

2006 Reunion

The Reunion Brat and I have been working extensively on our reunions for 2006 and 2007. Contracts are in place for both reunions. Deposits have been made and we are rolling for final plans. The 2007 Reunion will be over the Veteran's Day Weekend in Washington DC. We will march in the 25th Anniversary Parade for The Wall and we will be staying at the Sheraton near the Pentagon. More information on the 2007 Reunion will be available in the future.

The following is the information for our 2006 Reunion:

The 12th Annual Reunion of the Vietnam Security Police Association will be held Wednesday, October 4 through Sunday, October 8, 2006 in Las Vegas, Nevada near Nellis Air Force Base. The reunion hotel will be SAM's TOWN. Las Vegas hotel rates increase on weekends at all hotels. Therefore, the following rates will apply on Wednesday, October 4 and Thursday, October 5: \$64 per night plus tax. Friday, October 6 and Saturday, October 7: \$120 per night plus tax.

EVENT SCHEDULE:

Wednesday, October 4: Reception Banquet in the evening

Thursday, October 5: Base Tour - This may change to Friday.

Friday, October 6: Optional Tour

Saturday, October 7: Business meeting and Sisterhood meeting in the morning. Banquet, guest speaker, awards and raffle in the evening.

Sunday Morning, October 8: Memorial Service for those we lost in Vietnam and Thailand, and for those VSPA members who have stood their final Guardmount.

The registration fee has not been finalized. However, the registration fee will cover the usual expenses for meals, bus transportation and tours. Negotiations are continuing so that we can ensure the best rates possible. As soon as I have more information, I will let you know.

Regarding Sams's Town: The hotel is located off of the Strip and is not in the older section of downtown. The hotel is huge and has a beautiful central atrium with several shops. It even has a bowling alley and will provide free shuttle service to the Strip so that our members can walk around, gamble or go to shows. **ROOMS CANNOT BE RESERVED YET.** A notice will be provided when room reservations can be made.

Regarding the business meeting: We will have four hours maximum to get our business completed. Officers will have to be elected and plans for the 2007 parade in Washinton DC will have to be very close to being finalized.

If you have any questions, please let me know. I send my best to all of you. Steve Gattis, President Vietnam Security Police Association Life Member #49 Cam Ranh Bay 68 - 69

BX

Patches:

VSPA Patch	\$5.00
QC Patch	\$5.00
SP Badge Patch	\$4.00
Air Force Vietnam Vet Patch	\$4.00
Tet 68 Survivor	\$4.00
7 th Air Force Patch	\$4.00
POW/MIA Patch	\$4.00
1 Been There Vietnam Patch	\$4.00
Brothers Forever Patch	\$4.00
In Memory Patch	\$4.00
Vietnam Service Ribbon Patch	\$4.00
QC Back Patch (9")	\$15.00
U.S, Air Force Back Patch (10")	\$15.00
K-9 Patch	\$4.00
VSPA Logo Back Patch (8")	\$15.00
VSPA Logo Patch (3")	\$4.00

Pins:

QC Pin	\$4.00
7 th Air Force Pin	\$4.00
Air Force Vietnam Vet Pin	\$4.00
Tet 68 Survivor Pin	\$4.00
POW/MIA Pin	\$4.00
POW/MIA Pin w/Eagle	\$4.00
POW/MIA Cross w/Black Ribbon	\$4.00
In Memory Pin	\$4.00
Vietnam Tab Pin	\$4.00
Vietnam Base Pins (Bien Hoa, Binh Thuy	, Can
Ranh Bay, Da Nang, Nha Trang, Pha	n Rang,
Pleiku, Ton Son Nhut)	\$4.00
U.S. Air Force (Generic)	\$4.00
Vietnam Service Ribbon Pin	\$4.00
Vietnam Veteran with Ribbon Bar Pin	\$4.00
New Air Force Security Forces Pin	\$4.00
Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) Pin	\$4.00
Vietnam Cross w/Black Ribbon Pin	\$4.00
Vietnam Flag with Year Pin	\$4.00
VSPA Reunion Pin (Plain)	\$5.00
VSPA Reunion Pin (2002)	\$5.00
VSPA 10 th Anniversary Pin	\$5.00

Stickers:

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VSPA Bumper Sticker	\$3.00
7 th Air Force, Proudly Serves sticker	\$3.00
Vietnam Service Ribbon sticker	\$3.00
U.S. Air Force	\$3.00
POW/MIA (Inside or Outside)	\$3.00
Security Police Shield sticker	\$3.00

Add Shipping:	Total Amount	Shipping
	\$0.00-\$25.00	\$3.00
	\$25.01-\$50.00	\$5.00
	\$50.01-\$75.00	\$7.00
	\$75.01-\$100.00	\$10.00
	\$100.01 & UP	\$12.00

Hats:	(Basebali	Style	Black)
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VSPA Association	\$12.00
QC Plain	\$12.00
QC w/Flight Tab above QC Rat	nger, Tiger
Phantom, Cobra , Dragon)	\$12.00
Security Police Shield	\$12.00
U.S. Air Force Vietnam with Ri	ibbon Bar \$12.00
QC w/K9 Tab above QC, Dog I	Embroidered on
side of hat.	\$14.00
Can add K-9 dogs name and	/or number for
additional charge of \$5	5.00
Miscellaneous:	
Security Police Qualification Ba	adges
Larg	e\$4.00
Smal	11 \$2.00

	Small	\$2.00
Paper Weight	VSPA Logo	\$10.00
Paper Weight	Security Police Shield	\$10.00
VSPA Stonewa	are Coffee Mug-Black	\$12.00

Coins:

7 th Air Force coin Challenge coin	 \$12.00 \$12.00
Flags: USAF (3'x5')	\$12.00

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POW/MIA	(3'x5')	\$12.00

Mouse Pad:

VSPA Logo, Black with Silver	Bkgrd	\$10.00
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Wall Print:

Larry Sutherland Wall Print	\$1.00
Deny Sectoriona (Contribute	. WI.00

License Plates:

SP Qualification front License Plate	\$8.00
VVA w/Helicopter front License Plate	\$8.00
Motorcycle License Plate Vietnam Vet	\$3.00
Motorcycle License Plate POW/MIA	\$3.00

• New Items:

VSPA Ink Pen	\$4.00
VSPA License Plate (Metal)	\$13.00
VSPA Brass Belt Buckle	\$20.00
VSPA Pilsner Beer Glass 22oz.	\$15.00
VSPA Glass Mug (16oz)	\$18.00
VSPA Glass Mug Pewter Thumb 12oz	\$18.00

Please Make Checks or Money Order Payable to: Vietnam Security Police Association or VSPA Send to: Kari L. Digby 3678 Malcolm Bay City, MI 48706 WWW.VSPA.COM

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President's Message - Steve Gattis

VSPA RESTRICTED AREA at <u>VSPA.COM</u>

For those of you who have Internet access, the Restricted Area will soon become more important than ever before. Many changes have been made that have improved the web site and will provide outstanding security for our dues paying members. Our Web Master, Don Poss, has given hundreds of hours in the last few months to make the changes and improvements a reality. As current members of the VSPA, you can log into the Restricted Area and view stories of a more graphic nature, see photos posted by our members, and view rosters that can be sorted in a variety of ways. The rosters include all active email links and can be sorted alphabetically by base, Regular Members, Life Members, Charter Members, and K-9. There is a very special roster that is compiled in a manner that will allow you to see if anyone lives in the same city as you do. You can also view previous issues of Guardmount by going to the "Guardmount Reload" link.

The BX will soon be operational in the Restricted Area. When it is up and ready, you will be able to see the merchandise and memorabilia that is available and then make an on-line purchase.

If you are an annual member, your ability to enter the Restricted Area will expire on January 1st when your dues of \$15 must be renewed. If you are a Life Member, your dues will never expire. Don Poss has done a tremendous amount of work to make the Restricted Area work for us and to maintain confidentiality of our personal information. If you are having difficulty logging into the Restricted Area, please contact me instead of Don Poss. The problem can be corrected through email or a short phone call with me so that we can go over the information that we have in the computer. The most important aspect of our new system is that you will be able to maintain all of your own information regarding your address, phone number and email address. If you move, you will never miss an issue of Guardmount. All you have to do is login and make the changes. However, your dues must be current. You will be locked out of the Restricted Area by the computer until your dues are paid. If your dues are current and you are having difficulty entering the Restricted Area, send me an email and describe the problem. <u>SteveGattis-LM49@vspa.com</u> or call me at 254-898-2647.

The Restricted Area is designed for you so that it will not be available to the general public, or to those who criticize you for writing about your experiences in Vietnam or Thailand. Once you are registered in the Restricted Area, you will also receive email notifications from the VSPA regarding reunions, special events, web site changes and additions, Agent Orange related issues, illnesses and deaths, requests for help, etc. You will also be notified regarding special opportunities like the VSPA Commemorative Badge (please see the photo and order form included with this issue) that will not be sold to the general public.

Dues are now due. Check your Name, if it is followed by 05 it means your dues are paid for 2005 and are due for 2006

Nemo A534 — Terry Strickland

Submitted by: Nemo's War Dog Heroes Association United States Air Force Sentry Dog - Nemo A534 Honored at Lackland AFB, Texas

Nemo's kennel pad, November 3, 2003 (Photo courtesy of Ernest Childers, Jr.)

In 2003, a group of old Military Working Dog handlers were in San Antonio, Texas for a Vietnam Security Police Association reunion. As part of this reunion, we took a tour of the DOD kennels at Lackland AFB. Most of us in the group had received our Sentry Dog and Patrol Dog training at this location. When we arrived at the kennels, many of us were anxious to see Nemo's kennel. Nemo was retired to this location after receiving wounds in the 1966 attack on Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam. When we located the kennel, we found ourselves staring at what was left; a barren, eroding pad with crumbling raised borders around the perimeter. Absolutely nothing was left to mark the significance of the kennel. Very few of the military personnel that accompanied us were even aware of the significance of this old pad.

A group of the old handlers decided, then and there, to reveal the history of the site and honor Nemo's legacy in a befitting fashion. The group's primary and most immediate concern was to restore Nemo's kennel to its original condition. After several meetings with the 37th Squadron commander, Lt Colonel Robert Roth and Lt Thomas McGillicuddy of the 341st Training Squadron, we received permission for the project. With that accomplished, we formed the "Nemo's War Dog Heroes Association" and began assembling our goals and acquiring the seed money needed to get the project out of the planning stage. While awaiting approval, the fencing and roofing of the kennel, Nemo's doghouse and kennel sign were reproduced to replicate the original condition as closely as possible.

During one of our many trips to Lackland, Lt. McGillicuddy stated that he knew someone we would be very interested in meeting. He introduced us to Marine Sgt Chris Willingham, one of the instructors for a new training program called Specialized Search Dogs (SSD). Sgt. Willingham relayed that, as a means to build pride in his team, he had assigned his troops the task of researching their Military Working Dog heritage. They not only took the "ball", but they ran with it! The Marines and Army researched the history of their respective K-9 branches, and SSgt Mike Long was assigned Nemo. A week later one representative from each branch gave a presentation on what they had learned. During his research, SSgt Mike Long discovered that Nemo was an Air Force Sentry dog credited with stopping the infiltrated Viet Cong assault on Ton Son Nhut AB in December of 1966, and had spent the last five years of his life on Lackland Air Force Base.

With the selection of Nemo as their hero, further research revealed his empty concrete pad. Immediate and prompt work began to develop a plan to raise funds for a dedication and memorial stone for Nemo. The memorial stone was to give the war hero his due respect and to let former dog handlers know his sacrifices were not forgotten. It should be noted that to raise these funds they held car washing events, as well as using their own personal funds. Motivation and dedication quickly became the plan of action!

Since, the old dogs were working on basically the same restoration project for Nemo's kennel and his story; we joined forces with the SSD team and agreed to make it a joint effort. Hence, we have a committee made up of old and young handlers who have the same objectives, to recognize, honor, and maintain the history of War Dog Heroes.

Continued page -5-

Nemo A534 — continued from page 4

On September 23, 2005, several of the old dog handlers who had visited the site initially were invited to the graduation of SSD, Team II and the dedication ceremony of Nemo's memorial headstone. With the installment of the stone, the groundwork has been laid for Nemo's War Dog Heroes Association to complete the memorial. Our intention is to restore the kennel to the condition of 1967-1968 by using photographs of its original condition. The efforts of today's handlers, young and old, will bring the project to completion and put in place the path for the continued recognition of all War Dog Heroes.

Well done SSD, Team II: Instructors U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Chris Willingham and Mr. Orlando Nunez, team members, A.F. SSgt. Mike Long (Class Leader), U.S. Army Sgt. Danyel Claire; U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Mark Corrado, CPL Tim Johnson, LCPL Josh Hays, LCPL Brett Hamm, and LCPL Mike Evans.

> Nemo's Memorial Stone picure on page (Photo courtesy of Ernest Childers, Jr.)

Updates will follow as the project progresses.

Injured Air Force Sgt. to keep dog ©2005 The Associated Press

Under compromise, injured Air Force Sgt. to keep bomb dog By Kimberly Hefling

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - Severely injured when her Humvee was bombed in Iraq, Air Force Tech Sgt. Jamie Dana woke up in a military hospital and cried out for Rex, her bomb-sniffing dog.She was told Rex was dead. Later, she found out he was alive.

But her joy soon turned to sadness when she was told she couldn't adopt him. Now, under a compromise announced Thursday between House-Senate negotiators, it appears Rex, a German shepherd, will join Dana full-time .He might even make it there by the holidays. "I don't really know how to put that into words," said Dana, a McKean County native who is still recovering from the bombing last summer that destroyed the Humvee and slightly burned Rex. "It's something you've been dreaming of for months, and now you find out you're allowed — what can you really say? I just feel overwhelmed. "The Air Force initially said it spent \$18,000 training Rex, and by statute

he needed to work the remaining five years of his useful life before he could be adopted. The effort to adopt Rex was accelerated by Dana's congressman, Rep. John Peterson, R-Pa., who found out about her desire to adopt the dog while visiting her bedside at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. Dana, who plans to become a veterinarian, had suffered severe internal injuries in the explosion, and continues to suffer from back pain and weakness in her legs. Peterson said that the military, with prodding, agreed to ask Congress to add language to the annual defense bill that will allow exceptions to the statute that prohibits the adoption of military working dogs before the end of their useful life. Rep. John Murtha, R-Pa., and Virginia Sen. John Warner, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, also joined the effort. The full Congress will likely vote on the bill next week. Jamie literally almost gave her life — as close as you can come to giving your life and living. ... The healing process from going through something like that, I can see so much therapy in having her friend Rex there to heal with her ... so we were all lobbying hard," Peterson said.

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Agent Orange - Paul Mashburn, Life Member #152, DaNang 66

Agent Orange, a strange name for a "red" liquid, but the orange identifying strip placed on the 55-gal drums caught on as easy as Kleenex did with tissues. Actually, there were other colors Monsanto and Dow Chemicals used for identifying other toxic defoliant barrels; white and blue for example, but "orange" stuck with us GIs.

By the end of our involvement in Vietnam, the military had applied 18.85 million gallons of 15 different defoliants to inland forests near the demarcation zone; inland forests at the junction of the borders of Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam; inland forests north and northwest of Saigon; mangrove forests on the southernmost peninsula of Vietnam; and mangrove forests along major shipping channels southeast of Saigon.

The Agent Orange formula accounted for 80% of the weed-killing herbicides used in Vietnam. They included 2,4-D; 2,4,5-T and its contaminant TCDD (or dioxin); cacodylic acid and picloram. Many of us witnessed these smelly liquids being applied by airplanes, helicopters, trucks, river boats, or even backpack sprayers. Most of the distribution fell to the crews of C-123s during **Operation Ranch Hand** ('62 to '71). As indicated by the Governments own records, these herbicides containing dioxin were used by the U.S. military to defoliate base camps and other facilities in the U.S. and in other countries as far back as the 1950s.

Since there was such wide-spread use of the toxic defoliants in Southeast Asia, your chances of being exposed are great. You may not have even aware of your exposure. However, some, like me, who often stood flight line post on the Ranch Hand C-123s, can remember the smell of the sticky liquid that wept from the plane's wing and tail sprayers squishing under our jungle boots. There is no doubt for me, but you could have been exposed without your knowledge. That's why you must exercise your **RIGHT** and apply for an examination and/or compensation!

The bottom line for VA compensation is this: If you have been diagnosed with Type I or II Diabetes and you served a single day "in country" Vietnam, you are entitled to monthly VA compensation. To apply you need copies of your medical records, which should include a letter from your doctor, and an original copy of your DD214. If you don't have an original copy, the VA will even research and find original copies of your DD214 and other assignment records for you.

This compensation normally amounts to 20% disability if you are on diabetes medication (i.e. Avandia, etc.), which usually translates to \$210/month for life! Without medication, if your medical records show you have been simply diagnosed, you are entitled to 10% or around \$108/mo. There is also a retroactive catch up amount that goes back to the earliest diagnosis documented in your doctor's records.

If you have developed diabetes or any of the other conditions listed on the VA website (http://www.yba.va.gov/bln/21/benefits/herbicide/), then you could be eligible for additional compensation. Other sources of research on the subject can be found at:

http://www.landscaper.net/agent2.htm

http://www.hcvets.com/Agent_Orange.htm http://www1.va.gov/agentorange/

http://www.diabetes.org/type-2-diabetes/agent-orange.jsp Contact your local Veterans Affairs Department Field Office (consult your local Yellow Pages) today for assistance in applying for what you have earned! The contact number is normally found by looking under your state's government listings. This field agent will probably fill out the application for you and send it to the proper office within the Veterans Administration. I don't recommend going directly to the VA first. After your application is filed by the Veterans Affairs agent, you will be contacted for more information. Notify your doctor that he/she will be contacted for your medical records, and that you would like a letter supporting your medical claim to the VA.

If you have any questions or personal experience on the subject of Agent Orange exposure and diabetes compensation, please send them directly to me at <u>fuzzbert_1999@yahoo.com</u>. I'll endeavor to answer your questions in follow up articles, and/or publish your experiences in Guardmount.

Last time I reported on the civil case being filed on behalf of Vietnamese exposed to dioxin. Unfortunately, the claimants faced a set back in March of this year when Judge Jack Weinstein of Texas ruled there was no legal basis for their claims. They continue to prepare for another battle.

More currently, Canadians learned in May that forty years ago the American military was allowed to testbomb a New Brunswick army base with deadly "Agent Orange" herbicide. To the dismay of the U.S. the Canadian government is admitting that veterans are dying as a result of being poisoned. U.S. forces doused forested areas of the Gagetown base with the infamous chemical defoliant, testing it for clearing jungle during the Vietnam War.

Sounds like the Vietnamese and the Canadians should be working together!

Until next time,

Paul Mashburn

Thailand Handler and friends support Air Force Kennels in Iraq



Bill Cummings - Life Member # 173 K9 Coordinator 635th SPS K-9 - Brutus X321 - U-Tapao RTAB 1970-1971

In August our Thailand handlers group was contacted by a MWD handler in Iraq concerning conditions of several kennels where our troops are deployed. It seems that they were in dire need for equipment to improve conditions for their dogs.

We put the call out to identify our personnel that would like to get involved in a "Re-supply Project". Needles to say, the response was overwhelming from our handlers and friends.

It is with great pleasure that I announce that our veteran handlers and our friends, just opened their wallets and said "Hell yes, lets help these handlers". And now, for the rest of the story!

Currently, we have adopted two Air Force kennels, namely Ali (407th ESFS) and Kirkuk (507th ESFS) Air bases. As of this date, we have purchased over \$1,200.00 worth of supplies and have the following equipment on the ground:

14 Guardian Pet Cots and replacement bedding material

- 8 Nylon Muzzles
- 14 Sets of grooming tools

(Brushes, rakes, shedding tools, waterholes, and food storage containers)

9 Cooling vests

7 Digital Thermometers

8 Cooling mats (for search and vehicle positions)

8 Flood lights (for training areas)

Many of the suppliers that we have contacted have been very generous, some even giving us up to 50% discount on the equipment.

In addition, we have "adopted" 14 handlers to communicate with over 25 of our handlers and friends – Yes; "Care Packages" are enroute!

I can't begin to tell you how much pleasure it is to swap old war stories, techniques, and personal experiences with today's handlers. We have matched up our "Old Dawgs and Pups" according to home state and bases of deployment.

Thanks to our group, we are "Supporting the war effort" – those handlers following in our footsteps will have something to tell those that follow them!

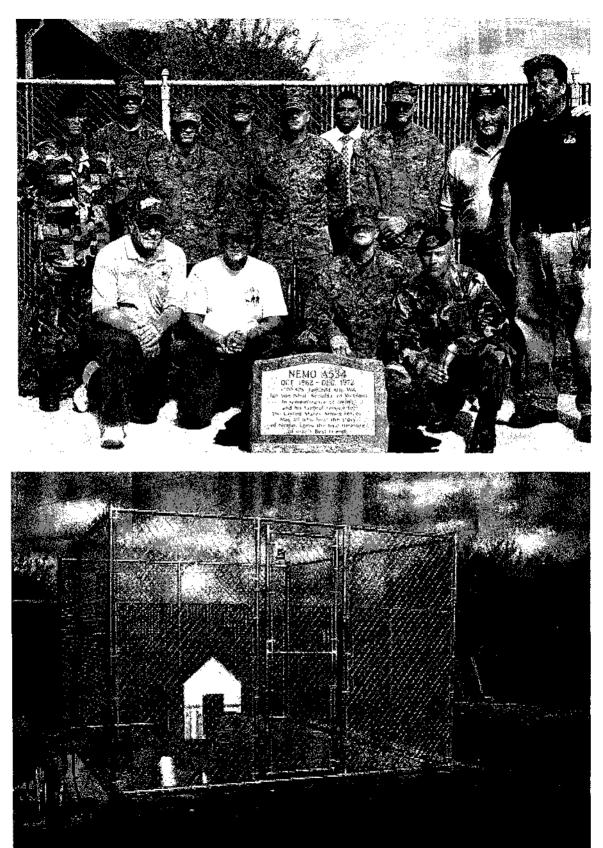
We expect to broaden our support for other kennels as their needs are brought to our attention.

Here is a response from one of our Kennel Masters:

"Bill, as you might have already been told we have received all our gear. We have the thermometers, light bulbs, cooling mats, cots, brushes, cooling vests, muzzles, rakes and everything else that I might have forgot to add. All of the cots have shown up too, as well. We are truly thankful and your debt. Here is of our dogs that love the cots".

MWD Rexo D188 - Does he like this bedding or what?

If anyone is interested in participating in this project, please contact me at <u>K9Brutus@gmpexpress.net</u> and I will update you on our progress.



VSPA Scholarship Fund - Jim (Buda) Lebowitz

At the VSPA Annual Business Meeting the scholarship fund was discussed. We have \$500.00 that can be awarded to members, spouses of members, children and grandchildren of members. All it takes is a 3.0 GPA and complete the appropriate paperwork. The scholarship award can be used for post secondary education, i.e., trade school or college.

I can send you the necessary paperwork via e-mail or snail mail. You can contact me as follows:

E-mail (work) James.Lebowitz@med.va.gov E-mail (home) jelcatfish@aol.com Home Phone 732-254-7912 Work Phone 908-647-0180, ext. 4354. You can contact me between 0700 and 1500 (that is 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM civilian time) FAX 908-604-5343

Reunions

REMEMBER THE DATES FOR OUR REUNIONS:

October 2006 Las Vegas, Nevada

November 2007 Washington D.C. Anniversary of The Wall - We will march as a unit in the parade! Make your Hotel reservations ASAP.

Janet M. Wise

I have heard from George Roach (Tucson '04) and Jacob Barr (Valdosta '05) and it just made me think how the VSPA touches so many. The memories I have with Daddy and the friends I've made are priceless.

The Pup program, Mom and Erlyce, Kim, the Sisterhood, "We take care of our own", so many good things from a great bunch of guys...can't wait to see all of you in Vegas. And I can't wait to see the faces of the newest Brothers, because they are in for something good.

Feel free to pass this on.

HUGS!

Janet M. Wise

Life Memberships are available as follows:

Age 41 to 50, \$180.00 Age 51 to 60, \$160.00 Age 61 to 70, \$130.00 Age 71 to 80, \$ 90.00 Age 80 + \$ 55.00

If you paid your 2005 dues or paid dues in advance, they will be applied to your life membership. We are now close to 260 Life Members. Please mail your payments to me.

FLAG COMMITTEE REPORT — Don Graham

VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION 2005 FLAG COMMITTEE REPORT

At last years reunion it was decided that as an organization we should have a flag to display at our reunions and other gatherings that some of our members attend. This became more urgent with the decision to attend the 25th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in 2007.

In just a few months the committee came up with a design that we think displays our heritage and commitment to our fellow Security Police who served during the Vietnam War.

I would like to thank my fellow committee members John Langley, Ken Neal, Ed Way, Don Poss, Earl Cary and Terry Morris for all they contributed to this project.

There were many good designs that were submitted and it was very difficult to select just one. The design we selected was submitted by Ken Neal.

And with that I would like to introduce Ken so he can tell us about the design.

CASUALTY BULLETIN: 3d SFS, IRAQ

TSgt. Jason L. Norton and SSgt. Brian McElroy were killed in action on Jan 22, 2006 in Iraq. A third U.S. Airmen was wounded in that attack on a convoy Sunday near Taji, where a U.S. air base is located 20 kilometers (12 miles) north of Baghdad, the military said. The name or medical status of the wounded airman has not been released.

All three airmen served with the 3d SFS in Iraq, which also served in Bien Hoa, Vietnam.

"The two airmen's deaths took the number of U.S. military personnel killed since the war in Iraq began in March 2003 to at least 2,226, according to an Associated Press count."

As a Life Member of the Vietnam Security Police Association, <u>I freely pledge</u>:

For the rest of my life, I pledge loyalty and support to my fellow Air Police and Security Police warriors. To the best of my abilities, I will preserve the memory of those who fought and died, and fought and lived, in Vietnam and Thailand during the Vietnam War, I will share their stories, and support my brothers who carry the torch still, so that what we did together in combat will be forever remembered.

Vietnam Security Police Reunion - A K-9 Perspective

Bill Cummings - Life Member # 173 K-9 Kennel Master

Hello everyone!

Well everyone is finally home and rested after the VSPA Reunion where 44 K-9 members, spouses, and guests attended at Valdosta, Georgia. Once again, the VSPA laid out the red carpet for us for the four-day event. Many of us renewed old friendships and all of us gained some new acquaintances. First and foremost we learned exactly how our modern day canine teams and our security forces are trained, equipped and willing to serve – they really made us proud.

What a great organization! Many of us believe that this was one of the greatest events we have attended. OK, here goes.

A number of us arrived on Wednesday, the day before the reunion officially started – but, it sure paid off for us. Eight of us visited the 347^{th} and the 820^{th} MWD kennels for an "Unofficial Visit" to meet the troops and dogs. We had a ball – but we had no idea what Thursday would bring for us – it was well worth the wait. As usual, we set up camp around the pool that evening and welcomed the "late comers" to our established "kennel area" and you can bet we peed on the ground to mark our territory - we had a ball as we made sure everyone who showed up was properly welcomed.

Thursday was just a great day as the remainder of our group continued to show up. Dixie Whitman and her group showed up and presented all of our handlers with a welcome bag - you can believe me that these were just first class and everyone really appreciated Dixie's efforts. It was now "high noon" and we departed the hotel for our "Official Visit" to the kennels. Once we arrived, the excitement began as TSgt Jeff George (347th) and TSgt Bob Kisner (822nd) greeted and welcomed us to their kennels. At this point, several of our old dogs were matched up with the pups that they had been communicating with for the first time - this was a wonderful moment for all involved. We then toured the kennels. You guys just wouldn't believe the wonderful conditions that now exist for our MWDs - these digs are squared away.

The Obedience Course demonstration then began under the direction of SSgt Chris Hann. We were quite amazed that the basic course still resembled what we old guys had done so many years ago – there were new twists, but everything still works. What a great job – oh, before I forget – these dogs still bite very, very, hard!

We then saddled up and headed out for a demonstration of some of the new tactics of today's handlers – this is where it really got exciting. We were then treated to view the operation of what goes on "out side of the wire" – and let me tell you – we were impressed. The members of the 820^{th} set up a mock patrol and everyone knew that we were getting ready to see something really new and exciting – they didn't let us down.

MWDs, with a fire team support, were just something that raised the hair on the back of your neck – these teams are trained professionals and just use these dogs to the limits.

They demonstrated alerts, attacks, escorts and numerous other procedures. Then they brought out a working explosive detection dog for us – you just knew we're not going to blow up anything while this dog was on duty – Great job!

We were then exposed to the newest weapon in the K-9 arsenal as we viewed how the new SSD (Specialized Search Dogs) worked entirely off leash, including the use of a radio receiver (that's right – that's how far off leash they work) and you talk about impressed – this team was Fantastic! Hell, even the old handlers in our group could read her alert – even if it was 150 yards away – there was no doubt in our minds that she had found explosives!

After a great afternoon with our troops, we gathered and presented both kennels with a copy of Charles Shaw's Air Force art collection depicting the retraining of Sentry Dogs to Patrol Dogs, along with challenge coins for all of the handlers. We knew this was the start of something good – and the carnaraderie of old and new handlers continued for the rest of the weekend as they joined us, both night and day, for the events of the reunion.

A special thank you goes out to Terry Strickland and SSgt Chris Jones (347^{th} SFS) for their efforts in setting up our private and special tour of the two kennels – great job guys.

Dues are now due. Check your Name, if it is followed by 05 it means your dues are paid for 2005 and are due for 2006

Vietnam Security Police Reunion - A K-9 Perspective

Friday was just as exciting as we joined the "straightlegs" for their portion of the base tour. When we arrived for a briefing by the 820^{th} Commander, he said that we were loading up for a convoy – and it involved 5-ton trucks (just 2 ½ times the size of our deuces) – as you might imagine; our K9 troops loaded up that truck in a heart beat.

We were in for a treat and we had no idea what was about to happen to us. After about a two mile ride, the convoy turned down a pine tree lined road – you could just feel that something was about to happen. The men and women of the 820^{th} sure didn't disappoint us – the fight was on and we were in the middle of it. Explosions, smoke, gun fire, and commanders barking out orders (it was at this point where we made pants and medication checks) – but we knew one thing for sure – these Security Force troops knew their job and executed it in every event that happened when our convoy was attacked. These troops are GOOD!

Once we got squared away even more excitement followed. That's right – we got to fire weapons – 50 Calibers, M-249 s (the new version of the M-60), and we got to sit (they wouldn't let us drive them – wonder why?) in Humvees and 5-Ton trucks. The members of the exercise team stood by the weapons and vehicles and answered questions for about an hour. I can tell you one thing – almost to the man our K-9 troops and guests shook the hands and thanked each and every one of these troops for their service. It sure wasn't hard to tell that they appreciated our support – these are great young service personnel.

We then saddled back up and headed back to the hangar where we had lunch with the troops – this was something new for the reunion and it really worked. Just something about sharing food with each other that always seems to work. There was a short K-9 demonstration and then a whole bunch of meet and greet – what a day! Several of us were asked to join some Safeside members for a tour of the 820th HQ and training quarters. Immediately upon our arrival we were greeted by their official mascot – the scorpion – that's right – two of those suckers in a glass enclosure who were treated like kings. We then continued the tour as we viewed the meeting and training areas, and various members of the unit explained their roll for deployment as a selfcontained unit – all these guys need are someone to fly them where the fight is – they have everything else to sustain themselves for the period of the engagement.

It should be mentioned that one of our own, SSgt Illaoa (Phil) Faleagafula (NKP MWD Kurt 1968) who was killed in the crash of the helicopter that was enroute to rescue the USS Mayaguez is memorialized in the main hallway of the 820th Headquarters building.

Before leaving the base, VSPA President Steve Gattis, Vice President Hector Ramos and Secretary Bruce Hadley presented challenge coins and VSPA pins to each member of the 820th Security Forces demonstration teams. A plaque was also presented to the men and women of the 820th Security Forces Group thanking them for hosting the 11th annual reunion of the VSPA.

After returning to the hotel and taking a little break, we held our Thailand Handlers Meeting. VSPA President Steve Gattis was our honored guest, along with several Vietnam handlers, and Janet Wise. Following individual introductions, the meeting proceeded with committee reports on the Nemo Project, Agent Orange, National War Dog Memorial, and the raffle to raise funds for the hurricane victims and the National War Dog Memorial.

As usual, Dave Broeker and John Homa just out did themselves with the "goodie bags" and prizes. Janet Wise also donated a beautiful German shepherd figurine. John also gave away 5 SP shields as part of a raffle. Those new dudes from NKP took all of the prizes. Thanks to all who made this event a great success! Thanks also to Charlie Berry for reminding us of Charlie Blood's birthday and thanks to Ernie Childers for the birthday cake – it was fantastic.

Hardship memberships, no one will be turned down, however, we need you to contact Terry Morris, Steve Gattis or myself every year. No explanation is necessary; we take care of our own.

Vietnam Security Police Reunion - A K-9 Perspective

Saturday morning found the Business Meeting to be a very long event, but it should be noted that an enormous amount of subjects were covered. Ken Neal (Ubon/Udorn) made presentations on the proposed VSPA Flag and a new challenge coin design. David Adams (Korat) gave a great update on the status of the Agent Orange objective for Thailand Veterans, and Bill Cummings (U-Tapao) was nominated and elected as the VSPA Kennel Master to coordinate all VSPA K9 efforts. Terry Strickland (Korat) and Bill Cummings gave a very brief presentation on the "Nemo's War Dog Heroes" program now underway, and Bill Wigginton (Korat) briefed the National War Dog Memorial plans and thanked everyone for stopping by to view the NWDM display.

On Saturday night, our troops, spouses, and guests attended the VSPA banquet. The food and libation were fantastic – but that was just the start of things to come. Our guest speaker, CMSgt Levi (Doc) Scott, the top enlisted cop from the Pentagon was superb and I think everyone there was impressed with his speech centering on "bridging of our forces" from the Vietnam era to today. What a dynamic speaker – between the CMSGT and the 820th Executive Office – we were almost ready to reactivate a K-9 section and head for the sand (can you picture that in your mind?). We all would have loved working for this guy.

Following the speeches and dinner, our raffle to benefit the K-9 victims of the hurricane and the National War Dog Memorial led off the festivities. John Homa proudly announced that the committee had raised a total of \$1,140 via donations from VSPA and VDHA members, spouses and friends for the National War Dog Monument, along with an additional \$385 collected for K-9 members that were victims of Hurricane Katrina. We cannot begin to thank John Homa for all of his efforts on this project over the last three years – what a great job and a great member of our organization – Thanks again John, from all of us.

The winner of the grand prize – a prototype shield and arm band was won by Ken Neal of Ubon/Udorn – congratulations Ken.

Bill Wigginton, on behalf of the Board of Directors Committee of the National War Dogs Monument Fund would like to thank the Thailand Units for their continued support.

Since the Vietnam Dog Handler Association's St. Louis Reunion in 2002 our Thailand handlers have held raffles and have donated \$3,390 to the National War Dog Monument.

President Steve Gattis, on behalf of the VSPA recognized Ken Neal and Bill Cummings for their efforts during the past year on the VSPA flag and coin, and involvement of our K-9 troops to support the organization. Ken and Bill were presented with a bust of a SF troop with a thank you message – a beautiful gift.

The event adjourned to the hospitality room at the hotel until the wee hours of the morning. There was a lot of hugging, hope to see you soon promises, and plans were put into action to meet each other again in Las Vegas, in October 2006. Firm handshakes and pats on the back were everywhere – you could tell how this event had indeed had an impact on the attendees – this was one great event!

Sunday morning, as each of us drifted out, goodbyes led to "see you soon" conversations.

The VSPA had once again offered us the venue to meet, exchange "stories", and make plans for the future – damn, dog handlers and straightlegs – all so very glad to once again serve our country – doing so as we expressed our support for our young troops at Moody AFB, Georgia.

Information & Order Form "Vietnam Air/Security Police Commemorative Badge"

Proceeds from the sale of this badge will go to the VSPA

Misrepresenting the nature and use of the badge could result in prosecution under Title 18 United States Code Section 701."



<u>NOTE</u>: This project is not officially sponsored by the USAF.

© Badge design is proprietary data and protected by copyright.

It illegal to reproduce or copy this design without written permission.

The Vietnam Air/Security Police commemorative badge is jewelry quality. It is over 3 three inches in height and more in line with today's civilian law enforcement badges. The exquisitely detailed badge incorporates the Vietnam Service Medal colors at the top with the word VIETNAM in the banner. The QC patch is prominently displayed in the center of the badge. The rest of badge incorporates a patriotic red, white and blue color scheme with the addition of a small US & USAF flag prominently displayed along side the American Bald Eagle. The badge is made from a custom one-piece die and is constructed with pride in the USA! The badge is solid metal and <u>NOT</u> a shell back badge like the issue SP shield. The reverse of the badge contains the names of all the bases in Vietnam and Thailand. The back attachment is a heavy-duty standard law enforcement pin and catch attachment.

How To Order:

Contact Email: TNTWaage@comcast.net

* <u>COST</u>: \$ 60.00 plus \$ 3.50 for First Class Postage, Padded Mailer and Insurance. Please contact me if you desire to make a multiple badge order. PLEASE PAY BY MONEY ORDER OR PERSONAL CHECK PAYABLE TO TIM WAAGE.

* ENGRAVING: The badge number panel can be engraved for an additional cost of .40 cents per letter. Badge number panel on very bottom of the badge will accommodate approximately 8 letters/numbers. Custom laser engraving is limited only to your imagination. A few examples are unit assigned (822 CSPS), Rank (SSGT), Year Served in Vietnam/Thailand (1967-1968), Name, etc.

ENGRAVING REQUEST: _

* Send your payment to:

* Your Return Mailing Address:

TIM WAAGE 5303 YFLLOW TURTLE PLACE WOODBRIDGE, VA 22193

CONTACTEMAIL ADDRESS:

PHONE:

OCTOBER 8, 2005 - BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 8, 2005 - BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES VALDOSTA, GEORGIA

- 1. Call to Order Meeting called to order by Steve Gattis, President, at 0910 hours.
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance Don Graham, Historian, led the Association members in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 3. Invocation was given by Steve Gattis.
- 4. Steve Gattis requested a moment of silence for those who did not return from Southeast Asia.
- 5. Steve Gattis announced the VSPA Sisterhood was holding its meeting at 0900 hours. Kim Bayes and Sharon Denitto were making presentation to that group.
- 6. A report was submitted that is herewith attached as exhibit #1.
- 7. Officers of the Association were introduced by Steve Gattis:

President:	Steve Gattis
Vice-President	Hector Ramos
Secretary:	Bruce Hadley
Treasurer:	Den Cook
Historian:	Don Graham

Appointed positions:

BX Sales:	Van Digby
Chaplain:	Steve Janke
Guardmount Editor:	Den Cook
Membership:	Terry Morris
Photographer: Tony M	Aorris
Web Master:	Don Poss
Service Officer: Juniou	s "Bud" Owens

Pete Villarreal, SAFESIDE Association, and Bill Cummings, K-9 Association were introduced. They have assisted the President in coordinating activities between associations, as well as increasing our membership accordingly.

President Gattis stated that the coordinator positions needed to be added to the bylaws and constitution due to their value to the VSPA, and that only members are eligible to hold these appointed positions. Motion was made and seconded to create a coordinator for the Safeside Association, and a coordinator for the K-9 Association. Motion passed

- 8. Reading of the 2004 minutes Secretary Bruce Hadley read the business meeting minutes of the 9 October 2004 business meeting. A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as read. Motion passed.
- Treasurer's Report Secretary Bruce Hadley read the Treasurer's Report in Den Cook's absence. Ending balance as of September 30, 2005 was \$51,900.55. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed.
- 10. Web Site Report Steve Gattis reported that Don Poss, Web Master, was unable to attend our reunion because he was dealing with several attacks to the Association web site. A report was submitted that is herewith attached as exhibit #2.
- 11. Membership Report Terry Morris, Membership Chairman, reported that there are 805 paid members for 2005. There was a net gain of 97 members. Motion was made and seconded to accept the Membership Report. Motion passed. Terry mentioned that he had compiled a database of all our members as well as a list of anyone who had expressed an interest in our association, but did not join. The database is sorted by state and city and is available on the web site.
- 12. Scholarship Report Jim Lebowitz, Chairman, reported that applications had been sent out; however, none has been returned. The scholarship is for \$500. Members were urged to submit an application for the year 2006. Applications are available by contacting Jim Lebowitz. Members, and their immediate family are eligible to apply.

OCTOBER 8, 2005 - BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES VALDOSTA, GEORGIA - continued

- 13. BX Sales Report Van Digby gave a report on sales. The BX continues to operate in the black. There are five new items added to the inventory. Van is still attempting to add youth sizes for the various shirts.
- 14. Historian Report Don Graham, Historian, presented the History Report. A report was submitted that is herewith attached as exhibit #3. Don mentioned that this has been a productive year for adding information to our history binders, particularly the articles on the Thailand bases as these were the ones that we had the least amount of information on. Having this information available came in handy recently when it was used for our History Book Project. Don mentioned that another project he started was a binder of all the Security Police (SP) who are listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. There are 85 brothers listed and he is trying to compile complete information. He thanked the efforts of Dave Gudes, Helen Kish, friends Sandra and David Wiszeauckas, who helped with the Memorial and then helped in making a rubbing for each SP listed on the wall. Without their combined effort, instead of an all day task, it was accomplished in about two hours. To complete the project, Don requested to know burial locations and have a photo of each man. Those photos can be forwarded to Don Graham or Don Poss.
- 15. Association Flag Committee Report Don Graham, Chairman, made the report that is attached herewith as exhibit #4. Don mentioned that in just a few months the committee came up with a design that displays our heritage and commitment to our fellow Security Policemen who served during the Vietnam War. Don thanked his committee: John Langley, Ken Neal, Ed Way, Don Poss, Earl Cary and Terry Morris. He said there were many good designs that had been submitted and that it was difficult to select just one. He thanked all the members who submitted designs and offered suggestions to make this come about.
 - a. Ken Neal, committeeman, explained the meaning behind the design of the Association flag. The flag is predominantly Air Force blue in color representing service in the Air Force. The Vietnam Service ribbon design runs from top left to bottom right diagonally representing service in Southeast Asia. Centered on the flag is the organizational crest of the Vietnam Security Police Association with the addition of the number 111 which symbolizes and recognizes those of our members who have passed on. Above the crest along the top border are the words, "United States Air Force," identifying our military affiliation to those unfamiliar with us. Below the crest, acting as a base for the crest and all that appears above, is our motto "We take care of our own."
- 16. Flag Bids Report Van Digby, BX Sales Manager, made the report. Motion was made and seconded to accept the recommendation of the board of directors to go forward with the bid for production of the VSPA flag, and the appropriate funding as needed. Motion passed.
- 17. VSPA History Book Steve Gattis reported this was a last effort to add and modify information because there is a window up to the first of the year 2006 to do so after which the book goes to printing. The actual books will be available five (5) months after printing for distribution.
- 18. VSPA Reunion Book for 2004 Steve Gattis reported that the books were in progress and had been delayed due to the History Book Project.
- 19. VSPA Reunion Book for 2005 Steve Gattis reported that the book would be handled by Janet Wise as soon as the photographs became available.
- 20. Recruitment Pins and VSPA Sisterhood Pins Steve Gattis reported that the VSPA Sisterhood pins had been made by Bob Mitchell. The Sisterhood voted to include a rose on the VSPA logo for future pins. A motion was made and seconded to modify the Association pin by adding a wreath around it to form the recruiter pin. Motion passed.
- 21. VSPA Incorporation Steve Gattis reported that VSPA has been incorporated as of this date as a 501(c)19 non-profit all veterans organization, but it may not offer insurance like certain other veterans organizations. As a result, there are reduced IRS filing requirements. Steve explained the benefits and limitations associated therewith.
- 22. Selection of the Reunion site for 2006 is Las Vegas, Nevada at Nellis AFB. Steve Gattis reported that the Reunion Brat is working on the reunion, and that information will be validated by a local member to assist in the

Dues are now due. Check your Name, if it is followed by 05 it means your dues are paid for 2005 are due for 2006

OCTOBER 8, 2005 - BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES VALDOSTA, GEORGIA - continued

decision on which hotel to use for the reunion.

23. 2007 Washington, D.C. – The 25th Anniversary of the Vietnam Memorial. Steve Gattis opened up the floor to a discussion about the need to come up with the appearance we would want to project in the parade. One suggestion was black hats and berets, black jackets and slacks. The VSPA will march as a unit in the parade. Dates of the annual reunion will have to be moved to November 2007. November 11th is on Sunday in 2007. Steve Gattis requested volunteers to work on this committee. The following members volunteered:

Hector Ramos, Vice-PresidentEarl CaryEarnest ChildersFrank YbarboKevin FitzgeraldJames ClickWilliam Sautter

Dave Gudes	Tony Morris
Ray Rash	Denis Mager
Bill Cummings (K-9)	David Dobson
Pete Villarreal (Safesid	le)Fred Garcia (Safeside)

- 24. Motion was made and seconded to award associate membership to MSgt. Tim Waage for designing a Commemorative Badge to honor our service in Vietnam and Thailand. Motion passed.
- 25. Motion was made and seconded to have Tim Waage produce a small lapel and hat pin similar to the badge that was made. Motion passed.
- 26. Donations for the Bayes children Steve Gattis explained that a fund had been established and so far there were four (4) U.S. Saving Bonds of \$1,000 denomination each that would be purchased. Certificates will be presented to Kim Bayes at our dinner this evening. Contributions can still be made through the VSPA.
- 27. Donations for injured Iraq war vets collections were being solicited by Pete Villarreal, Safeside Association. Pat Dunne gave details on some of the injured and killed. Donations can be made to the AFSPA Eagle Chapter Proud Warrior Program.
- 28. Steve Gattis presented Pat Dunne with a plaque to recognize his continued service in consideration of others, for his commitment to Vietnam Veterans and for his service as VSPA Liaison to the family of A1C Elizabeth Jacobson who was killed in Iraq.
- 29. Challenge coin development for recognition of our younger brothers and sisters currently serving Motion was made and seconded to immediately send approximately a dozen challenge coins from the BX to Captain Chris Johnson who is stationed at Camp Bucca, Iraq. He will present the coins to troops for outstanding service in the field. Motion passed. Motion was made and seconded to develop a new coin for recognizing our younger brothers and sisters serving in security forces. Motion passed. Ken Neal volunteered to design the coin.
- 30. Guardmount Report Steve Gattis gave the report for Den Cook, editor, who could not attend. Steve mentioned that a number of members and supporters have come forward to help in publishing Guardmount and to continue after Den Cook steps down as Editor.
- 31. Service Officer Report Bud Owens gave his report about dealing with the Veterans Administration on serviceconnected disabilities claims application process.
- 32. Agent Orange in Thailand David Adams reported that a 163 page report was sent to Congressman Evans, Democrat from Illinois, documenting that Agent Orange was used in Thailand as early as 1958. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy had authorized the use of Agent Orange.
- 33. K-9 Memorial at Lackland AFB this is not the same as the National K-9 War Memorial. Steve Gattis explained that a memorial kennel was being restored at Lackland to honor K-9 "Nemo" who saved his handler. The memorial to "Nemo" will serve as a standard for K-9s. This is a joint effort between the Thailand Dog Handlers who are members of the VSPA, the K-9 Training Center and military personnel who are currently being trained at the K-9 Training Center.
- 34. Vice-President Report Hector Ramos, Vice-President made a motion that was seconded to award Associate Membership to Ms. Erlyce Pekas, fiancé, and Ms. Rachel Lehman, mother of Millard Lehman, who was killed in action on August 8, 1966. Motion passed.
- 35. Adjournment Steve Gattis, President, adjourned the meeting at 1335 hours after a motion was made and seconded. Motion passed.

Bruce N. Hadley, Jr. Secretary, Vietnam Security Police Association

FRIENDS, HEROES AND SPECIAL PEOPLE IN THE VSPA

FRIENDS, HEROES AND SPECIAL PEOPLE IN THE VSPA

Each year at our reunion, the officers of the VSPA try to ensure that very special people receive recognition for their contributions to the VSPA and their commitment to our motto, "We take care of our own." This year, we have many, many people who gave from their hearts without being asked. The true measure of character for these people was their consistent willingness to help others without being asked, for doing something when it was not expected and for doing it when nobody was looking. It is often difficult to discover when these good things happen, but we strive to identify these wonderful people each year. The following members received awards for their outstanding commitment to their fellow security policemen and the VSPA:

- Frank and Joan Pilson for outstanding assistance in the publication of our newsletter *Guardmount*.
- David Adams for his tireless effort to prove that Agent Orange was used in Thailand.
- Kari Digby (daughter of Van and Joyce Digby) for her outstanding assistance in the management of sales of memorabilia through the BX.
- Alvin Matthews for his outstanding financial support, his donation of raffle items and his generous provision of pulled pork BBQ in our Hospitality Room.
- Janet Matthews-Wise (daughter of Alvin Matthews) for her generosity and financial support throughout the years and her consistent support of the VSPA.
- Patrick "Hawk Dunne for his outstanding commitment to Vietnam Veterans and his invaluable assistance as the VSPA liaison to the family of A1C Elizabeth Jacobson who was killed in Iraq.
- Calvin "Monk" Pope for his outstanding effort to preserve the music we enjoyed while serving as Air Policemen and Security Policemen in Vietnam and Thailand.

- Ron Wheelock for ensuring that the spirit of our brotherhood survives.
- Jim Jerome for his outstanding design of a belt buckle for the VSPA.
- Ken Neal for his outstanding effort to design the VSPA flag.
- Don Graham for his outstanding effort to design the VSPA flag.
- Bob Mitchell for his extraordinary assistance in maintaining our brotherhood and for his consistent contribution of memorial buttons for our members.
- Don Poss for his outstanding service as the VSPA Web Master.
- Pete Villarreal for his outstanding assistance as the SAFESIDE Liaison, for recruitment of SAFESIDE members into the VSPA, and for his generous provision of smoked salmon and reindeer sausage (from Alaska) for our Hospitality Room.
- Bill Cummings for his outstanding assistance as the K-9 Liaison, for recruitment of K-9 handlers into the VSPA, and organizing the shipment of critical equipment to Security Forces K-9 Handlers in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- J.B. McGuire for organizing and handling the shipment of care packages and telephone cards to Security Forces personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan, and for being the first to provide regional food specialties in the Hospitality Room and thus, start a wonderful tradition.
- Jackie Kays for his poetry that has assisted so many of his brothers in healing wounds that cannot be seen.
- Bud Owens for his outstanding service as the National VSPA Service Officer for dealing with the VA regarding claims.

The following people and businesses also received recognition for their assistance to the VSPA:

- K.C. Shane, Attorney at Law for her assistance in the incorporation of the VSPA.
- Brett Gober, Classic Rings, for his

FRIENDS, HEROES AND SPECIAL PEOPLE IN THE VSPA continued

outstanding design of a security police ring and generous donation of security police rings for our raffles each year since 1999.

- Saginaw Knitting Mills for their outstanding assistance in the production of high quality memorabilia for our members.
- Sharon Denitto, for being the guest speaker for the VSPA Sisterhood and sharing her heartfelt experiences with The Moving Wall.
- Retired Security Forces MSgt. Tim Waage for his outstanding design of a badge to commemorate our service in Vietnam and Thailand.
- MSgt. Michael Silvin for his extraordinary assistance in the planning and preparation of the host activities for the 820th Security Forces Group at Moody AFB.
- Colonel John Decknick for being our host at two different reunions (Langley AFB 2001 and Moody AFB 2005) and for his outstanding leadership in the preservation of our honor and history among current Security Forces personnel.
- The men and women of the 820th Security Forces Group for their outstanding service and for hosting our 11th annual reunion.
- Chief Levi "Doc" Scott for his outstanding leadership, for being our guest speaker and

for his assistance in preserving our honor and history among current Security Forces personnel. His presentation was so well received that many of us were ready to reenlist.

When you see these people or exchange email with them, please give thanks for their outstanding service. If you know of someone who deserves recognition, please send me, or any of our officers, an email identifying the person and describing what they have done to be a living example of our motto, "We take care of our own."

My sincere thanks to everyone for all that you do for our brotherhood, for the Vietnam Security Police Association and for the troops who currently wear our shield. While leadership keeps the business side of this wonderful association running, we are only as strong as our membership allows us to be. Together, we can take our membership well over 1,000 and be the best possible organization for Vietnam Veterans and thereby preserve the honor and history of our service. Thank you for your hard work and selfless contributions for the good of everyone, including the troops who have followed in our footsteps. It is an incredible honor to walk among you at a reunion and to be a member of the VSPA.

Steve Gattis, President

Dues payments can be made on line at <u>www.vspa.com</u> or by mailing them to Denis Cook 1632 Manor Blvd. Lancaster, PA 17603 Make checks payable to the VSPA

2006 Reunion – Las Vegas

Hello to all.

Questions were asked in the reunion announcement posting that I will answer. Many of our members do not have the time to read everything on the bulletin board, so the answers are here rather than having them ask again when they have not had the time or opportunity to read all of the responses to the first announcement.

Reunions are tough to plan. Las Vegas is especially tough. The hotels want our business, but they also have to bid in a proposal format so that we can hold them to their proposed cost. If you call them out of the blue and do it without contracts, you will not get cooperation when things really get tough, when they have high rollers who demand rooms or someone offers to bring in more people at a rate higher than we are paying.

When I was getting bids for our 1999 reunion, one hotel on the Strip actually bid \$27 per quart of orange juice for our business meeting. That was in 1999! The economy and Las Vegas have changed a lot over the years. We get good deals for our large group by having several hotels bid against each other.

Going to Las Vegas is not about getting a room for the night. Nor is it about getting a weekend package in an out-of-the-way old section of the hotel for a cheap fee. All room rates in Las Vegas go up on the weekends. In 1999, our room rates at the San Remo were \$70 during the week and \$99 on Friday and Saturday. The San Remo has been closed and is just now reopening as a Hooters. Same event coordinators and we love them and we asked them to bid. BUT, we are too big for them. They cannot handle a group our size because we have grown so much and have brought in over 200 for the last two years. In fact, we had 189 in 2003, 218 in 2004 and 236 in 2005. We have a lot of members in California, Arizona and Washington as well as local folks in the Las Vegas area who will also come to the banquets and join us to share in our brotherhood both at the hotel and at Nellis. This will be a very large reunion as most West Coast reunions are.

Anyone can get a cheap room for one night and run around Las Vegas. If you are a high roller, you can even stay free. If you are retired, you might be able to stay at the base. However, you will still pay more for a Saturday night than you will for a Wednesday night in a hotel unless you are staying in a place where wives would not enter unless it was to find us and drag us out into the streets.

Our reunion is about our brotherhood being in one place. It is about the Vietnam Security Police Association arriving with 200 plus people who need rooms with a hospitality room, with private banquet rooms that can feed over 200 for our reception dinner, with a secure location for our BX operation, meeting rooms away from the public, and the ability to have a sitdown plated banquet dinner on Saturday for at least 250 AND our guests from the host squadron at Nellis.

Continued on page 27

New Members in order of enlistment.

- Richard Bachmann Edward Raube Donald Howard Ernest Babcock
- Christopher Godfrey Curtis Hammond John Powers James David Joe Maze James Rossiter Charlie Jordan Edward Hogan
- Donald Rock Michael Wigginton Thomas Vesterby Craig Hutcheson
- Larry Smith John Coakley Bryan leif
- Danny Bowlin Robert Beam Arnold Smith Gene Kostreba Robert Reynolds Benny Aloia Larry Blades
- Ronald Agner Rodney Atkeson William Wade Riccardo Mazzacua Raymond Adams Donald Jones Ben Hayes Eddie Spragg

Jul-05

Tan Son Nhut 65 K9 Tan Son Nhut 7/69-70 Tan Son nhut 12/67-68 Tuy Hoa 12/69-70

Aug-05

Bien Hoa 4/65-66 Tan Son Nhut 5/67-70 Nakon Phanom 2/73-74 Phu Cat 8/67-68 Phan Rang 12/69-70 K9 Bien Hoa 4/65-66 QuiNhon Phan Rang 8/68-69 Pleiku TSN 12/73-74 NKP Nha Trang 7/69-70 Cam Ranh Bay Cam Ranh Bay 69 Danang 2/68-69 Monkey Mountain Danang 70-71 Ubon 9/68-69 Cam Ranh Bay 71 Cam Ranh Bay 66-67 Bien Hoa 12/69-70 Bien Hoa 4/70-71 Phan Rang / Korat KoKha U-Tapao 72-76

Bien Hoa 7/65-66 Pleiku Takhli 10/73-74

Sep-05

Ubon 5/70-72 Udorn 11/73-75 Bien Hoa 6/67-68 Phu Cat 3/69-70 Korat 1/75-76 U-Tapao 4/75-76 U-Tapao Tan Son Nhut 11/67-68

Oct-05

Korat 1/75-76 Bien Hoa 7/67-68 Tan Son Nhut 11/67-68 Tan Son Nhut 8/68-69 Tan Son Nhut 10/64-65 Danang 11/65-66 Bien Hoa 65 Binh Thuy 10/69-70 Phan Rang Menomonee Falls, WI Atlantic Beach, FL Williamson, WV Las Vegas, NV

Stevenson Ranch, CA Leavenworth, KS Wittenberg, WI Wyoming, MI Springfield, OR Shrewsbury, PA Fairfield, CA Holly Springs, MS

Ephrata, PA Slidell, La Caldwell, ID Flowery Branch, GA

Wilmington, NC Valley Village, CA Layton, UT

- Arlington, TX Plant City, FL Windsor, CT Calhoun, GA Citra, FL Lakewood, CO Baltimore, MD
- East Brunswick, NJ Owasso, OK Trenton, NJ Citrus Springs, FL St. Petersburg, FL Salinas, CA St. Petersburg, FL Memphis, TN

New Members in order of enlistment.

Nov-05

Ben Brown		
James Morris	Bien Hoa 65 Phan Rang 9/68-79 Ubon 67	Moultrie, GA
Dennis Snellen	Udom 12/72-74	Lithonia, GA
Frederich Brooks	822nd CSPS 68-69	Calimesa, CA
Harold Robinson	Takhli 2/68-69 U-Tapao 6/71-72 Takhli 6/74-76	Pensacola, FL
Craig Reeves	Nakon Phanom 9/68-69	Medford, OR
Edward Small Jr.	Danang 9/68-69	Richmond, TX
Randall McLagan	Tan Son Nhut 1/70-71	Brookings, SD
Russell Colombo	Tan Son Nhut 11/69-70	Rochester, NY
David Strassel	Takhli 8/65-67 Phan Rang	Port Orange, FL
George Knight	Phan Rang 5/69-70	Gautier, MS
- Gary Lockhart	Tan Son Nhut 68-69 Vung Tau	Commodore, PA
William McManus	Ubon 11/70-71	Niagara, ND
Gary Jones	Udom 65 Phan Rang Danang 68-69 71-72 Phu Cat TSN 68	Waldorf, MD
Daniel Dudek	Tuy Hoa 11/67-68	Phoenix, AZ
	Dec-05	
Jerry Burlison	Tan Son Nhut 3/68-69	Nederland, TX
Stephen Powell	Cam Ranh Bay 4/71 72 Tan Son Nhut	Indianapolis, IN
Michael Tillman	Phan Rang 66	Burlington, KY
Joseph Richardson	Tan Son Nhut 9/67-68	Indianapolis, IN
Duane Brown	Udom 71-72	Dubuque, IA
William Lauchlan	Phu Cat 3/70-71	Cedar Rapids, IA
Mark Galpin	Cam Ranh Bay 2/68-69	Cheyenne, WY
Ray Roberts	Danang 10/66-67	Morristown, TN
	Jan-06	
Stephen Wasulko	Tan Son Nhut 4/67-68	Granada Hills, CA
Herbert Norfolk	Danang 12/65-66	Glen Burnie, MD
Mason Morris	Danang 7/67-68	Oak Creek, WI
Douglas Lilly	Cam Ranh Bay 4/68-70 Danang	Slatington, PA
Jimmie Durham	Korat 3/65-67 Tan Son Nhut	Chattanooga, TN
	Feb-06	
John R. Powers	U-Tapao12/68-69 8/70-71	Port Reading, NJ

Dues are now due. Check your Name, if it is followed by 05 it means your dues are paid for 2005 and are due for 2006.

VSPA K-9 Veterans March in Austin's Veteran's Day Parade - Bill Cummings - Life Member # 173

VSPA K-9 Veterans March in Austin's Veteran's Day Parade

On November 11, 2005, four VDHA/VSPA K-9 members participated in the Austin, Texas annual Veteran's Day parade. Terry Strickland (Bien Hoa & Korat) and Bear, Kelly Bateman (Ubon) and Rio, Ernest Childers (Udorn) and Finn, and Bill Cummings (U-Tapao) and Onyx stepped out on the march down Congress Avenue heading for the Austin capital building. It is easy to say that the K-9 teams just stole the show! In an unexpected surprise, we were also joined by Mike Dunavant, DVM, (Cam Rahn Bay) who was also representing Sons of the American Revolution. "It's so important, I think to understand where we came from, what price has been paid for our freedom, what price is being paid today for our freedom we still enjoy," veteran Mike Dunavant said.

Immediately following our K-9 unit was a group of South Vietnamese veterans. Our group spent a wonderful time with these soldiers as we shared our experiences. What a proud group of men; they received a grateful welcome throughout the parade.

Not a group to shun the spotlight, we were interviewed live by Channel 8 television, as we told the story of how our dogs served in the war. Later during the parade our "dogs" were greeted with "Hello Bear", "Hello Rio" by people who had seen the broadcast continued to welcome

our group.

Our group proudly saluted the "older veterans" that lined the sidewalks the entire length of the parade. How honored we were to be recognized by our brother veterans and the citizens of Austin.

It is hard to put into words what this parade meant for us, it truly was the homecoming parade that we had not experienced in the 60s and 70s.

We would like to express a special thank you to Beverly Gainer, Director of the German Shepherd Rescue of Central Texas for providing rescued German Shepherds as our partners during the event. Onyx and Finn proudly represented the dogs we left behind in Southeast Asia so many years ago. For further information on shelter please visit <u>http://gsdrescuectx.com</u>

or e-mail Beverly at <u>gsdrescuectx@yahoo.com</u>. This would also be a great time to note that Beverly is also a Vietnam era veteran; in addition, she is a Veteran Service Officer and assists with the coordinate the parade What a great day to be a veteran in Texas!

Bill Cummings - Life Member # 173 K-9 Kennel Master 24735 Red Hill Court, Hollywood, MD 20636 635th SPS K-9 - Brutus X321 - U-Tapao RTAB 1970-1971

Tet 1968, 1-31-68, 0320 hours – Chris Godfrey

38 years have passed since 1-31-68, and a time of 0320 hours. This will no doubt remain in the minds of many SPs who were at Tan Son Nhut AB. We will forever remember those who gave their lives at the 051 bunker as well as those who fought to defend the base during the 1968 Tet Offensive.

Those of you who were there on that night will remember quite clearly where you were and what you were doing at the start of the ground attack. As for me, I was in charge of Golf #3 SAT and was patrolling the outer perimeter road on the northeast section between the 056 bunker and the POL/MACV on the east. We had just received enemy automatic weapons fire in front of my jeep and I immediately radioed this to CSC. About 5 minutes later Capt De Nisio and Lt Grover arrived at my position and I briefed them. At that time a radio call from CSC came in saying that a major enemy assault was taking place at the 051 bunker. They told me to hold my position and then departed for the 051 bunker.

For the next 3 days my team responded to numerous calls from perimeter posts dealing with sniper fire being received....and we engaged the enemy. My team of 2 troops performed fantastically! That being said, my hat is off to any and all SPs who were involved in this defensive battle for Tan Son Nhut AB. Although we did not receive a warm welcome when we came home to the U.S., "we" know we did well in serving our country. Sincerely, Chris Godfrey (Sgt, Ldr, Golf #3 SAT, "C" Flt Scty, 377SPS)

VSPA SISTERHOOD

The VSPA Sisterhood has evolved from an idea of "something for the significant other to do during the VSPA business meeting", to an organized, dedicated group of family members. We now have our own slogan, thanks to Bob Mitchell:

"Taking Care of Those Who Take Care of Their Own"

We also have our own logo. It is the VSPA logo with a red rose thru the center. Van & Joyce Digby are looking into golf shirts with the embroidered logo that will be available through the BX.

Two of our members were accorded a very high honor at the reunion this year in Valdosta. The officers and members of the VSPA graciously and unanimously voted to award Associate Memberships to Erlyce Pekas and Helen "MOM" Lehman. In the eleven years that the VSPA has been in existence, there have only been nine people who have received this honor. We are all very proud of them.

An Executive Committee for the Sisterhood was selected at the reunion this year. The following members of the Sisterhood were elected to represent and assist you throughout the year:

Sheila Gervase-Cain, Liaison to VSPA Erlyce Pekas, Secretary Janet Matthews-Wise, Advisor to the Liaison

Pamela Talbot, Communications

Our goals for the coming year are to open lines of communication between members, and to locate, share and utilize resources to help and support each other.

I would personally like to thank all of you for entrusting me with the duties of the Liaison. I AM AVAILABLE WHEN YOU NEED ME 24/7. You can contact me through email at <u>smgervase@yahoo.com</u>, by phone at 716-895-4922, or by mail at the following address:

Sheila Gervase-Cain 261 Crocker Street Sloan, NY 14212

For those of you in the Sisterhood who would like to be placed on an internal email contact list, please send an email to Pam Talbot with "Sisterhood" as the subject of the email. Pam's email address is <u>Lilacroller1@comcast.net</u> and she will be responsible for communications. Pam will maintain that vital connection for all of us when it comes to mass mailing of email for special events, emergencies, and planning for the Sisterhood events at the reunion next year in Las Vegas.

God bless you all and have a safe and happy holiday season, Sheila

Obituaries

I am sad to report that one of our Vietnam, brother Security Policemen has passed on.

His name is James J. Johannes Jr., age 54, Hamilton, NJ, who was assigned to the 377th Security Police Squadron. (Year is unknown to me.) There is a Vietnam photograph of him and you might recognize him. Mr. Johannes was born in Trenton and had been a lifelong area resident.

He was formerly employed by U.S. Steel. A sergeant in the U.S. Air Force having served in the 377th Security Police in Vietnam, he is a recipient of two Purple Hearts. A member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

Interment with military honors will be in the Brig. Gen. William C. Doyle Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Arneytown.

Memorial contributions can be made to the Military Order of the Purple Heart, 5413-B Backlick Road, Springfield, VA 22151 or visit <u>www.purpleheart.org</u>.

Sad to report that another Sky Cop and Vietnam Vet has turned in his shield in for the last time. Richard (Dick) H. Killian, MSgt (Ret) passed away on 27 Sep 05 in San Antonio, TX. He was stationed at Da Nang AB as the NCOIC of the 81mm Mortar Section. He will be buried at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetary on 3 Oct 05.

2005 HISTORY REPORT - Don Graham

This has been a productive year for adding information to our history binders. Many of our members have sent me photo's and articles concerning the bases they where stationed at. The most recent addition was from Ernest Childers who sent copies of newspaper articles concerning attacks on Udorn Air Base in 1972.

Another former Udorn SP, Jay Jones, sent original newsletters that were published by the Squadron. This publication was called "Cop Out" and Jay was the staff photographer. It's items like these that give us a glimpse of the activities of the Squadrons.

It's great to get articles on the Thailand bases, as these are the ones that we have the least amount of information on. Some others who contributed are Charles Penley and Bill Cummings. There were others who contributed over the last year and I want to thank each and everyone one.

Gathering and preserving our history is important. Having this information available came in handy recently when it was used for our History Book Project. Many of the articles that had been sent to me were furnished to Steve Gattis for possible use in the book. Another project that is near to my heart this year was starting of a binder on all the SP's that are listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. We have 85 brothers who are listed and I'm trying to compile as much information as I can on each one.

Thanks to the efforts of Dave Gudes and Helen Kish I was able to spend most of a day at the Memorial. The day started out by joining members of the Vietnam Veterans of America chapter 641 from Montgomery County, Maryland in washing the Memorial. This is done the first Saturday of every month from Spring through Fall.

After the washing, Dave and Helen along with their friends Sandra and David Wiszeauckas and myself started the process of doing a rubbing for each of the SP's listed on the Wall. This took about two hours with the five of us working. Without their combined effort it would have taken all day.

To complete this project I not only need information such as burial locations but also a photo of each man. Anyone having information or a photo of one of our fallen brothers is encouraged to contact either Don Poss or myself to have a copy made.

Chaplain's Corner — Steve Janke

Perhaps I too am within the line. But our work is of danger And the danger is real. That's why going home and feeling Safe is hard to feel. I am 21 but got old the day I came And somehow I don't think life Will ever be the same.

July2, 1971 Steve Janke 483 SPS, K-9 Cam Ranh Bay Chaplain's Corner <u>PLEASE FORWARD TO EDITORS FOR PRINTING IN NEXT NEWSLETTER...(To sign -up for</u> <u>free Bible studies or sermons e-mail Chaplain Steve)</u>

Elizabeth N. Jacobson

For those who fought for it, Life has a different flavor The protected will never know.

Airman 1st Class - Air Force - Regular 21 year old Single, Caucasian, Female Home of Record, Riviera Beach, Florida. Assigned to the 17th Security Forces Squadron, Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas. In Iraq, assigned to the 586th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. Length of service 2 years. In Iraq more than 3 months. Casualty was on Sep 28, 2005 Convoy Security near Camp Bucca, Iraq, HOSTILE, GROUND CASUALTY Improvised Explosive Device Body was recovered.

9/30/2005 - SAN ANTONIO (AFPN) -- An improvised explosive device killed a female Airman during a convoy mission supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Airman 1st Class Elizabeth Jacobson, 21, was providing convoy security Sept. 28 near Camp Bucca, Iraq, when the vehicle she was riding in was hit by an improvised explosive device.

The Riviera Beach, Fla., native was assigned to the 17th Security Forces Squadron at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas. Airman Jacobson had been in the Air Force for two years and had been deployed to Iraq for more than three months.

She is the first female Airman killed in the line of duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"She was an outstanding Airman who embraced life and took on all the challenges and responsibilities with extraordinary commitment to her country, her comrades and her family," said Col. Scott Bethel, 17th Training Wing commander at Goodfellow.

"Her dedication to the U.S. Air Force and serving her country was evident in all aspects of who this young lady was," he said.

"Team Goodfellow and the San Angelo community are deeply saddened by this tragic loss of one of our cherished family members," Colonel Bethel said. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family during this difficult time. We ask that all Americans keep Airman Jacobson, her family and the men and women serving in the military, overseas and in the United States in their thoughts and prayers as they continue to keep America free."

2006 Reunion – Las Vegas - continued

That is only the beginning of what we have to provide during a reunion and does not include buses to Nellis or any of the base activites that we coordinate for the troops or what they do for us.

By comparison, the Vietnam Dog Handlers Association is meeting in Charleston, South Carolina and the room rate is \$122 a night!

Our dates for this reunion have been set for two years. At the last reunion, we voted to extend the reunion by one day so that we could relax the pace and still cover everything that needed to be handled while members were enjoying each others company. Even with the dates set, we asked for proposals in November around Veteran's Day. The weekend rates went up to \$150 and \$200+ a night!

If you look in your local newspaper travel section, you will see deals for trips to Las Vegas. You are welcome to go for one of those deals. However, the hotels that offer the deals only have a limited number of rooms at those rates. They do not have 200 rooms in a block with a rate guarantee three days before and three days after our event. And, they cannot feed us in a private banquet or give us private meeting rooms.

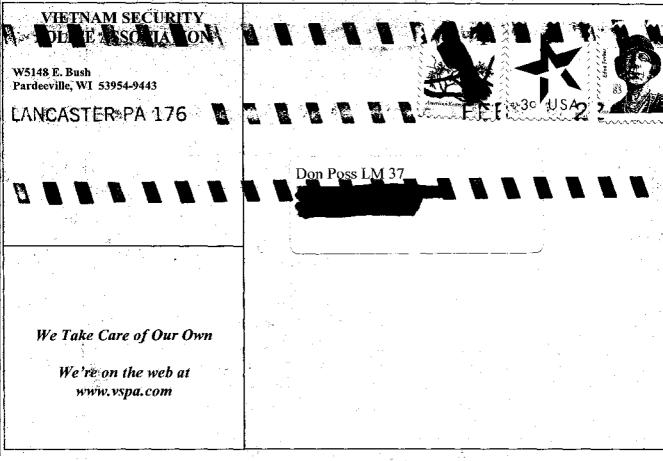
Some of the other hotels with similar rates were booked or had slot tournaments on our dates because Las Vegas is cooling down from the hot summer. Conventions are on the upswing due to the improved weather.

The mandate in all of our planning is to provide the best possible rates at a location that can handle our entire group. Please remember, our entire group includes the Sisterhood, our friends, and our guests who support us throughout the year. We must have access for those in wheelchairs and we must have the ability to work with the hotel staff. One night in Glitter Gulch just won't work for a group of 200+ and we can't tell our members to find there own rooms and meet at location X for dinner. That would destroy the purpose of our reunions, the sense of brothehood that we share and the memories we will take away from the reunion. It would also eliminate any possibility of the troops from the base joining us in our hospitality room, which has always been something very special for us.

One last word about The Reunion Brat and her ability to negotiate good deals for us a group. She has represented us every year since 1999. She has done an outstanding job and has twisted a lot of arms during negotiations for us. Yet, Las Vegas is one of her toughest venues due to the price fluctuation on Friday and Saturday nights. Everybody gets upset about it and there is nothing that can be done because people who want to party for a night are willing to pay the higher rates.

My best to all of you. Steve

Dues payments can be made on line at <u>www.vspa.com</u> or by mailing them to Denis Cook 1632 Manor Blvd. Lancaster, PA 17603 Make checks payable to the VSPA



Veteran Contact Numbers - by Don Graham

 For info on home loans, disability, medical care and burial

 –
 1-800-827-1000

 Life Insurance –
 1-800-669-8477

 Education (G.I. Bill) 1-888-442-4551

 Health Care Benefits –
 1-877-222-8387

 Agent Orange –
 1-800-697-6947

 Headstones & Markers –
 1-800-697-6947

 web address
 www.va.gov

Need help with the VA? Bill Wagonlander, VSPA member, has a web site that will help. Http:12.239.11.79/vetsvacorner/

Offices that can assist in searches for supporting documentation. To obtain copies of your records go towww.archives.gov/research_room/vetrecs/index.html

National Records & Administration Center Attn: NCP-MA 9700 Page Blvd St. Louis, MO 63132-5200

Washington National Records Center 8601 Adelphi Road Adelphi, MD: 20740-6001 National Archives & Records Administration Library & Printed Archives Branch Eight & Pennsylvania Aves. N.W. Washington, D.C. 20408

Air Force Personnel Center Attn: DPPPR 550 C Street West Suite 12 Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4714

Unit Histories, Lineage and Honors

Air Force History Support Officer - 202-404-2264

Dept. of the Air Force HQ/AFHRA 600 Chennault Circle Maxwell AFB, AL. 36112-6424

Correction of Military Records

Air Force Review Board Office SAF/MIBR 550 C Street W. Suite 40 Randolph AFB, TX 78150-4742