



Vinh Long Outlaws Newsletter

April-June-2013

The VLOA is a 501(c)(19) nonprofit, tax exempt war veterans' organization.

2nd. Quarter 2013

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National Director's Corner

Greetings fellow Outlaws:

As we can tell from our national weather reports, summer is here. Temperatures in the Dallas/Fort Worth area have surpassed the one hundred degree mark. I am sure there are other areas that have hit temperatures above the one hundred ten degree mark.

In January's column, I mentioned that I was transferred to the 121st Aviation Company, Air mobile light, shortly after arriving in Vinh Long. I returned from Viet-Nam September, 1965 and was stationed at Fort Wolters, Texas. I instructed there until June, 1967 when I separated from active duty. I went to work for the contractor, Southern Airways of Texas, and did the same job except I wore different patches on my flight suit. When Fort Wolters started to shut down, I was laid off. Then I went to work for Air America.

I flew Bell 204B helicopters in Viet-Nam from May, 71 to Aug 72. I transferred to Udon Royal Thai Air Force Base and transitioned to the CH-34D helicopter. Most of the flying occurred in Laos. There I met Father Lucian Joseph Bouschard, Roman Catholic Priest. He would hitch hike flights with us to take him to villages that were a great distance away. The U.S. Ambassador to Laos knew of him and authorized us to help him whenever we could.

Fast forward to 6 June 2009. At an Air America Reunion, in Dallas, Texas, Fr. Bouschard was the guest speaker. He completed theological seminary in 1956. His first request for assignments was for Chad, Africa. However, the Church sent him to Laos. He said "when I arrived in Laos, I thought I went to heaven". He spoke about his ministry in Laos.

He shared some of his experiences during his stay in Laos. He arrived 17 Nov 1956. His assignments were to minister his faith to the Laotian people and to care for the lepers. On one occasion he visited a Laotian military outpost. However, there was a Pathet Lao (enemy) outpost a mere two hundred yards away. He told the soldiers that he could not celebrate mass bent over to keep his head below the walls. So he got the soldiers to dig a hole about one and a half feet deep, so he could stand erect while celebrating mass.

On another occasion, while walking to a village, a Pathet Lao soldier appeared from the brush with a rifle aimed at him. Another Pathet Lao soldier jumped out and stopped him from shooting Fr. Bouschard saying that he was a priest and "he takes of our lepers". Fr Bouschard said that he gave a prayer of thanks that evening.

By 1975 Laos fell under the communist rule and Farther Bouschard was ordered out by his bishop. He served approximately eighteen years in Laos. After a few months in Thailand, his bishop assigned him to Borneo, where he served for thirty five years. He retired in Florida after this assignment.

Please start making plans to attend our 2014 Roundup in Washington, D.C. now. It is looking to be an outstanding reunion, thanks to Tom Anderson's hard work.

Please have a great summer with your family and friends.

Angelo Spelios



VLOA Members!!!

This is your news letter.

Please be advised that it would be appreciated if you would send any articles and photos related to your tour or anything that you think would be of interest to the readers. Please try to get the info. To the editor by the end of the quarter .

Thank you!



Reunion Planning For Outlaw Golden Anniversary On Schedule



Planning for the 2014 Golden Anniversary Outlaw Reunion is now well underway. This article is an update on some of the items that are involved to date.

As I reported in the last VLOA Newsletter, we undertook an initiative to solicit corporate sponsorship donations from a number of corporations with direct involvement with Army Aviation. Several of our VLOA members attended the Army Aviation Association convention in Fort Worth, TX, and were able to obtain leads from a number of personal contacts on the trade show floor. In addition, using several sources of defense-related aviation corporations a list of over 60 potential corporate sponsors was developed. Contact names of individuals within each corporation were identified. Personalized letters, on VLOA letterhead stationery were addressed to specific individuals within these corporations. The letter itself was reviewed by several VLOA Directors and their suggestions were incorporated into the final version. Envelopes, featuring the Outlaw 50th Anniversary logo alongside the return address were printed. Letters were folded, inserted into envelopes and stamped with a US FLAG stamp. On June 5, 2013, 60 letters were placed into the US mail.

Regrettably, the response to this effort has been disappointing. By the middle of July 2013, two firms have responded with turn-downs. I'd like to think that the other 58 are still mulling over our request for their corporate sponsorship and will, in time, forward a sponsorship donation to the VLOA. However, with the passage of time, I'm being forced to the conclusion that, as the saying goes. . . "It was a long run for such a short jump". So far we have not had a positive response from any of the firms.

My initial hope was that 6, 8 or possibly even 10 firms might respond with the suggested \$500 contribution to the tax-exempt Vinh Long Outlaws Association. That number would make a significant difference in covering some of the likely expenses that are forecast for the reunion. We would still welcome hearing from any corporation that any of our readers/members think might be interested in making a tax-deductible contribution to the VLOA. If you know of such a company in your area, let me know and I'll send them a letter detailing what our group is, why we are soliciting corporate support and asking them for their help.

The largest single reunion expense is the coach transportation (buses) to take our attendees to the various venues planned in our schedule. In the Washington area, costs for coaches can be as much as \$850 per day, per coach. We will need two coaches for two days. \$3400, plus driver gratuity.

However, our Event Planning company, SLM Events, has a good record of successfully negotiating difficult contractual issues and we hope SLM will be able to bring in a coach contract that will conform to the constraints of our budget.

Within the next 90 days we will have a better "big-picture" of the total costs associated with the reunion which can then be used to develop the cost-per-person for attendees. For this reunion, we plan to combine both the hotel reservation cost and all other reunion-related costs so there will be no need to make hotel reservations separate from the reunion registration. In previous reunions, the practice of forwarding separate reservations has resulted in confusion, errors and misunderstandings.

The 2014 Outlaw Reunion Registration Form will be included both in the next VLOA Newsletter as well as on the VLOA website. If you haven't looked at the website recently, browse through it at www.vinhlongoutlaws.com. There are a LOT of good memories there!

Our planning schedule still includes visiting the three significant venues mentioned in the last VLOA Newsletters: A wreath-laying at the Viet Nam Veteran's Memorial, a visit and tour of Arlington National Cemetery and a guided tour of the immense Smithsonian Air & Space museum at Dulles International Airport. The details involved with visiting each of those venues are still being worked out but will be in place in the near future.

Because there are so many significant sites to visit in the Washington DC area, it would not be possible to stretch our schedule to include all possible, or suggested, sites. However, most of our Sunday is being kept open to allow everyone to schedule individual visits to locations they would like to see while in the National Capitol Area. While SLM cannot attempt to make individual reservations to all such areas, if you have a location you'd like to visit, and don't know how to start the process, put a note with your Registration form and we will attempt to provide you a website, phone number or other contact so you can have a head-start in making your own arrangements.

See you in Washington

Tom Anderson





OUTLAW PRIDE BRINGS VLOA MEMBERS TOGETHER



The principle reason that the Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA) exists is to bring its old-soldier members together every two years to renew the bonds of friendship forged half a century ago! It's that simple. And, there's a reason why every reunion has been memorable. It's because those old soldiers who come to the reunions are proud of their military service, proud of their fellow veterans and proud to be a part of their Association.

Every reunion brings dozens of old Outlaws, their spouses, their families and friends together in renewed friendship. But, what is it about the VLOA that brings out the pride in those who come to the reunions? There may be several reasons.

The VLOA is one of the few Viet Nam reunion groups that, from the beginning, aggressively encouraged participation, and attendance, from all ranks and from all elements of the Outlaw organization. That unifying fact, more than anything else, has made the VLOA unique, and a source of pride for those who attend the reunions.

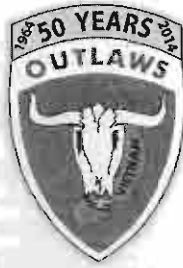
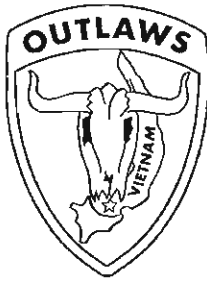
VLOA reunion activities are planned with a healthy collective mix of local venue participation and free time to schedule personal preferences. VLOA reunions are not designed merely to hang out in a hospitality room, drink beer and relive the past.

VLOA's leadership, both our National Directors as well as members of the Steering Committee, , have come from former officers, warrant officers and enlisted ranks.

Through the continuing efforts of a number of dedicated members, the VLOA has established, and maintained, a treasury that continues to support the inclusive efforts designed to communicate its objectives to the membership.

Who knows how long the VLOA will continue? Our ranks are thinning. After the 50th Anniversary reunion, there will likely be a drop-off in the ability of many to travel to a reunion site. So, plan now to attend the historically significant 2014 reunion of the members of that little Mekong-Delta-based helicopter unit. The Outlaw's deployment to Vinh Long in 1964, and the proud history it made during the next 8 years, serves as a source of pride to everyone who served at any time with the Outlaw units. Come and be part of the 2014 Golden Anniversary reunion to be held in our National Capitol Area in 2014.

Watch for the Golden Anniversary Outlaw Reunion Registration Form in the next Outlaw Newsletter.



THE REUNION

By Rachel Firth

If you are one of those who don't "go to reunions", perhaps this little piece will make you realize how poignant, important and heartwarming a reunion of "old soldiers" can be. Read it slowly and put yourself in the picture.

With autumn leaves rustling, together - to the appointed place - the old warriors come.

Pilgrims, drifting across the land they fought to preserve.

Where they meet is not important any more.

Greetings echo across a lobby.

Hands reach out and arms draw buddies close.

Embraces, that as young men they were too uncomfortable to give, too shy to accept so lovingly.

But deep within these, their Indian-Summer days, they have reached a greater understanding of life and love.

The shells that hold their souls are weaker now, but hearts and minds grow vigorous, remembering.

On the table someone spreads old photographs, a test of recollection.

And friendly laughter echoes at shocks of hair now gray or white, or merely gone.

Those once-rugged, slender bodies are now lost forever.

Yet they no longer need to prove their strength.

Some are now sustained by one of "medicine's miracles," and even in this fact, they manage to find humor.

The women, all those that waited, all those who loved them, have watched the changes take place.

Now, they observe and listen, and smile at each other, as glad to be together as the men.

Talk turns to war and planes and foreign lands.

Stories are told and told again, reweaving the threadbare fabricate of the past.

Mending one more time the banner of their youth.

They hear the vibrations, they feel the shudder of metal as engines whine

Continued—

whirl, and the equipment of war comes to life.

These birds with patched bodies can be seen beyond the mist of clouds, and they are in the air again, chasing the wind, feeling the exhilaration of flight closer to the heavens.

Dead comrades, hearing their names spoken, wanting to share in this time, if only in spirit, move silently among them.

Their presence is felt . . . and smiles appear beneath misty eyes.

Each, in his own way may wonder who will be absent in another year.

The room grows quiet for a time.

Suddenly an ember flames to life. Another memory burns.

The talk may turn to other wars and other men, and of futility.

So, this is how it goes. The past is so much the present.

In their ceremonies, the allegiances, the speeches and the prayers, one cannot help but hear the deep eternal love of country and comrades they will forever share.

Finally, it is time to leave.

Much too soon to set aside this little piece of yesterday, but the past cannot be held too long, for it is fragile.

They say "Farewell"..."See you another year, God willing."

Each keeps a little of the others with him forever.

National Director-DNIF —“Duty Not Involving Flying”

Elsewhere in this Newsletter is the regular article from our VLOA National Director, Angelo Spelios. As part of the planning for the 2014 Reunion, I have been in regular contact with Angelo and he has been an active participant in several significant issues relating to the Reunion. Those of you who know Angelo, know that any discussion with him is always friendly and fruitful.

However, in the past several weeks, Angelo has made me aware of a serious medical issue of which his fellow Outlaws should be aware. Angelo felt he didn't want to be the one to write about his situation in his Director's article, but gave his consent for me to convey his issues to you.

A number of months ago, Angelo discovered a growth developing in his right leg, between his thigh and knee. A medical examination disclosed that it was a tumor sarcoma. He began a schedule of chemo-therapy treatments in early June of this year. The treatment process was to be chemo, then radiation, and finally surgery to remove the tumor.

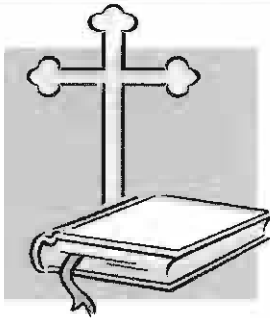
Recently, however, he felt that the tumor was growing. He had an additional examination which confirmed his suspicions. So, in July the chemo treatments were suspended and a series of radiation treatments were begun. He is receiving his radiation at the world-class MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Once a day, five days a week for a five-week period. At the end of the radiation treatments he will be scheduled for surgical removal of the growth.

Angelo is extremely upbeat and optimistic about his treatment schedule, not only because the MD Anderson Cancer Center is regularly ranked as one of the top two hospitals in the nation for cancer care but also because that's just naturally the way Angelo is!

He's looking forward to opening up the 2014 Outlaw Reunion in the Washington DC area. Please keep Angelo in your thoughts and prayers.

The Back Pew

By: John Doyle



Good News, You're in the Will!

I imagine that, at one time or another, we have all dreamed about some distant relative dying and naming us in their will. We dream of a new house in a fancy neighborhood, with a new car in the driveway, or maybe we have always wanted a trip to a far-off land. Sounds great; however, the chance of its happening are slim to none.

What if I told you how you could take a long trip and have a mansion? What if I told you that the long trip and mansion are part of your inheritance?

What do you mean, "No one in your family has that kind of money to leave these gifts to you?" Jesus tells us in John 14:1-7 (KJV):

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself: that where I am, there ye may be also."

Thomas saith unto him, 'Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?'"

Jesus saith unto him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

This is the inheritance Jesus has promised to all that accept Him as Lord and Savior.

Chaplain

**Vinh Long Outlaws Association
(VLOA)**

Treasurers Report by Chester Voisin



Balance
\$

Cash Balance - 01/01/2013

18,920.79

	2013 6 Months 6/30/2013
Revenues:	\$
Dues - Annual	100.00
Dues - Lifetime	200.00
Dues - Associates Lifetime	100.00
Sale of Inventory Items	140.00
Silent Auction Proceeds	-
Ticket Sales - 50/50 Raffle	-
Miscellaneous	-

Total Revenues: 540.00

Expenditures:	
Newsletter Costs	1,166.45
Inventory purchases & costs	12.27
2012 Reunion Costs	-
2014 Reunion Costs	-
Prizes - 50/50 Raffle	-
Administration	600.00

Total Expenditures: 1,778.72

Net Income (Loss) - 6 months 2013 (1,238.72) (1,238.72)

Cash Balance - 06/30/2013 17,682.07

Details:**Revenues**

Inventory Sales	140.00
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Annual Dues:

Robert Tidd	25.00
Donald Palmer	25.00
Harry Bauman	25.00
Fred Jacobs	25.00
	<u>100.00</u>

Life Time Memberships (LTM):

Frank Stone	100.00
Robert Taylor	100.00
	<u>200.00</u>

Life Time Associate Membership (ALTM):

Carol Taylor	<u>100.00</u>
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<u>100.00</u>

Total Revenues

<u>540.00</u>

Expenses

Robert Sharp - 4th Quarter 2012 Newsletter	606.89
Robert Sharp - 1st Quarter 2013 Newsletter	559.56
Harlow Media - Administration	600.00
Tom Anderson - Inventory Expense	12.27
	<u>1,778.72</u>

Total Expenses

<u>1,778.72</u>

Deficit 6 month period ending 06/30/2013

<u>(1,238.72)</u>



Did You Receive a Purple Heart During Your Viet Nam Service?

Outlaw Jack Bellochio, and wife Dottie, live near a very unique historical center in New York which honors, and recognizes, all military personnel who have ever been awarded the Purple Heart medal. They have made us aware of an organization that should be of interest to all Outlaws who received the Purple Heart during their military service.

The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor was established to collect and preserve the names, stories, of Purple Heart recipients from all branches of service and across all generations and armed conflict, to ensure that all Purple Heart recipients are represented.

A large number of Outlaw members, as well as those who served in attached units during the Viet Nam conflict, were honored for wounds they received by being awarded the Purple Heart medal. If you received the Purple Heart, the Purple Heart Hall of Honor would like to hear from you and ask you to register in their data base. Moreover, the organization would like to have you write the story of how you received your wounds and provide them with a photo of you in uniform if possible.

As you may know, the original award goes all the way back to General George Washington who wanted to recognize individual merit among the enlisted soldiers of his Continental Army. He established the award as a cloth badge to be worn on the uniform.



After the Revolution ended, the award was all but forgotten until WWI, when General Pershing resurrected a form of the award. However, it was not until WWII that the award criteria was changed from meritorious service to one which recognized the sacrifice of all service members who had been wounded, killed or died after being wounded.



If you are one of the many Outlaws who received wounds and was awarded a Purple Heart for your Viet Nam service, you are urged to contact the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, on their website, and enroll yourself, or a family member or friend who has received the Purple Heart medal. There is no charge or fee associated with enrollment.

Find out all the information on the organization by calling up their website at www.thepurpleheart.com or call them by phone at 845-561-1765. The address is **The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor** PO Box 207 374 Temple Hill Road Vails Gate, New York 12584-0207.

Many thanks to Dottie Bellochio for making the information on this worth-while organization available to Outlaw members.

Reunion 2014 Silent Auction **Has New Coordinators !**



In the last Newsletter, I put out a call to the membership for someone to step forward to serve as the coordinator for the Silent Auction for the 2014 50th Anniversary Reunion. Al Iller suggested that Jack and Fran Konopka might be willing to take on the role.

Al made the initial contact with them and, with little or no hesitation, Jack and Fran Konopka have agreed to take on the role as coordinators for the next Silent Auction !

Jack and Fran have been part of every reunion except the Branson reunion in 2000. They have played an active role in supporting the Auction, having purchased several "treasures" over the years. In discussions recently, Jack and Fran indicated they may have some new thoughts and ideas on conducting the Auction, and that is GOOD!

Although Jack and Fran operate a garage-door repair and installation business in their local area, they agreed that they can fit the Auction activities into the demands of their business. And, because they are busy people, they are a good fit for handling the Silent Auction. Why? Because busy people always function at their best when challenged with more busy projects.

As we all know, the Silent Auction is the primary fund-raising event conducted by the VLOA. In the years since we began the Auction, it has become one of the most anticipated features of the reunion. Every attendee spends lots of time reviewing the ever expanding number of items donated by our members, deciding what they MUST have, and figuring out how to be the LAST bidder on those items that are coveted by several other bidders.

VLOA could not continue to support the variety of demands placed on our treasury without the auction. Moreover, it costs money to have a reunion! The treasury underwrites a good portion of the reunion expenses in order to keep down the cost of registration fees paid by each attendee. The VLOA treasury purchases hospitality room refreshments, name badges, welcome bags, favors for the ladies, caps for the men, recognition gifts for deserving members, banners to announce our presence in the hotel, other forms of signage and a wide variety of other behind-the-scenes items that makes each reunion so successful. The individual reunion cost, per-person, would be substantially higher without the support from your treasury, and the Silent Auction.

Jack and Fran Konopka are enthusiastic about making the next Silent Auction even more successful than previous reunions. They will have an article in the next Newsletter outlining their plans for the Auction.

Every year the response to appeals for donations to the Auction has increased. At the Savannah reunion, we actually had 76 separate items on the auction tables, which brought in just under \$3000 for the VLOA treasury. The Steering Committee and Reunion Coordinator Tom Anderson deeply appreciate Jack and Fran's offer to handle the Silent Auction.

Please start thinking about what you might want to donate to the 2014 auction. Help make the Konopka's Silent Auction the biggest and most lucrative in our history !!

Tom Anderson



UNKNOWN ADDRESSES OF FORMER VLOA MEMBERS: The following is a list of names of former VLOA members whose addresses are not current. We are providing this information in our newsletter in hopes that one of the readers might know a current address for one or more of those listed. Any assistance you can render on this roster updating will be most gratefully appreciated.

<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>	<u>LAST NAME</u>	<u>FIRST NAME</u>
Akkola	Dennis N.	Lowie	William P.
Badgett	Berkley F.	Marrow	Murph J. (Jack)
Bean	Jerry	Merritt	Herbert D.
Benjamin	Richard D.	Mills	Betty
Bixler	Clyde E.	Morgan	Robert J.
Botterbaugh	Paul L.	Norden	Kathy
Campbell	Timothy L.	Ohm	Keith D.
Cotham	William P.	Parsley	Larry
DeLucian	Robert A.	Paulin	Louis
Diuguid	Randy	Pearson	Everett O. - "Pink"
Farley	Therman A. - "Shorty"	Postles	Peggy
Gaff	Lori	Prescott	Sue
Groover	Martin - "Cleve"	Procter	Gil
Hand	John J., Jr.	Reynolds	John P.
Harris	Rossie C., Jr.	Schrum	Kathleen
Hoff	Virgil R., III	Scoles	Jimmie J.
Huggins	Sean	Seagers	Louie
Jobski	Jerry L.	Shreve	Ernest P.
Keltner	Richard "Lightnin"	Simpson	Harold
Kite	Tommy E.	Smith	Ronald G.
Koeppelle	James A.	Spade	Donald F.
Lannerd	Robert F.	Storer	George A., Jr.
Lawson	Jack A.	Sturgill	Enoch G.
Ledford	Talmadge	Washburn	William (Bill)
Litt	Patricia A.	Weedon (USN)	Robert E.
		Williams	Lee J.

