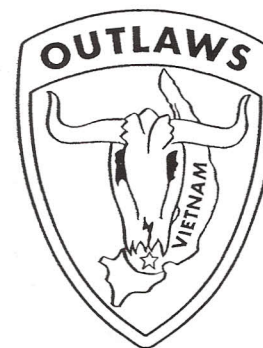


VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION

# VINH LONG OUTLAWS NEWS



April - June  
2d Issue 2004

## ATTENTION TO ORDERS

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Everyone pay attention to the registration form, page 7 of this newsletter. IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER FABULOUS GET TOGETHER!

Frank and Ann Estes and their committee have put together plans for a wonderful reunion of the Vinh Long Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners plus the 28<sup>th</sup> Signal Detachment as well as the attached gunners from the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. Full details were provided in the March reunion letter. This year marks the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the deployment to Viet Nam by the 62d Aviation Company and it's attached units.

As you will note, the location this year is Ozark and Ft. Rucker, Alabama, the Home of Army Aviation. The post is extending its hospitality to all who attend. We have some special events scheduled that will add greatly to you and your family's feeling of how much your service and sacrifice are appreciated by your fellow soldiers, veterans and citizens of our great land.

Tom Anderson (the original Outlaw 6) has written an interesting bit of background for the importance of this reunion. Please read what the "old man" has to say on page 2.

Linda and I are looking forward to renewing old acquaintances. See you there!

With warmest regards,

*Ernie Isbell*

*P.S. Please send in your current membership dues with your registration form. This will be our last newsletter until after the reunion.*



## **A ONE-OF-A-KIND-EVENT 40 YEARS LATER**

**40 YEARS !!** Has is REALLY been 40 years since our group of then-young men came together in a country that most Americans couldn't even locate on a map?? At a little airstrip, carved out of Mekong Delta rice paddies, known as Vinh Long? Yes, friends, four decades have passed since we went to war and served our country in the same way thousands of other young men and women are doing today.

We came together for just a year, all of us from different backgrounds, and filling different jobs. And notwithstanding our individual differences, and jobs, we quickly developed into an extremely effective and highly capable team, which we proved over and over again in so many ways. I am convinced that, because of our success in that combat environment, we all learned individual traits and techniques that contributed to making us successful throughout our lives once we departed Vinh Long a year later, whether or not we chose a military or civilian career.

Regardless of the paths we followed after our one year together, a bond was formed between ALL of us that cannot be duplicated in other careers. When we arrived in Vinh Long, we had no idea what the next year would hold for us. We shared each other's lives, hopes, small pleasures, excitements, victories, losses and a thousand small intangibles that are now long forgotten. But the bonds of friendship that developed during that year can never be erased, or forgotten.

How many times have you heard someone say that they'd NEVER go to a school reunion? And afterwards, that same person finds that they deeply regret not attending because you can never go back and do it again. It's gone. It's over. And if they wait until the NEXT one, there's a good chance you won't see that one person who made a difference in your life so long ago. These times, these events, are truly one-of-a-kind!

A key event at our reunion at the Home of Army Aviation this fall, will be the unveiling, and presentation to Fort Rucker, of a monument dedicated to the memory of all those who serve, in any capacity, in any of the units that comprised the "Vinh Long Outlaws" organization. We will also present a memorial plaque to the Army Aviation Museum recognizing the service of all of you who were members of that organization. Funding for these memorials has been raised entirely from within our Vinh Long Outlaws organization.

We were unique! History has shown that we were the spearhead unit for the entire massive buildup of US forces in Vietnam. Several years ago, Fort Rucker recognized our unit by naming a major street "Outlaw Street". Additionally, a key classroom building at Fort Rucker has been named "Sanford Hall" after one of our own, Jack Sanford.

And our VLOA group is a uniquely small organization. To ensure that, at our reunions, we can be among those people who meant so much to each other during that year 40 years ago, we limit our membership base to those who served at any time between August 1964 and September 1965. We must realistically face the fact that we may not be able to attend the next reunion, two years from now. Conversely, that friend that you have wanted to see again, for so many years, may not be able to attend the next time.

**Sign up, come to Rucker for a few days, and recapture the spirit and mood of all those "young" men who served together in Vinh Long 40 YEARS AGO! Don't put it off. Don't allow yourself to regret that you didn't attend. This time together, this unique event from September 30 through October 3, 2004, is truly one-of-a-kind. Don't miss it!**

*Tom Anderson*

**Outlaw 6**



# VLOA REUNION 2004 and SECURITY AT FORT RUCKER

The VLOA R2K+4 date is rapidly approaching. The Ozark and Fort Rucker officials are excited that the Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners, avionics, and door-gunners will be coming to the Ozark and Fort Rucker area for a biennial reunion. These officials have been very supportive of our planning efforts to make this "Fort Rucker homecoming" reunion a most enjoyable one.

The reunion letter sent in March contained information about our agenda. You might have noticed that some of our activities will be conducted on the Fort Rucker installation. Given the heightened security emphasis placed on key military installations, we will have to ensure compliance with Fort Rucker's security requirements because it is the installation where the preponderance of Army helicopters is located. The following provides guidance if you are driving or flying into the area to attend the VLOA reunion.

## **Private auto (with Department of Defense (DoD) sticker):**

- DoD sticker must be accompanied with valid month/year sticker.
- Driver must have valid military identification (active duty or retired military).
- Driver must have proof of vehicle registration certificate from the appropriate state or proof of motor vehicle ownership, and proof of current motor vehicle insurance.
- Passengers must have government issued picture ID (such as state driver's license).

## **Private auto (without DoD sticker), including rental cars:**

- Driver must have valid state driver's license properly annotated for the type of vehicle being driven.
- Driver must have proof of vehicle registration certificate from the appropriate state or proof of motor vehicle ownership, and proof of current motor vehicle insurance.
- Rental car drivers must ensure their rental car documents contain proof of company ownership and motor vehicle insurance. If rental car insurance is declined, driver must have proof of personal auto insurance coverage for a rental vehicle.
- Passengers must have government issued picture ID (such as state driver's license).

## **Prohibited items/activities:**

- State laws that permit carrying a concealed firearm do not permit individuals to carry such a firearm in a concealed manner on Fort Rucker.
- Transporting or possession of any firearm (including BB and pellet guns, archery equipment, pistols, rifles, shotguns, and similar items).
- Transporting or possession of items such as knives (with blade of 4" or greater), blackjack, "brass knuckles," or instruments that can be used as a weapon.
- Transporting an open container of an alcoholic beverage.
- Declining consent to take evidential tests for alcohol or other drug content, or to have vehicle searched. Autos without DoD sticker will be searched upon each entry at gates.
- Refusing to wear vehicle seat belts.
- Taking photographs while on Fort Rucker proper of airfield facilities, aircraft, headquarters buildings, and security gates.

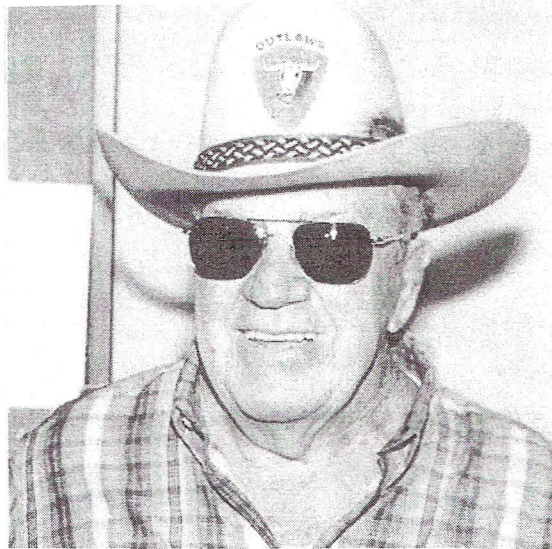
Hopefully you will understand that these stringent requirements are based on Homeland Security requirements. Additionally, most states require that many of the private and rental vehicle documents be available in the vehicle.

***COME JOIN US AT THE VLOA R2K+4 AT OZARK AND FORT RUCKER!!***

Submitted by Frank & Ann Estes



## AN OUTLAW LEAVES OUR FORMATION



On April 12, 2004 we lost one of our original Outlaws, Travis Wilson of Ozark, Alabama. Travis passed away after a brief bout with cancer. He was a stalwart of VLOA, as the Assistant Director, developed the Outlaws web page and continued as our Webmaster.

Born in Texas, Travis entered the U.S. Army at 18 years of age and served twenty-two years with distinction and honor before his retirement. One of his many assignments during his military service was with the 11<sup>th</sup> Air Assault Division (Test) at Fort Benning, GA. While there, he was assigned to the 62d Aviation Company during it's initial organization prior to deployment to VN. Travis was one of a few selected members of the advance party to precede the unit to VN in order to prepare for their arrival at Vinh Long. His coordinating efforts were a major contributing factor in allowing the main body of the unit to transition into their new facility and into operational status in the minimum of time. Later he was designated as NCOIC of the installation ammunition supply and rearm point.

After retirement from the U.S. Army, Travis was employed as an instructor by the Alabama Aviation and Technical College in Ozark and continued in that capacity for 25 years before final retirement. During the period Travis taught at the college he completed his junior college education at Enterprise Junior College earning an Associate Degree in Aviation Management. He continued to pursue his higher education goals and earned a Bachelors Degree in Business Management from Troy State and was within one semester of attaining a Masters Degree when he retired.

Travis with his wife Hilde enjoyed traveling and included in their many adventures three trips to Europe and her homeland in the Czech Republic. He reported on their most recent trip to Europe in the December issue of the Outlaws News. Travis and Hilde, together with their friend Jan Smith attended the Branson, MO R2K and San Antonio, TX R2K+2 reunions.

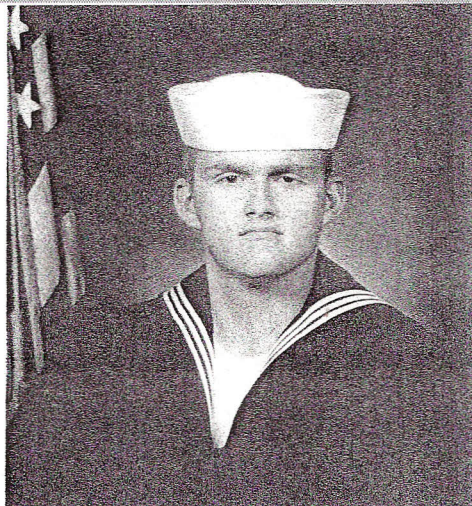
Travis and Hilde celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in January this year. Travis is survived by his wife, Hilde, his devoted son Brian and daughter-in-law, grandson and granddaughter, one brother and a sister.

The VLOA extends their sincere and deepest condolences to Hilde and her family.

**Old friend, old soldier we never say goodbye!**



## A SAILOR'S HOME IS THE SEA



Gunnery Mate Justin John Miksch, United States Navy, son of Byron Miksch, Jr. (Outlaw 31) of Three Rivers, CA and Heather Ruskievicz of Colville, WA, died on October 16, 2003 as a result of an accident in the ship's armory while serving aboard the USS DULUTH (LPD-6) stationed in San Diego, CA.

Born October 30, 1982, Justin graduated from high school in June 2001 and joined the U.S. Navy. After completing boot camp and gunnery training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center, IL, Justin was assigned sea duty aboard the USS DULUTH (Amphibious Transport Dock). Aboard ship he was a participant in Operation Enduring Freedom and a Veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom. In January 2003, with Justin aboard, the DULUTH transported the 15<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) from Camp Pendleton, CA to the shores of Kuwait. While the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU fought their way to an area somewhere past Nasiriyah, Iraq, Justin's ship provided active support to several Navy Seal Teams as they captured and secured two Iraqi oil platforms. Two U.S. Coast guard Harbor Security units from the West Coast then provided support protecting the platforms from foreign capture. During the six month period of deployment, the DULUTH, in addition to providing support to the 15<sup>th</sup> MEU, processed several hundred Iraqi POW's providing for their sanitation, medical, food, clothing needs and the right to worship as they chose. They were then transported to POW camps in Kuwait. In July 2003, the DULUTH and 15<sup>th</sup> MEU returned to the West Coast at the completion of their deployment tour for retrofit and preparation for further possible mission deployment.

Justin wished his organs be donated upon death and several of his organs including his heart were successfully harvested. His remains were cremated and a delayed burial at sea with full military honors by the U.S. Navy occurred on March 16, 2004. Justin's shipmates regarded him as an "exceptional man and sailor" sorely missed by all.

In addition to Justin's parents, he is survived by his sister, Seaman (E-3) Shelby L. Miksch, USN who is now enrolled in the Defense Language Institute, Presidio of Monterey, CA where she is learning Serb and Croat languages.

The VLOA extends their deepest condolences to the family.

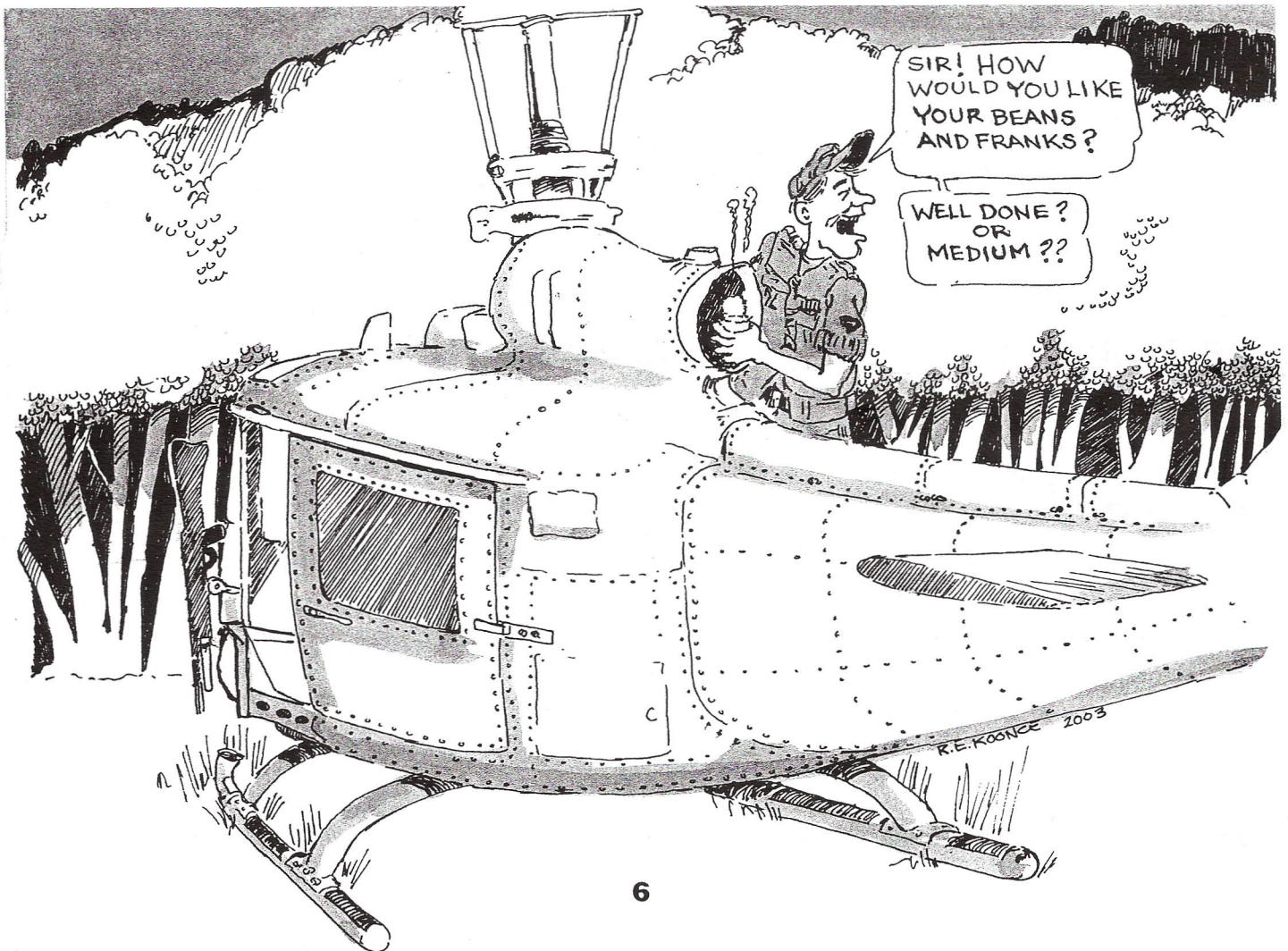


**VINH LONG OUTLAW ASSOCIATION  
INCOME AND EXPENSE REPORT  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (1/1/04 to 03/31/04)**

Beginning Balance	\$10,639.94
<b>Income:</b>	
Annual Dues Collected	670.00
Honorary Membership	20.00
Ft. Rucker Memorial Fund:	
In Honor of Shirley Hall & Billy Hampton	100.00
Reunion Reservations	2,659.00
Ft Rucker Memorial Fund	835.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 4,284.00</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Newsletter Publication, Ck #141 (12/29/03)	272.91
Quality Inn & Suites, Banquet Rm Contract, Ck #142 (2/18/04) (50% Deposit)	450.00
Reunion Purchase, Ck #143 (3/20/04)	97.92
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 820.83</b>
<b>Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$14,103.11</b>
<b>Total Amount Committed to Ft. Rucker Memorial Fund</b>	<b>[ \$ 3,370.00 ]</b>

Submitted by: *Chuck Wren, Treasurer, VLOA*

**Koonce's Komix**



VINH LONG OUTLAW ASSOCIATION, REUNION 2004 (R2K+4)

Ozark & Fort Rucker, Alabama
September 30 - October 3, 2004
REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

YOUR REUNION COSTS INCLUDE: 3 nights' accommodations at the Quality Inn & Suites or Ozark Travel Park (based on your selection below). Refreshments during the day and daily social hours at Quality Inn & Suites; tours and lunch at Fort Rucker (Friday); busses for Fort Rucker trip (Friday); BBQ dinner (Friday); farewell dinner Saturday night; and equipment rentals, gifts, freebies, taxes, gratuities, and incidentals.

Table with 5 columns: REUNION FEES, #PERSONS (CHECK ONE), PRICE, =, TOTAL. Rows include Motel Suite, Motel Room, Ozark Travel Park for 1 and 2 persons.

Add to the item checked above:

Table for additional days before/after reunion with columns for item, days before/after, and price per day. Includes subtotal line.

MEMORIAL FUND: For the Veterans' Park monument and Army Aviation Museum plaque memorials in honor of all those who served and all of our fallen comrades, I am also including.....\$

GRAND TOTAL \$

SECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Smoking \_\_\_ Non-Smoking \_\_\_ Double \_\_\_ Queen \_\_\_ King \_\_\_ Handicapped \_\_\_ room. Special accommodations: (specify)
Please specify any special dietary needs or other needs not addressed in the registration form. Golf (\$27 for 18 holes & golf cart; pay your own way): I will \_\_\_ will not \_\_\_ play golf on Saturday morning, October 2; my golf handicap is: \_\_\_\_\_.

PAYMENT: 50% deposit is due no later than June 15, 2004. Balance/Final Payment is due no later than August 15, 2004.

REFUND POLICY: No refunds will be made before the reunion. All cancellations must be made prior to August 15, 2004

Name you want on name tag: \_\_\_\_\_ Call Sign: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of spouse or guest: \_\_\_\_\_

Current address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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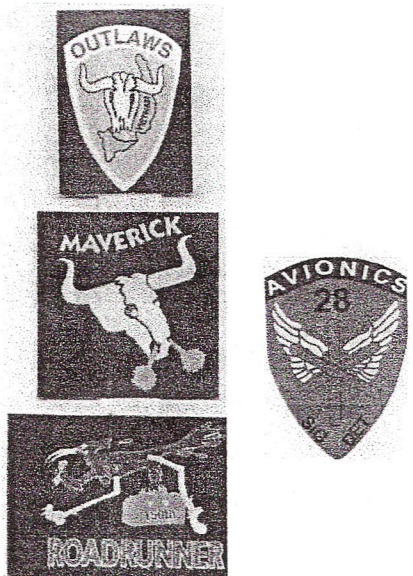
VLOA
C/O Chuck Wren
20 Rozbern Drive
Eatontown, NJ 07724

SEND REGISTRATION FORM & PAYMENT TO:
(CHECK OR MONEY ORDER)



VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION (VLOA)

C/O Charles C. Wren  
20 Rozbern Drive  
Eatontown, NJ 07724



## WHERE ARE YOU?

If your mailing address or Email address has changed, please let us know by mailing in a membership form indicating the changes.

Thanks!

### 2004 VLOA Membership Application Form

Beginning January 1, 2004 an initial VLOA membership is \$20.00, and all annual dues will be \$20.00 and due each January. Please use this form to forward initial and annual dues to: Charles C. Wren, 20 Rozbern Drive, Eatontown, NJ 07724.

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street/PO Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Assigned to Outlaws/attachments (Mo/Yr to Mo/Yr) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Unit/pit/sect/posn \_\_\_\_\_ Radio Call Sign \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if the above address is a change from the one previously provided.

Please initiate  renew my VLOA membership. Make checks payable to VLOA.

Please do not renew my VLOA membership, but keep my name on the VLOA roster. I understand I may not receive any future issues of the VLOA Newsletter.

I know of a former Outlaw/Maverick/Roadrunner/attachments member and have attached his name, address, and phone number to this form.