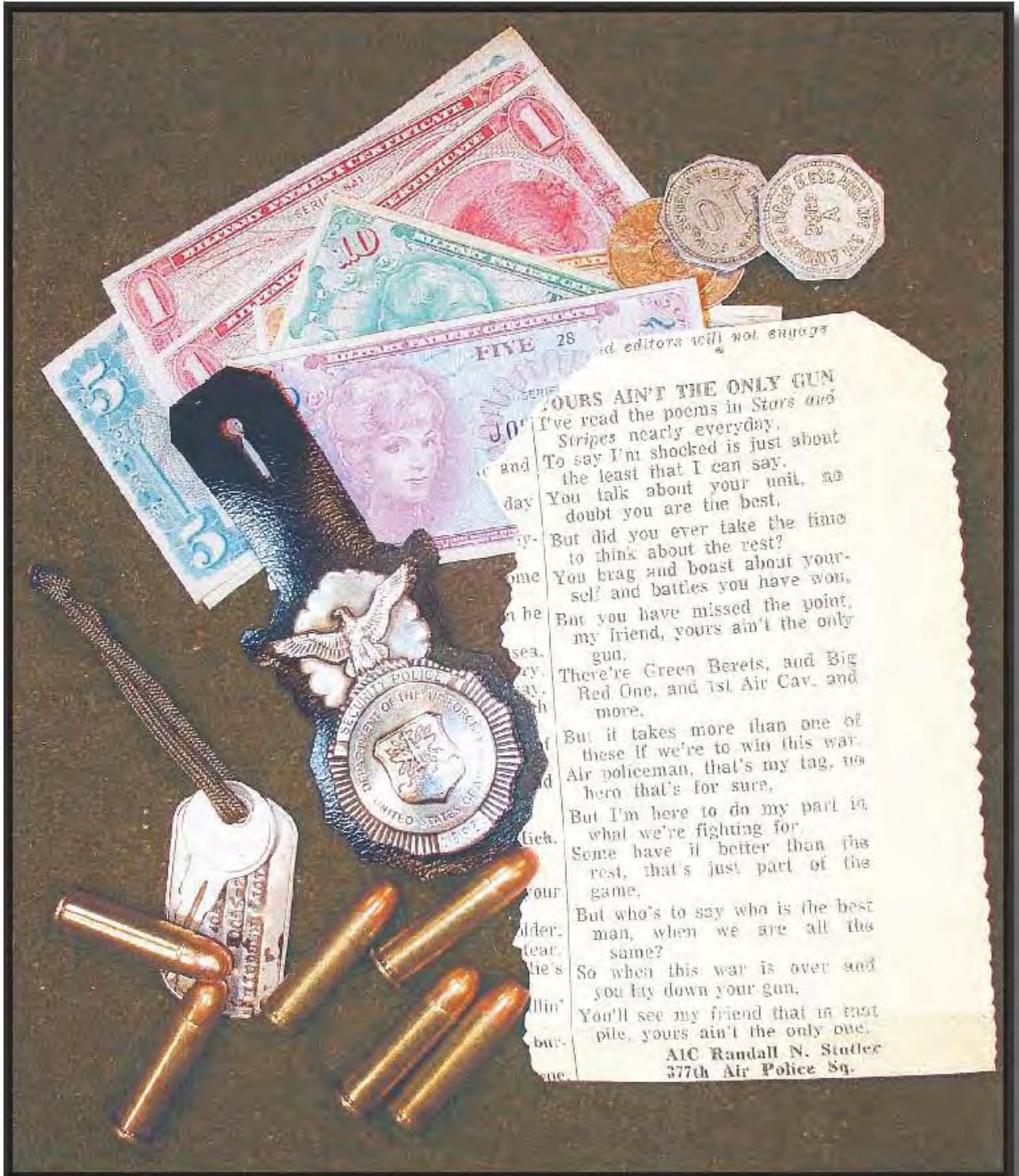
# GUARDMOUNT

VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION

"We Take Care of Our Own"



Fall-Winter 2009 Issue



# **PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

by Newell Swartz

## ***The Excellent 2009 VSPA Reunion***

Our 15th Annual Reunion in Phoenix, AZ had about 170 members and guests who attended. The weather was great, the food was good and there were plenty of drinks and snacks for the Hospitality Room. Our tour at Luke AFB was one of the best I have attended in five reunions. Major Michael J. Borders, Commander of the 56th Security Forces Squadron, committed at least fifty of the security forces men and women to the various demonstrations we saw. Big difference in this unit that I noticed was that everyone participated in the physical exercise, officers, senior NCOs, NCOs and all the troops, men and women, doing the same exact exercises. The exercises are set up so the same types of strength and skill as used in combat are used in their exercise programs, relay teams running carrying a litter patient, running with full ammo cans etc. Very impressive because they work as a team and are led by example.

## ***Changes in the VSPA BX Store***

At the Board Meeting of the VSPA Officers, Van Digby tendered his resignation as the BX Manager effective 1 July 2010 to give us time to find a replacement. His wife Joyce accompanied him. Both Van and Joyce, along with their daughter Kari, have managed the BX for over seven years and nurtured it from an inventory of about \$2,500 to an inventory of about \$25,000. They fill anywhere from 20-30 orders a week to as high as 40-50 orders during peak times. Each order according to Van and Joyce takes about an hour and a half to fill. That's from when they receive an order, to filling it, wrapping it and mailing it. Then there is the administrative side such as managing the PayPal account, ordering new merchandise from vendors and doing the physical inventory. At the reunions when others are enjoying some quiet time or enjoying the Hospitality Room, Van and Joyce were working in the BX for our benefit. We owe them a debt of gratitude that can never be paid. We are very fortunate to have had Van, Joyce and Kari provide such great service over the last seven years. The Digby family exemplifies the type of dedication to the members of the VSPA that makes the VSPA a great association.

The BX is no longer a small operation and it has become a very time consuming operation which has to be treated as a business; one in which the primary goal is to provide merchandise to our members at the lowest possible price for the highest quality goods. It is apparent that the VSPA was fortunate in having a family like the Digbys devote the space in their home for the merchandise, have three adults who assisted in the operation of the BX and provide the tireless effort they put forth. I did not seriously consider asking for another volunteer to devote



*VSPA President Newell Swartz and Past President Steve Gattis presenting VSPA "Defenders of the Force" challenge coins to active duty members of the 56th Security Forces Squadron at Luke AFB during the 2009 VSPA Reunion.*

that much time out of their life. This is a full-time job at a time when most of us are retired or looking forward to retirement.

Don and Larry Poss are already heavily involved with the VSPA in providing us with web services and also operate an on-line store that sells military memorabilia. Don and Larry donated several large flags and banners for our reunion this year along with numerous other items worth in excess of \$1,500. I asked if either of them would be interested in managing the VSPA BX, but both initially declined to be managers. After two potential deals to locate a manager failed, Larry agreed to take on our BX as contract manager for one year at a time, with extensions up to five years if both parties agree. The basics of the agreement are that the VSPA retains ownership of the current inventory. The prices for merchandise, the quality of merchandise and the time to process orders will be about the same as current orders. There were some initial slowdowns during the Christmas Holidays but the BX continued to receive orders on PayPal and those mailed to the Digbys were forwarded to Larry Poss. The profits will be 80% to Larry Poss and 20% to the VSPA. What is considered profit is what funds remain after replacing the merchandise and paying business expenses. This will be an on-line store. Accountability can be ascertained on a monthly basis or even a daily basis if needed since the business transactions are computerized. Larry assumed operation of the BX effective January 1, 2010.

I believe, as does your board, that this is our best opportunity to make the BX a viable business. Our primary motive is not to make money but to continue to provide the best quality of merchandise for the best price to our members. Any earnings can go into the scholarship fund or to fund the challenge coins we give away each year to the Security Forces personnel who support our reunion visit to their base. Larry is a businessman experienced in this type of business; he believes he can make a profit without increasing merchandise cost and most of all he is already a crucial benefactor to the VSPA. There is a trust factor here that we would not share with someone who has not previously shown a high level of dedication to the VSPA.

### ***VSPA Legal Status***

The accountants and attorney hired to file tax returns for the VSPA have all the requested information in their possession. We are current on our reporting obligations to the State of Texas.

### ***The 2010 VSPA Reunion***

The guest speaker for our 2010 reunion in San Antonio will be LtCol Robert Sullivan, USAF (ret.). On 1 August 1966, then Capt Sullivan led our convoy of 52 SPs , some Red Horse construction troops, a couple of cooks and one medic into Phu Cat Valley. When we arrived at the location (couldn't even call it a camp much less a base) we threw our belongings out the back of the trucks onto the ground. Bulldozers started grading away the prickly pear cactus patches so the Red Horse guys could pitch our tents while we scouted out guard positions and dug foxholes. Capt Sullivan will have something of interest to say to everyone. He was the first SP Commander at Phu Cat and he treated us great. He welcomed the 1041st (Test) which were the first Safeside troops to Phu Cat in Jan 67, toured the US with the famous War Dog hero Nemo, and was later assigned to work on the Military War Dog Program.

As part of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) the SFS units at Lackland AFB (the 37th) and Randolph (the 12th) which were formerly at Phu Cat are being deactivated in 2010.

The future presence or configuration of SFS troops at Lackland is not known at this time. I have been in contact with LtCol Schneider, the current CO of the 37th SFS and he will keep us apprised of developments as they occur which might impact on our reunion. Anyone desiring information on the status of the VSPA reunion visit to Lackland may contact Steve Gattis, Hector Ramos or myself. Please do not contact the base or the SFS unit for information. The members of Cobra Flight from Phu Cat have a reunion scheduled in the Spring of 2010 and we do not want to cause any confusion as the SFS will have their hands full with the deactivation.

### ***One More Announcement . . .***

My final comment is to inform you that I do not intend to run for a second term as president of the VSPA. When I stepped up to run for president it was because I saw things that I knew could be improved upon. All of these issues have been addressed and I am satisfied that I have been a part of several changes for the betterment of the VSPA.

Sometimes when change is needed, close friends are hesitant to suggest to those who have worked tirelessly for us that some changes can be made to increase our efficiency. Nothing is forever. Changes in one area necessitate changes in other areas. Basically, the VSPA outgrew the methods of accountability under which growth was sustained up until recently. The VSPA, due to our size and increasing complexity, requires newer more modern methods to capture data and achieve accountability. Highly efficient computerized methods now let us capture data from membership dues, whether by checks or PayPal, and track the money that goes into the bank account under the oversight of the treasurer. The BX operates the same way. While this simplifies matters for the treasurer, it does require significant computer skills and an investment in the personal computer systems of those managing these systems. The treasurer now files a monthly report with the president and vice president detailing those transactions. I feel it is appropriate to have a professional accountant who is not a VSPA member file our taxes each year. It is just good business practice when we are dealing with a sizeable sum of money that belongs to an entire membership.

I would like to especially single out those folks who have given a tremendous amount of time and effort over the past year to coordinate the new systems we have in place. First: Van, Joyce and Kari Digby with Larry Poss for the BX operations; Phil Carroll for management of our membership program; Don Poss for the innovative website and computer programs; Richard Garcia and Den Cook for getting our financial matters squared away and finally Steve Gattis for all his work gathering information for our past tax years and coordinating with the accountant, the tax attorney and the Texas Secretary of State's Office for our Articles of Incorporation. If any one of these folks had dragged their feet or walked away from all the extra work, it would have made everything much more difficult for everyone else. Many others contributed to the success we will have in the future but the above folks significantly disrupted holidays and took many hundreds of hours from their families to improve upon what we already had.

In selecting your elected board in the future I would only caution you that there are no ceremonial posts on your elected board. Look to see who has the experience and desire to serve you in the future. What they have done for you in the past is a good indicator of how they will perform for you in the future.

Respectfully,  
Newell Swartz, President

## ***Yours Ain't the Only Gun***

by A1C Randall N. Stutler  
377th Air Police Squadron

I've read the poems in Stars and Stripes nearly everyday.  
To say I'm shocked is just about the least that I can say.  
You talk about your unit, no doubt you are the best,  
But did you ever take the time to to think about the rest?  
You brag and boast about yourself and battles you have won,  
But you have missed the point my friend, yours ain't the only gun.  
There's Green Berets, and Big Red One, and 1st Air Cav and more,  
But it takes more than one of these if we're to win this war.  
Air Policeman, that's my tag, no hero that's for sure,  
But I'm here to do my part in what we're fighting for.  
Some have it better than the rest, that's just part of the game,  
But who's to say who is the best when we are all the same?  
So when this war is over and you lay down your gun,  
You'll see my friend that in that pile yours ain't the only one.



## ***Old Memories; Old Friends***

by Randy "Ramps" Stutler

I got an email from Mike Tillman on 1/29/2009, it reads as follows....,

Ramps,

My power was off yesterday so I was going thru some old junk boxes instead of playing on the computer. I found an old yellowed clipping from possibly the Stars and Stripes that (to the best of my memory) I had sent to my first wife from VN. It was a poem entitled "Yours Ain't The Only Gun."

After reading this poem I had not seen in 40-odd years, I glanced down at the author thinking you and some more of the guys might like it. The author – A1C Randall N. Stutler, 377th Air Police Sqn. !!! I can't believe that there are two of you, but just in case, did you write this sometime in 65 or 66? I was planning on posting the story and the poem on the BB, but figured I'd ask you first to make sure I'm right on the facts. If you would like the clipping, I'd be happy to send it to you.

Mike

Yes, I remembered the poem "Your's Ain't The Only Gun." I think I wrote it sometime around June 1966 when I was assigned to the 377th Air Police Squadron at Tan Son Nhut. I thought I

had remembered the poem, but after reading the original Mike had sent me, I had been missing a few lines all these years. It is so strange how my memories were ‘refreshed’ as I read that old poem. Forty three years had passed, but the memories had not.

Hey Mike!

Yes, that was me. Still is me, I guess (LOL). I can’t believe a copy of that ever survived to this day. I used to get a little ‘disjointed’ when folks who didn’t know any better thought all we ever did was control traffic at the main gate and flirt with the pretty girls (half of that is great).

What are the odds that you would ever run across that old poem? If you don’t mind, and you can do it..., would you please scan a copy of that poem for me? I was one of the real IDIOTS in Vietnam..., I never kept my lighter, patches, didn’t get many pictures, didn’t stay in touch with my friends. I never thought things like that would mean something some day. Thanks for telling me about your find..., I appreciate it!

Randy “Ramps” Stutler

In the exchange of emails that followed Mike and I came to the realization that many of our members have experienced since joining the VSPA. Our Brothers, our old memories, mean much more to us now than we could have ever imagined back then. I never thought back then that I would ever look back to my time in Vietnam with any kind of fond memories. I’m sure Mike felt about the same, back then.

Ramps,

Never kept much myself – still got my black beret – used to have a lot of slides but lost them. The poem was mixed in with a few faded pictures. I remembered the poem when I read it but except for finding the VSPA would have never paid much attention to the author. I jumped up and started yelling “Ramps wrote it, Ramps wrote it” My wife thought I was having a fit of some sort!

Anyways, I have (hopefully) attached it. I’ll take it with me to the Dayton gig Saturday. If this doesn’t send, let me know and I’ll get the wifey to help me!!!

Stay safe, buddy.

Mike

How I wish I could have made it to the Dayton Mini-Reunion. It would have been so great to meet Mike and the guys, especially knowing that he was going to have that clipping with him..., I had previous arrangements for that weekend which would not let me make it to the reunion. I think it’s worth mentioning that Mike always ends his emails with:

America, don’t let the Eagle die... Dexter Frisby 1932 – 2003 SF – RVN

I sent a copy of the old poem and a short report of what happened to Newell and a couple of the guys. They got a big hoot out of it..., especially the part about Mike jumping up and down yelling “Ramps wrote it!”

Our VSPA President, Newell Swartz, “suggested” that I get in touch with Larry Ernsting, VSPA Guardmount Editor, and see if we could do a story on the events that brought this old poem from Vietnam, Stars and Stripes, back to its author (me) after all these years...,

It was also suggested that I might give a little insight to the pride I had in being an Air Policeman that caused me to write the poem in the first place. "Back In The Day" when I was a three-stripe Airman First Class I was not just 'another snuffly.' At times, I felt like an old man with the weight of the world on my shoulders at 20 years old! We goofed off a little now and then, but WE ALWAYS DID OUR JOB as professionals!

We weren't that well equipped, and truthfully we weren't that well trained, but we did the best we could with what we had, and we NEVER failed to accomplish our mission!

I joined the US Army after I got out of the Air Force. I went through several Army MOSQ Schools, including Jump School (my favorite). I was with Army Special Forces for 7 years plus; Army PSYOPS for 7 years plus; and Army NCO Academy for 7 years plus. I always put my troops first!!! I used to tell my students how they needed to learn 'personal responsibility and discipline' the way the Air Force Security Police practiced those attributes, probably two of the most important qualities of any good Airman or Soldier.

Saturday, 2/21/2009 I went to the post office to get my mail. I got a package from Mike. It was a beautiful plaque he had made with the clipping of the poem in the center, the word "RAMPS" at the top, and the year "1966" at the bottom. I have big plaques for being the NCO of The Year for my Major Army Command and such, but I will never have a plaque that will mean more to me than the one my friend Mike Tillman made for me with a small part of the proud young Air Policeman I was back then.

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## ***The Waving Nurse***

It all started with a message Charles Penley posted on the VSPA Bulletin Board on 15 Sep 2009, for somebody who had contacted him for information. The post said, in part:

"I am hoping that some of the former Security Police members can fill in the blanks on this story -- or at least will remember what happened. I lived in one of the two female BOQs that were behind the VNAF Chapel (which had the impressive hole in the roof from an earlier rocket attack).

During the first half of my tour (April 1968 -- May 1969), there was a nurse who had started a tradition of standing on the second floor balcony of our building and waving at the SPs who passed, late in the afternoon, for a shift change. Charles Penley, who is my guru on "all things TSN," has told me that the SPs could have been going to Bravo Sector, Charlie Sector, Delta Sector, or Base Police guard posts. This grew to be quite a "tradition."

"Does anyone remember this? I have a vague memory of being told at the time that she had been invited over to the SPs' area and they thanked her and "made a fuss about her." I hope that happened!"

You can follow the whole story through posts on the BB. A series of VSPA members came up with photos and stories to fill in the blanks, some of which are now posted on the Tan Son Nhut Association's website. Then Steve Gattis tracked down the original "Waving Nurse" on the phone and arranged for Bill Paddock to meet with her at a nursing home in Sumpter, South

Carolina. On 15 Oct, 2009, Bill posted the following on the Bulletin Board:

I met with Lt. Col Ruth Sidison this afternoon at Covenant Place nursing home, Sumter, South Carolina. Also there was Maj. Dee Corbett-Reiter, her friend and fellow nurse at TSN. I handed her each gift from all the members of the VSPA one at a time and she would exclaim and “cry” with each one. She has had a stroke and is fixing to go for more treatment at either Duke University or somewhere.

She asked me to thank all of you for the gifts and she send her unqualified love to each and everyone of you. Dee Corbett-Reiter also sends her love, thanks and appreciation for thinking of her...mostly remembering her! I have taken about twenty pictures of this event so if you would like some let me know and I will email them to you.

There’s a copy of the joint VSPA and Sisterhood proclamation that we have sent to the “Waving Nurse” at the end of this issue. Check our next issue for lots more on this heartwarming story.



*Bill Paddock with the TSN Waving Nurse*

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The Luke Air Force Base

# Thunderbolt

Train The World's Greatest F-16 Fighter Pilots and Maintainers, While Deploying Mission Ready Warfighters



Oct. 16, 2009  
Vol. 9, No. 41

## ***Vietnam vets share memories at Luke***

by Master Sgt. Stephen Delgado, 56th Fighter Wing Public Affairs  
(From the Luke AFB “Thunderbolt” newspaper)

10/16/2009 - LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz. -- Luke Air Force Base was graced Oct. 9 by the visit of nearly 170 Air Force veterans from the Vietnam War. They visited Luke Air Force Base and the Phoenix area as part of their 15th annual reunion Oct. 7 through 11. These veterans are part of the Vietnam Security Police Association, a group of veterans who served in Vietnam or Thailand between July 1, 1958, and May 15, 1975.

They came to Luke to share memories, renew old friendships and to honor the 111 security policeman who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. However, a profound part of their time spent at Luke was to see how their experiences all those years ago in a distant land gave birth to the modern and efficient Air Force Security Forces of today.

Their day was packed with a plethora of events including a spontaneous protection enabling accelerated response demonstration, K-9 demonstration, lunch and a CrossFit demonstration.

Hector Ramos, vice president of VSPA, spent 1969 at Binh Thuy Air Base, Vietnam.

“We were static security forces trained to defend and secure the perimeter of the base,” he said.

“I feel one of the primary lessons from Vietnam is that it provided the impetus for future security forces. We realized at that time that we needed more and better training. We did the best with what we had, and I am proud to say that no base in Vietnam was overrun by the enemy.”

Mr. Ramos said that the Tet Offensive in 1968 helped to convince commanders that additional training was needed.

Steve Gattis, president of VSPA from 2002 to 2008 spent the first part of 1968 in Korea during the USS Pueblo incident and then it was on to Cam Ranh Bay, South Vietnam, for the rest of the year. It was much different in those days.

“We never had enough people ,” he said. “We went in as replacements instead of as a unit, which hurt unit cohesiveness and camaraderie. Also, training was inadequate and we were always scrounging for ammunitions and radios. Today’s training is outstanding.”

However, Mr. Gattis said that an important mission of his group is to preserve history.

“We want to preserve our history in Thailand and Vietnam,” he said. “One of our purposes is not to forget the hard lessons learned. We want to get the truth out as to what happened. There wasn’t a lot of documentation during that time.”

What’s more, part of the VSPA are veterans who were members of the 56th Security Police Squadron, Nakhon Phanom, Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand, which is an ancestor to the 56th Security Forces Squadron at Luke.

May 13, 1975 is remembered as a dark day in 56th SPS history. They lost 18 members of their squadron in a helicopter crash. They were part of the SS Mayaguez Rescue Operation, which is considered by historians to be the last battle of America’s involvement in Vietnam. The SS Mayaguez was a U.S. merchant ship sailing from Hong Kong to Sattahip, Thailand. It was seized by the Khmer Rouge Navy.

After negotiations failed, President Gerald Ford decided to launch a rescue operation, which resulted in the loss of 41 deaths of American military personnel, 44 wounded and three missing in action. The Khmer Rouge did release the Mayaguez and its crew.

Current VSPA president, Newell Swartz, said he also took great pride in the fact that no base in Vietnam was ever captured by the enemy. He said he very proud of the members of his group’s successes in life.

“Many of our members had successful military and law enforcement careers,” he said.

Maj. Michael Borders, 56th Security Forces Squadron Commander said he was proud to have this group of veterans visit the base.

“This group is our history,” he said. “They enable us to do what we do today.”



# ***Awards Presented to Members at the 2009 Reunion***

## ***The Calvin “Monk” Pope Brotherhood Award***

The award was established in Monk’s name in 2007 to honor his memory with the selection of one outstanding VSPA member each year who exemplified all that Monk believed in when he gave his personal tribute to a friend by saying that he was, “Jam up and jelly tight.” Like Monk, who worked on behalf of his VSPA brothers without ever being asked, the VSPA member would be recognized for their enduring commitment to our brotherhood, for their outstanding character and for all that they do for Vietnam Veterans and the VSPA. The 2009 award was presented to our Membership Chairman, Phil Carroll, with our sincere appreciation for his enduring commitment to our brotherhood and his effort to preserve the honor and valor of our service in Vietnam and Thailand. Monk always said that he was “Jam up and jelly tight.”

## ***VSPA Meritorious Service Awards***

The following VSPA members were recognized for being a living example of our motto “We Take Care of Our Own”:

### ***Gary Jones, Mike Cowder, Ken Neal, Rich Nucifora and John Tudor***

For traveling great distances in their effort to preserve The Wall and, thereby, preserve the memory of 111 of our brothers who did not survive the war in Vietnam and Thailand.

### ***Mike Douglas***

For his coordination of the VSPA “Golf with the Troops” day during our reunion at Luke AFB.

### ***Missy Hamilton of the VSPA Sisterhood***

For her outstanding commitment to deployed troops and their families. Her heartfelt dedication and commitment to the Packages from Home Program has had a lasting positive impact on the lives of our military personnel serving in Iraq, Afghanistan and throughout the World.

### ***Gary “Steel Boots” Steele***

For his outstanding commitment to the memory of a fallen brother and for sharing the legacy of our service in Vietnam and Thailand with students.

### ***Greg Dunlap***

For his outstanding commitment and extraordinary effort to review, coordinate and compile documents and files located on the VSPA web site so that they could be easily found by our members.

### ***Bill Cummings and his Military Working Dog, Brutus X321***

For their service to our country and for Bill’s selfless service as the Kennel Master for the VSPA during which time: he managed the “Old Dawgs and Pups Program” to support America’s deployed Military Working Dogs and their handlers; helped found the “Nemo’s War Dogs Heroes Memorial” at Lackland AFB, and was personally responsible for the recruitment of 95 VSPA K-9 handler members, many of whom are now Life Members of the VSPA.

## ***The Warriors Medal of Valor of the Native American Nations of the U.S.***

The Warriors Medal of Valor of the Native American Nations was created and crafted by a Native American Chief who served in Vietnam. The medal may be awarded to any deserving Vietnam Veteran and is not limited to Native Americans. Our ability and opportunity to award the Warriors Medal of Valor has been approved by a tribal council and made possible by VSPA Life Member #127, MSgt Alvin Matthews (Ret.). MSgt Matthews was also the first Chairman of the VSPA Committee for the selection and presentation of the Warriors Medal of Valor in 2006.



MSgt. Matthews was the first VSPA member to receive the Warriors Medal of Valor for his service in Vietnam. He received his medal from a local Chief while attending a Cherokee Powwow in 2005, and subsequently worked to make it possible for the VSPA to present the medal. “Sarge” and his daughter, Janet Matthews-Wise of our VSPA Sisterhood, made all of the arrangements to present the Warriors Medal of Valor at our reunions in 2006 and 2007, and personally financed the awards for our members. The presentation is a very moving experience and an honor for all recipients.

When Sarge stood his final Guardmount on January 3, 2008, his brother VSPA members made very generous donations to the VSPA in his memory to ensure that the Warriors Medal of Valor would be continued. Sarge’s daughter Janet has honored her father by remaining as the Chairperson of the committee that receives and reviews all VSPA nominations for the medal.



Janet and Sarge socializing at dinner during the 2006 VSPA Reunion in Las Vegas.

The 2009 recipients of the Warriors Medal of Valor from VSPA are:

### ***William “Pete” Piazza***

For his distinguished service on multiple tours in the Republic of South Vietnam and for Gallantry in Combat during an extended attack when the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army attacked Bien Hoa Air Base during TET on 31 January 1968. His actions helped to repel a direct attack, saved lives and sustained security policemen under fire as he remained on post for over 30 hours. At the conclusion of the TET attack on Bien Hoa that was blocked at Bunker 10, the bodies of 153 VC and NVA were found near the bunker, and another 25 had been detained. Captain Reginald Maisey, who was KIA in Bunker 10, received the Air Force Cross. SSgt. Piazza received the Silver Star and the men who manned the bunker with him received the Bronze Star for Valor. All were assigned to the 3rd Security Police Squadron.



**James Randall**

For his distinguished service in the Republic of South Vietnam and for Valor in Combat during a face-to-face engagement with a Viet Cong sapper squad that had attacked Cam Ranh Bay Air Base on 12 June 1970. His individual actions saved lives and repelled a direct attack on the US Air Force and US Navy Air Facilities located at Cam Ranh Bay. A/IC Randall was assigned to the 483rd Security Police Squadron and received the Bronze Star for Valor.



**Al Handy**

For his distinguished service in the Republic of South Vietnam and for Valor in Combat during a face-to-face engagement with a Viet Cong sapper squad that had attacked Da Nang Air Base on 1 July 1965. His



courageous actions repelled a devastating

attack and saved 25 unarmed Air Force personnel from certain death in a nearby bunker. A/IC Handy was TDY from George AFB, California and was working directly for TSGT Terence Jensen, who was the first Air Policeman killed in Vietnam. TSGT Jensen was conducting a post check and delivering coffee to A/IC Handy when the VC initiated the attack, killing TSGT Jensen almost immediately. A/IC Handy remained on his post and delivered devastating fire from his M-16 that repelled the attacking sappers. A captured VC later stated that

they broke off the attack because they thought they had encountered a machine gun. A/IC Handy was never recognized for his valor under fire. The VSPA is working with the Air Force to make that happen.

*(NOTE: The full story of this incident was compiled by Don Poss. Titled "Three Days of Hell," it is available on the VSPA website.)*



Al Handy with VSPA LM #37 Don Poss, who conducted the investigation leading to Al's receiving the Warriors Medal of Valor.

**RIGHT:** Warrior's Medal of Valor recipients who attended the 2009 VSPA Reunion: Standing, from left: Robert Bohach LM#143 (Bien Hoa), John Riese LM#346 (Pleiku), Bill Cummings LM #173 (U-Tapao), Richard Holstein LM# 343 (Cam Ranh Bay), Greg Cain LM #62 (Binh Thuy), Don Poss LM #37 (Da Nang), and Steve Gattis LM #49 (Cam Ranh Bay). Seated, from left: James Randall LM #69 (Cam Ranh Bay), Gold Star Mother Helen Rachel Lehman (on behalf of her son, Millard Lehman, KIA Binh Thuy), Pete Piazza LM #141 (Bien Hoa, Cam Ranh Bay, Phu Cat) and Al Handy LM #523 (Da Nang).



**ABOVE:** Army Captain Jeff McCowan (home on R&R) and his dad, VSPA Past President Steve Gattis, presented this VSPA flag to Phil Carroll for efforts on behalf of Jeff's unit of the Oregon National Guard. The flag came with a certificate signed by the Commander and Command Sergeant Major of the 41st IBCT, declaring it had been "proudly flown in the face of the enemy at Camp Victory, Baghdad, Iraq, during "OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM ."

Photos courtesy Steve Hall, Phil Carroll and SrA Tracie Forte.



VSPA's Binh Thuy Liaison Lew Goldberg and his very forgiving wife, Scotti, at the Awards Banquet.



VSPA Kennel Master Bill Cummings gives his final K-9 Report to the VSPA Business Meeting before handing off the job to Chaplain Jim Stastny.



Helen Lehman and Erlyce Pekas, our Gold Star Mom and Fiancee (of Millard Lehman, KIA).

**RIGHT:** In a fantastic honor for veterans of the 56th SPS at Nakhon Phanom, the 56th SFS K-9 section is dedicating its new \$1.6 million K-9 kennels and training facility to the "Nightfighter" dog handlers of the past - in honor of the handlers lost on the Mayaguez rescue mission. This plaque will be on the facility, and was presented to the Nightfighter veterans during the K-9 demonstration at Luke AFB.



56th SFS and local law enforcement put on an outstanding joint SWAT and K-9 demo for our reunion. You might say that this suspect has been "subdued."



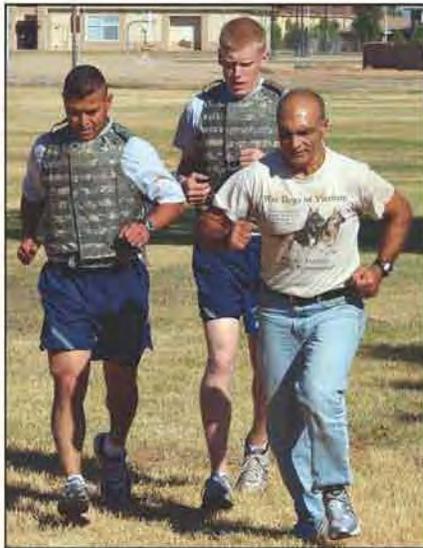
VSPA Past President Steve Gattis presents a 12" x 18" VSPA flag to 56th SFS Commander Maj. Borders. The flag was carried throughout Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos by VSPA Life Member Bill Harris. The flag is now framed in the 56th Commander's Conference Room.



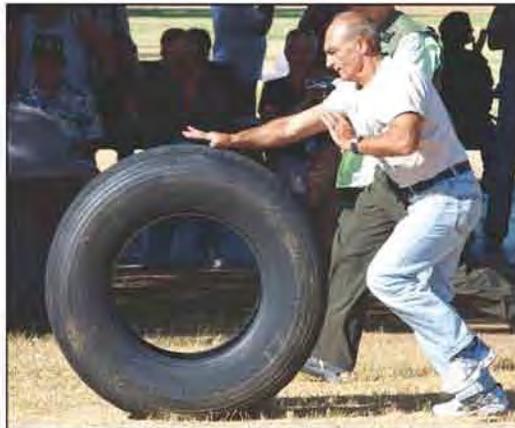
VSPA members who are veterans of the 56th Security Police Squadron at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base pose in front of an F-16 Fighting Falcon of today's 56th Tactical Fighter Wing at Luke AFB. The 56th today says it "Trains the world's greatest F-16 fighter pilots and maintainers, while deploying mission-ready warfighters."



56th SFS and VSPA members and guests at the 2009 VSPA Reunion, at Luke AFB.



VSPA's own Ironman, Patsy Perotto, competing with active-duty 56th SFS troops in their impressive "CrossFit" physical training.



**BELOW:** 56th SFS and SPS K-9 handlers, past and present, at the 2009 VSPA Reunion K-9 demonstration.



## ***Remarks to VSPA Reunion and the 56th SFS***

Thank you all, for this opportunity to talk to such a huge gathering of people that I consider to all be heroes. My name is Phil Carroll; I'm a former Air Force Staff Sergeant, and Security Police Sentry Dog Handler.

I'm sure you know that America's involvement in the war in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Thailand lasted for many long years, starting more than 50 years ago. Thousands of Air Force Air Police and Security Police protected the front-line combat air bases throughout South Vietnam and Thailand over the course of the war.

One of those bases was Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base – or NKP. It was the closest US Air Force base to communist North Vietnam. The base was well positioned for its many missions, but easily accessible to sapper attacks and within range of known heavy weapons at communist positions in Laos.

The 56th Air Commando Wing was at NKP, later becoming the 56th Special Operations Wing. As always, the Skycops - Air Police and Security Police - were part of it. I was one of them, as were a number of our Association members here today.

In some ways we were like you. We weren't draftees - we volunteered to serve in the Air Force, and for the Air Police and Security Police career fields. Some of us went on to volunteer for K-9, and some volunteered to serve in the war zone. In at least one sad way it was like the wars you're involved in today - some of us didn't make it home.

I have a plaque I'm going to present to you in a few minutes but first I want to read you the names of some of those men who were not able to return to their country and their families and their fellow Airmen because their lives ended while they were at NKP, serving their country in wartime, in a foreign land. They were A3C Roosevelt Harden Jr., 11 JUL 1967; Sgt Charles R. Morgan, 12 AUG 1968; Sgt Robert M. Robertson, 27 JAN 1970; Sgt Robert A. Palmer, 02 MAY 1970; A1C Clarence McKnight, 12 JUN 1973; CMSgt John B. Davis, 14 JUN 1973; Sgt Melvin J. Blakeney, 07 JUL 1973.

I need to pause for a moment, because now we come to 1975. At NKP, some volunteers from the 56th Security Police Squadron were beginning to be trained as an assault force, outside the wire. The turmoil and communist rebels in Laos, Cambodia and Thailand threatened the stability of all three countries. The 56th SP's were among those training for Operation Eagle Pull, which was preparing to evacuate the embassies of all three countries at once if the balloon went up.

Cambodia collapsed first, and Operation Eagle Pull was triggered there on 12 April, 1975. The 56th SP's were not assigned, but the mission was a success and served as a dress rehearsal for the next historical evacuation, in just two weeks. On 29 and 30 April, Operation Frequent Wind, the final evacuation of Saigon by Americans was successfully carried out. It was supposed to be the end of the Vietnam War – but not quite two weeks after that, a Cambodian gunship seized the American cargo vessel Mayaguez on the high seas, and the 56th Security Police Squadron was the closest combat-ready unit that an angry and impatient President Ford could call on – in part because of their specialized training.

Security Police troops at NKP were asked to volunteer for an urgent rescue mission, and although it was beyond what even they were trained for, 75 were chosen from among the

many who stepped forward. Weapons were issued, including some the men weren't trained on. Aircrews loaded the troops aboard the Special-Ops helos. Some current members of the Vietnam Security Police Association were among those not chosen to go, and they watched their friends load up. A few are here today.

About 2115 the night of 13 May, 1975, the helos took off from NKP and headed toward U-Tapao in southern Thailand, the closest U.S. air base to where the Mayaguez and its kidnapped crew were being held. All 18 Security Police volunteer rescuers and five aircrew aboard perished when the CH-53 helo "Knife 13" crashed in the dark jungle 36 miles from NKP.

These brave men were our brothers ... and yours. They were: Sgt Jimmy P. Black, SSgt Bobby G. Collums, Sgt Gerald A. Coyle, Sgt Thomas D. Dwyer, Sgt Bob W. Ford, Sgt Gerald W. Fritz – K9, TSgt Jackie D. Glenn, Sgt Darrell L. Hamlin, Sgt Gregory L. Hankamer, Sgt David A. Higgs, SSgt Faleagafulu Ilaoa – K9, Sgt Michael D. Lane, Sgt Dennis W. London – K9, A1C Robert P. Mathias, Sgt William R. McKelvey, Amn Edgar C. Moran II, A1C Tommy R. Nealis, and Sgt Robert W. Ross.

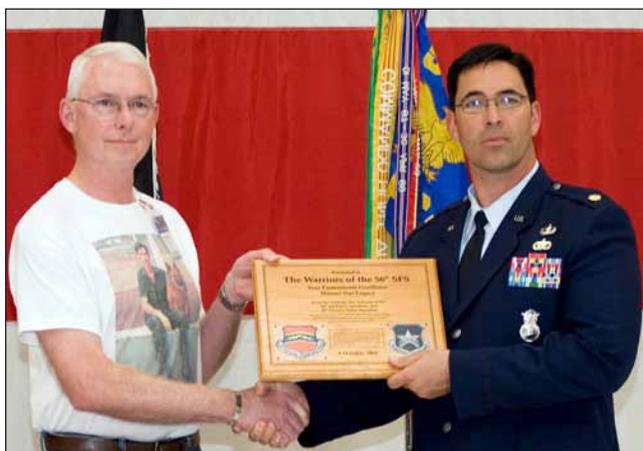
They were American Airmen. They were Warriors. They answered their Nation's call.

Major Borders: If you would please accept this memorial plaque from all the members of the Vietnam Security Police Association. We will always remember these men.

Now, I also would like to talk for just a minute to the men and women of the 56th Security Forces Squadron about *you*. All the members of the Vietnam Security Police Association believe in you and have tremendous admiration for how you carry out your mission.

But beyond that I have something even more personal, from all 67 members of the VSPA who served with the 56th at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base.

Would the Vietnam War Veterans of the 56th please stand up for a minute? Although we're all part of the VSPA, we created this plaque on our own as a message from us to you because you're "our own." Its message is simple:



*Phil Carroll presents the plaque mentioned above to 56th SFS Commander Maj. Borders after delivering the address. Steve Gattis also presented a plaque with the 25 names of those lost from the 56th SPS, and a VSPA flag that was carried throughout Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Laos.*

"Your professional excellence honors our legacy."

We want you to remember that, as the years go by and as you come and go from this squadron. We're very proud of you, and of sharing this legacy with you. After all ...

*We* were American Airmen. *We* were Warriors. *We* answered our Nation's call.

Major Borders, if you would please accept this plaque on behalf of all the American Airmen of the 56th Security Forces. Please note it has on the reverse side a letter listing all the VSPA members who served with the 56th, and it's been signed by the few who were able to come visit you here today.

# ***Minutes of the October 8, 2009 VSPA Board of Directors Meeting***

The meeting convened in the Crowne Plaza board room. In attendance were Newell Swartz, President; Steve Gattis, Past President; Hector Ramos, Vice President; Richard Garcia, Treasurer; Bruce Hadley, Secretary; Kelly Bateman, Historian; Don Hamilton, appointed Second Vice President; and the following invited members: Van Digby, BX Manager; Van's wife, Joyce, and Ed Wilson, Jr. A quorum was declared and the meeting was called to order at 16:35 hours.

The following agenda was discussed and acted on:

1. Change Reunion dates from fall to spring. This was tabled until the 2010 San Antonio reunion. As a point of information, the Safeside Association will donate \$500 every year as long as they have money in their treasury. A check for \$500 was presented this year accordingly. This item will be brought up at the general membership meeting on October 10, 2009.
2. Two or more past presidents on the board as voting members. This concept of two past presidents serving as voting members was agreed to by the board, and is subject to a draft proposal that will be brought up at the 2010 board and general membership meeting accordingly.
3. Policy that the President may spend up to \$1,000 as needed without board approval. This was agreed to by the board to enable the President to cover or back up a decision that requires initial expenditures of funds.
4. Property Accountability of coins, flags, etc., purchased by VSPA and consigned to the BX. Tabled due to the unavailability of records currently being analyzed by the accountant. Steve Gattis and Richard Garcia will work together on unresolved issues in this connection.
5. Bud Owens Benevolence at Pease AFB. He is selectively handing out VSPA challenge coins at his own expense to returning servicemen from Iraq, Afghanistan, and others countries in that theatre. It was agreed by the board that 50 VSPA challenge coins be given to Bud for that purpose at no charge.
6. VSPA will expend up to \$1,000 upfront money for maintaining the hospitality room. This item is tied into item #3 above. Sheila Cain expressed her concern to the President that this year, the expense for maintaining the hospitality room may exceed \$1,000. It was agreed by the board that the hospitality room be maintained at all cost. This year's expense will be offset by the generous donation of \$500 from the Safeside Association.
7. VSPA Related Accounts. It was agreed by the board that the Treasurer, Richard Garcia should have access to all accounts of the VSPA such as PayPal, checking etc. for functions such as the membership and BX accounts. This proposal is to prevent VSPA money from being tied up in escrow in the event the current signatories on those accounts should become incapacitated or unable to continue their duties.
8. Alternate Site Maintenance of hard copies of VSPA Records. Examples of VSPA records concerned are the meeting minutes, the treasurer's reports, the articles of incorporation, the

constitution, etc. Approved with the stipulation that the financial records not be accepted as the final copy until the accountants have reviewed them for accuracy.

9. Effective July 1, 2010 Van Digby will terminate his tenure as BX Manager. A new BX Manager is being sought. The President praised the work of Van and Joyce Digby and their daughter in running the BX in an efficient manner that served the wishes of the VSPA.
10. Operation Soft Landing – Jim Willis, Oregon State Director of Veterans Affairs proposal to accommodate veterans returning home have access to a variety of services, including counseling for employment, family life adjustment, mental health, veterans benefits. It was agreed by the board that this item be supported and brought up at the general membership meeting on October 10, 2009.
11. Engraved brick for VSPA at the All Veterans Memorial, Pensacola, Florida. Life member Arthur Rogers expressed his desire to pay for the subject brick so that VSPA is represented so long as he has permission to use the VSPA name accordingly. It was agreed by the board that he pursue obtaining the engraved brick in VSPA's name and the association will reimburse him accordingly. This item will be reported to the general membership on October 10, 2009 under the good of the order.
12. Past President Steve Gattis reported progress being made in resolving the association's tax issue. As a separate item, he mentioned that the Air Force Security Forces Association (formerly the Air Force Security Police Association) holds a mid-year meeting to handle important business prior to the annual meeting. He suggested that we do the same, however, due to the logistics involved, that we resort to a conference call instead. It was agreed by the board that this would enhance communication that was currently taking place by eMail. This was taken under advisement by the President.

If reference to #8, Bruce listed: (Secretary's note for consideration: final of the secretary's minutes of the board and general membership meetings are edited and completed by the President and forwarded to Guardmount for publication. In effect, this becomes the official copy. The secretary's copy is the unedited notes of the meeting.)

Comment: As President, it is preferable to me that any elected board member who has the obligation to present a written report for any purpose as a required duty of his office should keep a hard copy of that report primarily to resolve any dispute as to what was said or to answer a question from any member. The final copy should be the one drafted by the secretary and edited by the President. Guardmount may or may not be published. However the final official reports of Board and Business Meetings should be published as soon as possible on the VSPA Website. Copies of all official VSPA papers, reports, documents, public Records etc considered essential to the operation of the VSPA will be maintained in a file in the custody of the 2nd Vice President. This back-up file is not intended to relieve any member of the responsibility of maintaining files considered essential to the duties of their elected or appointed office.

This being the final item on the agenda, the board meeting adjourned at 17:50 hours.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bruce Hadley, Secretary

# ***Vietnam Security Police Association Annual Business Meeting Minutes October 10, 2009, Phoenix, Arizona***

1. At 09:11 hours the annual business meeting was called to order by VSPA President Newell Swartz. The President requested that non-members in attendance agree not to interrupt, ask questions or vote in any element of the meeting.
2. The President requested a moment of silence for those who did not come home and for our departed VSPA brothers listed at LM #111.
3. The invocation was given by Chaplain Jim Stastny.
4. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice President Hector Ramos.
5. The President announced that the VSPA SISTERHOOD convened their meeting at 0900. The theme this year is "Taking Care of You (so you can take care of him)."
6. INTRODUCTION OF OFFICERS AND APPOINTED POSITIONS was done by President Newell Swartz. All officers are elected for two years. Elections will be held next year in San Antonio, Texas.

## **ELECTED POSITIONS**

- President Newell Swartz, Life Member #262, Phoenix, Arizona (Phu Cat and Phan Rang 66-67)
- Vice President Hector Ramos, Life Member #165, Carteret, New Jersey (Binh Thuy 69-70)
- Secretary Bruce Hadley, Life Member #71, Forest Hills, New York (Bien Hoa 61-62)
- Treasurer Richard Garcia, Life Member #82, Massapequa, New York (Phan Rang 69-70).
- Historian Kelly Bateman, Life Member #118, Wimberly, Texas (Ubon K-9 71-72)
- Past President Steve Gattis, Life Member #49, Glen Rose, Texas (Cam Ranh Bay 68-69)

**APPOINTED POSITIONS** - All positions appointed by the President are made with approval of the Board.

- Web Master(s) Don Poss, Life Member #37, Hemet, California (Da Nang K-9 65-66) is the Web Master. He appoints and supervises the following positions:
  - ~ K-9 Web Master, Monty Moore, Life Member #500, Livingston, Texas (Da Nang and Phu Cat K-9 68-70), unable to attend.
  - ~ Bulletin Board Flight Chief, Bill Marshall Life Member #85, Dana Point, California (Phu Cat 68-69), unable to attend.
  - ~ QRT Flight Chief, Gary Jones, Life Member #363, Ladson, South Carolina (Da Nang, Phan Rang, Safeside Tan Son Nhut, Udorn 1965, 68-69 and 71-72),
  - ~ Tech Support Greg Dunlap, Life Member #361, Santa Rosa, California (Da Nang K-9 68-69), unable to attend.
- Membership Chairman Phil Carroll, Life Member #336. Gladstone, Oregon (Takhli and NKP K-9 70-71).
- Guardmount Newsletter Larry Ernsting, Life Member #139, Clay Center, Kansas (Phan Rang-Safeside, Pleiku, Tuy Hoa, 68 - 70), unable to attend.

- Chaplain Steve Janke, Carlstadt, New Jersey (Cam Ranh Bay K-9 69 -70) Steve is unable to attend and sends his prayers for a great reunion.
  - Chaplain Jim Stastny, Life Member #442, Gaithersburg, Maryland (Korat K-9 70-71).
  - Chaplain Bill Cooley, Life Member #350, Canyon Lake, Texas (Cam Ranh Bay K-9 71-72) Bill is unable to attend and sends his prayers for a great reunion.
  - Chaplain Jeff Kerkhoff, West Covina, California (Tan Son Nhut 72-73). Jeff is unable to attend and sends his prayers for a successful reunion.
  - Photographer Tony Morris, Life Member #70, Shererville, Indiana (Cam Ranh Bay 69-70)
  - Photographer Lou Reda, Norwalk, Ohio (Phan Rang 68-69), unable to attend.
  - Photographer Steve Hall, Orange, California (Binh Thuy 68 - 69)
  - BX Sales Manager Van Digby, Life Member #59, Bay City Michigan (Phan Rang 67-68)
  - VSPA Service Officer Bud Owens, Life Member #56, North Hampton, New Hampshire (Binh Thuy 66 - 67), unable to attend.
  - K-9 Kennel Master Bill Cummings, Life Member #173, Tucson, Arizona (U-Tapao K-9 70-71).
  - Safeside Liaison Dave Pierson, Life Member #299, Carson City, Nevada (Binh Thuy 69-70), unable to attend.
  - Binh Thuy Liaison Lew Goldberg, Life Member #150, Battlefield, Missouri (Binh Thuy 68-69)
  - Cam Ranh Bay Liaison Trent Nentrup, Hope, Indiana (Cam Ranh Bay 68-69), unable to attend.
  - Phu Cat Liaison Ron Arthur, Life Member #107, Chilhowee, Missouri (Phu Cat 67-68), unable to attend.
  - Tan Son Nhut Liaison Charles Penley, Kingsport, Tennessee (Tan Son Nhut K-9 67-69), unable to attend.
  - Ubon Liaison Jim Watson, Life Member #520, Covina, California (Ubon K-9 68-69), unable to attend.
  - Sergeant-at-Arms Keith Young, Life Member #175, Angola, New York. (Binh Thuy and Phu Cat 70-71)
  - VSPA Legal Services Para-legal Paul Sigler, Bartlesville, Oklahoma (Cam Ranh Bay 65-66).
  - Aide to the President Don Hamilton, Life Member #301, Phoenix, Arizona (Tuy Hoa 69-70).
7. Approval of the 2008 Business Meeting Minutes recorded by the Secretary Bruce Hadley. Without reading the full text of the minutes based upon prior electronic distribution via the VSPA web site, and the published minutes in the Guardmount newsletter, motion made to accept the minutes by Wendell Windsor; seconded by Randy Stutler; motion carried by majority show of hands.
8. REPORTS
- 8.1. Treasurer's Report Treasurer Richard Garcia. Supplemental report on State of Texas and IRS Tax status by Past President Steve Gattis. The report is attachment #1. Motion made to accept the report by Al Handy; seconded by Van Digby; motion

- carried by majority voice vote.
- 8.2. Historian's Report Historian Kelly Bateman (including Lackland AFB Security Forces Museum Memorial Wall Project). The report is attachment #2. Motion made to accept the report by Ray Rash; seconded by Tony Morris; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.3. Web Site - VSPA.com Web Master Don Poss (comment by Gattis re prohibition of organized political activity on the web site due to IRS restrictions against political activity by tax exempt organizations). The report is attachment #3. Motion made to accept the report by Al Handy; seconded by Pat Dunne; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.4. Membership Report Membership Chairman Phil Carroll The report is attachment #4. Motion made to accept the report by Al Habercorn; seconded by Mack Griffin; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.5. Guardmount Report By Newell Swartz for Larry Ernsting (looking for volunteer who can edit and publish). Larry Ernsting is stepping down and was not in attendance.
  - 8.6. Scholarship Committee Chairman Jim Lebowitz. Committee members are Vice President Hector Ramos, Albert Habercorn, Bud Owens and David Adams. The report is attachment #5. This year's recipient of the J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship fund for \$500 is Jeffrey Irlbeck who is working toward his Bachelor's degree. Jeffrey is the grandson of VSPA member Nugent Jackson. Motion made to accept the report by Ted Whitlock; seconded by Randy Stutler; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.7. BX Sales Report BX Sales Manager Van Digby. The report is attachment #6. Van and his wife Joyce have notified the Board in writing that they wish to step down as the BX Managers effective July 1, 2010 Motion made to accept the report by Tony Morris; seconded by Bruce Ross; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.8. VSPA Service Officer By Newell Swartz for Bud Owens unable to attend. As a point of information, Bud emphasized that we have the CL checked in our blood. The report is attachment #7. Motion made to accept the report by Wendell Windsor; seconded by Bill Cummings; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.9. K-9 Report Bill Cummings, Kennel Master. This will be Bill's last year. Jim Stastny will replace Bill
  - 8.9.1. Nemo's War Dog Heroes Memorial at Lackland Bill Cummings
  - 8.9.2. Old Dawgs and Pups Program Bill Cummings The report is attachment #8. Motion made to accept the report by Jim Stastny; seconded by Randy Stutler; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.10 Safeside Report Gary Jones gave an update on the reunion at Moody AFB in September and status of deployed Safeside units. Safeside donated \$500 to the Hospitality Room and will continue to do so in future years. The report is attachment #9. Motion made to accept the report by Ted Whitlock; seconded by Tony Morris; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - 8.11 VSPA Legal Services Report and explanation of services by Paul Sigler. The report is attachment #10. Motion made to accept the report by Van Digby; seconded by

Al Handy; motion carried by majority voice vote. President Newell Swartz gave an explanation of the Liaison positions and the need to increase the program to allow for one per base i.e. Lew Goldberg for Binh Thuy, Trent Nentrup for Cam Ranh Bay, etc.

9. OLD BUSINESS

- 9.1 VSPA History Book Update was addressed by Past President Steve Gattis
- 9.2 Reunion Site Selection for 2010 was presented by Steve Gattis and Newell Swartz. Sites are selected two years in advance so that VSPA and Security Forces Squadron planning can begin early if necessary. San Antonio, Texas and Lackland AFB with Camp Bullis were selected in 2008 as the site for the 2010 reunion. Wright-Patterson AFB received the second highest number of votes and was voted as the secondary location in the event that base operations at Lackland AFB prohibit the 2010 reunion in San Antonio, Texas. The dates of the 2010 reunion will be October 6th thru the 10th traditionally held over the Columbus Day Weekend so that Monday is a holiday.

- 9.3 Selection of Reunion Site for 2011 Steve Gattis and Newell Swartz

<b>Previous Reunion Site</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Region</b>
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 (10th Anniversary)
Valdosta, Georgia . . . . .	2005 . . . . .	East
Las Vegas, Nevada . . . . .	2006 . . . . .	West
Washington D.C. . . . .	2007 . . . . .	East
Albuquerque, New Mexico . . . . .	2008 . . . . .	West/Central
Phoenix, Arizona . . . . .	2009 . . . . .	West (15th Anniversary)
San Antonio, Texas . . . . .	2010 . . . . .	Central

- 9.3.1 2010 Nominations/Suggestions/Presentations
- 9.3.2 Primary site chosen for 2011 was Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio.
- 9.3.3 Backup site chosen for 2011 in the event of operational changes at the base was McChord AFB, Washington.

10. NEW BUSINESS

- 10.1 Proposed amendments to the By-Laws were explained and voted on as follows:
  - A. Regarding the elimination of the bonding requirement for the VSPA Treasurer due to the exceptionally high cost that would deplete the treasury. Explained by Newell Swartz and Richard Garcia. Motion was made to amend the By-Laws accordingly by Ted Whitlock; seconded by Nelson Avery; motion carried by majority voice vote.
  - B. Regarding the addition of the elected position of 2nd Vice President. Currently, an

appointed position that has been filled by Don Hamilton acting as an assistant to the president, Newell Swartz. Explained by Newell Swartz and Don Hamilton as studied by Don throughout the year. Motion made to amend the By-Laws accordingly by Derrill Dickerson; seconded by Hector Ramos; motion carried by majority voice vote. (Both amendments could be looked at as old business under Treasurer and the Election of Officers. However, they should be handled here as they affect the Bylaws and are new for this year. Handled here, they will not be “lost” within the reports. Precedent has already been set for the President to appoint someone to fill an elected position for the remaining term).

10.2 AFFIRMATION OF THE BOARD OF ELECTED OFFICERS for banking purposes and the authorization to sign checks for the coming year. Elections will take place again in 2010.

- ~ President Newell Swartz (authorized to sign checks)
- ~ Vice President Hector Ramos (authorized to sign checks)
- ~ 2nd Vice President Don Hamilton (appointed for one year as a voting board member)
- ~ Secretary Bruce Hadley
- ~ Treasurer Richard Garcia (authorized to sign checks)
- ~ Historian Kelly Bateman
- ~ Past President Steve Gattis

Motion made to authorize the President, Vice President and Treasurer individually to sign checks by Jim Willis; seconded by Ted Whitlock; motion carried by majority voice.

10.3 Appointed Positions - The following positions are appointed for the next year by the President of the Association to assist the elected officers with the management of the various functions of the VSPA:

- ~ Web Master - Don Poss who appoints the Assistant Web Master for K-9 (Monty Moore), the Bulletin Board Flight Leader (Bill Marshall), the QRT fight Chief (Gary Jones) and Tech Support (Greg Dunlap).
- ~ Membership Chairman - Phil Carroll; Assistant Janet Wise, Daughter of Life Member Al Matthews.
- ~ BX Sales Manager – Van Digby, Assistants Joyce and Kari Digby until 07/01/10.
- ~ Chaplains Steve Janke (New Jersey), Jim Stastny (Maryland), Bill Wheeler (Texas) and Jeff Kerkhoff (California).
- ~ Photographer(s) – Tony Morris, Steve Hall and Lou Reda.
- ~ Guardmount Editor - Larry Ernsting ? Replacement?
- ~ VSPA Service Officer - Bud Owens
- ~ VSPA Kennel Master – Jim Stastny
- ~ Safeside Liaison – Dave Pierson
- ~ Base & Squadron Liaisons
  - ~ Binh Thuy – Lew Goldberg

- ~ Cam Ranh Bay – Trent Nentrup
- ~ Phu Cat – Ron Arthur
- ~ Tan Son Nhut – Charles Penley
- ~ Ubon – Jim Watson
- ~ VSPA Legal Services provided by Paul Zigler, Para-legal

10.4 Operation Soft Landing – Resolution from the VSPA to members of the House of Representatives and the Senate regarding support for legislation that enables a 90-day Title 10 funded “Soft Landing” for military personnel on their return home from a deployment to a combat zone. The ability to propose the non-political resolution was explained by Past President Steve Gattis. The resolution was explained by Jim Willis, Director of Veteran Affairs, State of Oregon. A copy of the resolution is attached as attachment #11 with text of current bill pending before congress. The bill number is H.R. 3358 sponsored by Representative DeFazio of Oregon. There is a companion bill in the Senate. Motion made to support proposal of the non-political resolution by Derrill Dickerson; seconded by Al Handy; motion carried by majority voice vote.

#### 11. ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

- 11.1 There will be no Safeside Association meeting following this meeting.
- 11.2 Reminder that the social hour for the banquet this evening is at 18:00 hours. Attendees should have seats selected by 18:55 hours. Presentation of colors will be at 19:00 hours. We will retire the colors and end by 23:00 hours.
- 11.3 Reminder regarding the Memorial Service on Sunday that begins at 0800 in the same room as the business meeting.
- 11.4 Art Rogers offered to pay \$250.00 for a brick with the name of the VSPA on it at the All Veterans Memorial out of Pensacola, Florida. He has asked the Board for approval to use the association’s name on it. The Board voted to authorize Art to proceed with the brick donation and VSPA will reimburse him.
- 11.5 Al Ashbaugh has suggested that the \$500.00 amount of the J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship be raised. Taken under advisement by the Board to research the budget impact before any recommendation is made to the Scholarship Committee.
- 11.6 Motion made for adjournment by Al Handy; seconded by Nelson Avery; motion carried by majority voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 12:30 hours.

***President’s Note to Members:*** Since the reunion concluded, there have been several; developments concerning items brought up in the Business Meeting:

- A member at the Business Meeting proposed a raise in the amount of the J.J. Chestnut Memorial Scholarship fund since \$500 does not cover much these days. I spoke to Jim Lebowitz and he would like to raise the amount to \$1,000. At the reunion just concluded, a member donated \$1,000 to the scholarship fund so the money is there for next year. Jim will explore alternate possibilities for funding the scholarship fund above the \$500 now stipulated on a permanent basis. Jim’s ideas will be brought up at the next Business Meeting.
- Pat Dunne “Hawk” has volunteered to take on the task of being the liaison for Pleiku.

## *Welcome to the 9th Annual AP/SP/SF Rendezvous!*

WHERE: Wickham Park (between Wickham Road and US #1) entrance off Parkway Drive, Melbourne, Florida.

WHEN: 22-25 APR 2010, 24 HOURS A DAY

WHY: The Space Coast Chapter of the Air Force Security Forces Association (AFSFA) would be honored if the men and women, current/former AP/SP/SF would visit us during the upcoming 9TH AP/SP/SF Rendezvous, 22-25 Apr 10. It takes place in conjunction with the 23rd Annual Vietnam and all Veterans Reunion at beautiful Wickham Park (400 Acres) in Melbourne. This veteran's reunion is the largest of its kind in the nation and is for all veterans of all services. The Vietnam Memorial, the Moving Wall is escorted into the park on 18 Apr and will then be erected. Opening ceremonies for the veteran's reunion will take place at 1900, 19 Apr, at The Wall. The Wall will remain available to the public 24/7 until closing ceremonies at 1900, 25 Apr. Numerous and varied vendors and live entertainment will begin on Thursday 22 Apr and continue throughout the weekend.

A very enormous, impressive and moving Massing of the Colors will take place on Saturday with veterans units from throughout the state and US. Also an emotional reenactment of The Last Patrol w/K-9 from the Vietnam era takes place on Saturday. The AP/SP/SF Rendezvous will start when we move our RVs, tents, campers into the Youth Camping area of North Wickham Park on Monday, 19 Apr. We will be there 24/7 until Sunday afternoon, the 25th.

The AP/SP/SF Rendezvous is co-hosted by the Air Force Security Forces Association (AFSFA) and the Vietnam Security Police Association (VSPA) and the Space Coast War Dog Association. We will have plenty to eat, cool drinks, a lot of shade, a lot of camaraderie, a lot of history and a lot of "war stories". Just stop by or we will gladly make a place for you to camp out with us if you so desire. This is a family rendezvous, so please bring the loved ones as well. But most of all we would just sincerely be honored to meet and greet you and yours, because we are all from the same family under the Bond of the Blue Beret.

Do not hesitate to email ([twhitlock@cfl.rr.com](mailto:twhitlock@cfl.rr.com)) or call me at 321-243-8919 if you have questions.

Ted Whitlock  
Chairman, AFSFA Space Coast Chapter  
VSPA Life Member #98  
(22 year active duty AP/ SP, 18 year SP/SF civil servant)



## VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION

**NEWELL SWARTZ, PRESIDENT**  
**6408 S. 39<sup>th</sup> Pl, Phoenix AZ 85042**  
**(602) 437-1154**



### LETTER OF PROCLAMATION

The Sisterhood of the Vietnam Security Police Association has conferred upon Lt Col (Ret) Ruth K. Sidisin the very first Associate Membership of the Vietnam Security Police Association Sisterhood ever awarded.

The Sisterhood and the members of the VSPA wish to honor a nurse who did more than heal broken bodies. She uplifted morale and touched the hearts of the Security Policemen as they passed her quarters every day on their way to isolated guard posts by simply waving her hand to greet them. At the end of a long tough day of her own, Lt Col Sidisin still had enough passion and patriotism to offer encouragement to those Security Policemen.

Lt Col, then Major, Sidisin's fame as "The Waving Nurse" soon spread throughout the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron in Vietnam. The men came to look for and expect the uplift that her heartwarming greeting gave them, so much so, that over forty years later, she is still fondly remembered.

Ann Margaret, Martha Raye and Ruth Sidisin. These are our heroines of the Vietnam War. We love them and cherish their memories to this day for the moments of happiness they brought into our lives.

With gratitude and affection, as a token of our esteem, we confer upon Lt Col (Ret) Ruth K. Sidisin an Associate Membership of the Vietnam Security Police Association Sisterhood. From the men whose motto is "We Take Care of Our Own" and from the women of the Sisterhood whose motto is "We Take Care of Those Who Take Care of Their Own".

This 14<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2010, Valentine's Day. How appropriate.

/s/

Newell M. Swartz, President  
Vietnam Security Police Association

/s/

Sheila Gervase-Cain, President  
VSPA Sisterhood

# U.S. Air Force Security Police Vietnam Veterans Wanted!



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

## Vietnam Security Police Association

is where you want to be. We've been to the same bases, trained in the same skills, experienced the same joys and nightmares, and we came home to the same troubled country that you found. Today we are active in helping our brother members, as well as active-duty USAF Security Forces troops.

*"We take care of our own!"*

Contact our membership chairman:

Phil Carroll

[k9nightfighter@msn.com](mailto:k9nightfighter@msn.com)

P.O. Box 8

Gladstone OR 97027

503-975-8608

[www.vspa.com](http://www.vspa.com)



The Vietnam Security Police Association, Inc., is a 501(c)(19) tax-exempt charitable Vietnam Veteran's organization.

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