



# Vinh Long Outlaws Spring Newsletter

January-March-2014

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

1st. Quarter 2014

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## National Director's Corner

Greetings fellow Outlaws:

As I am writing this column, it is difficult for me to believe that a few months from now it will have been fifty years that we left, as a unit, to go to Viet Nam. Where have fifty years gone?

Memories go back to the summer of 1964, Fort Benning Georgia, where the 62<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Company (Air Mobile Light) was formed. It was very exciting for me to be a member of this new Company and knowing that we would deploy to Viet Nam soon. Questions came to mind, what will war be like? Will the year of combat duty go by fast? Will we lose any of our comrades? Will WE come home unscathed? Would I?

In late September of that year, we were off to Warner Robbins Air Force Base to board several C-118's for our trip to Viet Nam. Somehow my anxieties were calmed because of the comradeship with my fellow Outlaw Officers, Warrant Officers, Non Commissioned Officers and our Enlisted Personnel. We all shared the same questions.

After flying backwards for four days through Hawaii, Wake Island, Guam and the Philippines, we arrived in Saigon. We boarded C-123's with Vinh Long our final stop. After settling down, we started flying missions in the Delta. The flying was great. The Seven Mountain area, Rach Gia and Ha Tien offered some beautiful scenery.

The Year "flew" (no pun intended) by very fast for me. Even though I was transferred to the 121<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company (AML), we participated in several assaults with the Outlaws. This gave me time to visit and share experiences with my Outlaw brothers.

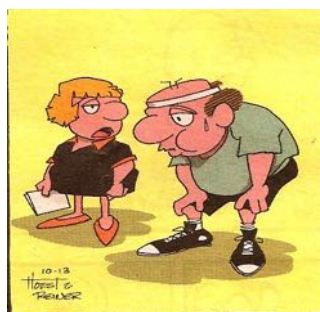
September, 1965 suddenly arrived. I found myself on a commercial air liner going home to the USA along with some of my fellow Outlaws. I remember sitting next to Jimmie Kirkley and sharing our experiences during our tour, while facing forward and not backwards, as in the C-118's. For me it was a wonderful tour, even though there were some very scary moments of actual combat and some very heart breaking news about comrades that gave their lives for our Country. I got to work with the "Above the Best".

September, 2014 is suddenly coming up for us. Will I see some of my friends that I have not seen since our deployment? I certainly hope so. What a better place then Washington, D.C. to celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Anniversary? Tom Anderson has spearheaded a great agenda for us. (More information on the agenda elsewhere in this Newsletter).

Please make plans to attend this great reunion. Now is the time to fill out the registration form and make travel plans to the reunion.

I am looking forward to seeing you and your loved ones there.

Angelo Spelios



"You felt the Burn?",  
All you did was put on  
your sneakers!!!!





## VLOA Receives "Out- Of- The- Blue Sponsorship Support !



By now you know that we were singularly unsuccessful in our effort to obtain corporate sponsorship support for our 2014 reunion. However, we have been deeply gratified to receive unsolicited support from two very different sources, for which we are deeply appreciative.

Andrew Hoder is a former Outlaw who now serves as the Adjutant in an American Legion Post in Moreno Valley, California. Andrew saw our article in the Newsletter, which cited the failed effort to obtain corporate support and was as dismayed as we were with the lack of response. Through Andrew's effort, his American Legion Post approved a contribution of \$500 to be applied to our "50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion" costs. Andrew's gracious letter is shown elsewhere in this Newsletter.

A second surprise contribution was received from a Mr. Ilir "Lee" Morava. Mr. Morava immigrated to the United States about 18 years ago. He came without his family, no job, but with a deep desire to succeed. He began working at construction repair jobs with his brother in Hendersonville, NC. After several years he was able to bring his family to this country. His wife began cleaning houses before she underwent some severe medical issues. I met Lee a number of years ago when he did a magnificent job of reconstructing an entire exterior wall of my house in Flat Rock, NC. Over the next few years, as he did other work for us, I got to know him. He now has his own construction business. His application, years ago, for U.S. citizenship and was granted and he was awarded his US citizenship two years ago. His two daughters are now both on academic scholarships at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I had casually mentioned my relationship my Viet Nam service with the Outlaws several times. Just before Christmas last year, out of the blue, I received the following note from him:

**From:** ILIR MORAVA [<mailto:moravailir@bellsouth.net>]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 23, 2013 6:09 PM  
**To:** Tom Anderson  
**Subject:** Re: Veteran's Group

Mr. Anderson,

Thank you for emailing me with the name of the association, as well as the link to the website. I am sending a (\$300) check to your Virginia address to donate to the Vinh Long Outlaws. Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a great New Year. Happy Holidays.

Best Regards,

Ilir "Lee" Morava

I was overwhelmed, not only because of the contribution itself but more especially because it came from someone who has struggled to make a success of his, and his family's life, in our country.

These two contributions to the Outlaws symbolize the gratitude that Americans of all levels of our society have for Viet Nam veterans. The Outlaws should be very proud that our organization is able to be recognized in this manner. Our deepest thanks, both to Andrew Hoder and his American Legion Post and to Mr. Lee Morava.

Early aircraft's throttles had a ball on the end of it. In order to go full throttle, the pilot had to push the throttle all the way forward into the wall of the instrument panel. Hence, the term "**Balls to the wall**" was meant for going very fast.

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During WWII, U.S. airplanes were armed with belts of bullets which they would shoot during dogfights and on strafing runs. These belts measured 27 feet long (nine yards), contained hundreds of bullets, and were folded into the wing compartments that fed their machine guns. Often times, the pilots would return from their missions having expended all of their bullets on various targets. They would say, "**I gave them the whole nine yards**" which meant they had used up all of their ammunition.



## A Letter Request to Outlaws, Mavericks and Bushwhackers!!



PSSST!...before you throw it away....please read.

My name is Anders Strand-Holm and I am an Associate member of the Vinh Long Outlaws Association. Although I live in Denmark, I have acquired a fascination with U.S. Army Aviation in Viet Nam and particularly the Outlaws. My wife and I actually attended your last VLOA reunion in Savannah and had a wonderful time with all of you.

For a number of years, I have been collecting items relating to nearly anything having to do with Army Aviation in Viet Nam. I mainly collect Viet Nam War Army Aviation and Helicopter pilot and crew-related items as well as Technical/Field Manuals and small paper items. For example, such things as:

- USARV Pilots Checklist for UH-1B (1966-71)
- AH-1G Pilots Checklist (1966-71)
- Bell Helicopter Pilot's Indoctrination Manual UH-1B
- TM 55-1520-210-CL Army models UH-1D and UH-1H Aircraft Pilots Checklist.
- USARV Operators and Crewmember's checklist Army model UH-1C Helicopter Pilots checklist.
- FM 1-105 Army aviation techniques and procedures.



I also have collected a number of unit calling cards, unit patches and in-country-made Beer Can Distinctive Insignia, and would like to continue my collection. In short, I am interested in nearly anything related to Assault Helicopter Company crews during the Viet Nam conflict.

If you have any old items from your time in Viet Nam, and would like to get rid of them, I would be appreciative if you would let me know. I would not want you to “donate” anything to me. I will gladly pay you for every item I find interesting for my little Viet Nam museum corner in my home in Copenhagen..

If you have anything you are thinking of getting rid of, please email me at: [anders@strandholm.dk](mailto:anders@strandholm.dk)

We plan to attend the 2014 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion of the VLOA in September in Washington. See you there!

Thank you, Anders.

## The Back Pew

By: John Doyle



### The Back Pew

In 1943, WW2 was in full swing, and I was 8 years old. I lived in New England where the

winters include snow and freezing days and nights. Our town was in a rural area, a place where people helped each other as a way of life. There was a field that had a stream running through it. At one point, it flowed between two hills. Each winter, a family that lived on one of the hills overlooking the stream, took it upon themselves to board up the little dam that the stream ran through. In a short time a little pond appeared. Shortly, it would freeze and made a great place to ice skate. This same couple would set up flood lights so the pond could also be used at night. Old and young, the town's people gathered to skate and enjoy the company of their neighbors.

When I think back on this, I realize that they were following Jesus's command to "love your neighbor as yourself." Wouldn't it be nice if we all made Jesus's words a map for how we live our lives?

Chaplain

*John Doyle*

Treasurers Report by Chester Voisin



Vinh Long Outlaws Association  
(VLOA)

Details:

Revenues

Inventory Sales 391.00

Miscellaneous - Donation

Ilir (Lee) Morava 300.00  
Hendersonville, North Carolina

Annual Dues:

Robert Tidd 25.00  
Donald Palmer 25.00  
John Doyle 25.00  
Eddie Mcguire 25.00  
Kenneth Bemowski 25.00  
125.00

Life Time Memberships (LTM):

Gregg Biggins 100.00  
100.00

Life Time Associate Membership (ALTM):

None -  
-

Total Revenues 916.00

Expenses

Robert Sharp - 4th Quarter 2013 Newsletter 555.07  
Administration 38.97  
Tom Anderson - Inventory Expense -  
Tom Anderson - 2014 Reunion Expense 558.86  
Frank Estes - Callender Floral Spray 128.62  
1,281.52

Total Expenses (1,281.52)

Deficit 3 month period ending 03/31/2014 (365.52)

Balance  
\$

Cash Balance - 01/01/2014 16,114.28

2014  
3 Months  
3/31/2014

Revenues: \$

Dues - Annual 125.00  
Dues - Lifetime 100.00  
Dues - Associates Lifetime -  
Sale of Inventory Items 391.00  
Silent Auction Proceeds -  
Ticket Sales - 50/50 Raffle -  
Miscellaneous 300.00

Total Revenues: 916.00 916.00

Expenditures:

Newsletter Costs 555.07  
Inventory purchases & costs -  
2012 Reunion Costs -  
2014 Reunion Costs 558.86  
Prizes - 50/50 Raffle -  
Administration 38.97  
Miscellaneous 128.62

Total Expenditures: 1,281.52 (1,281.52)

Net Income (Loss) - 3 months 2014 (365.52) (365.52)

Cash Balance - 03/31/2014 15,748.76

## Heroes to reunite

Written by Bob Weir

Wednesday, 26 March 2014 00:00

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*How many babies did you kill today?* No, that's not a slogan from a present-day anti-abortion protester; it's one of the cruel questions hurled at Viet Nam veterans returning home from the war in the early seventies.

Highland Village resident and retired Army Colonel Ernie Isbell remembers those days as one of the most difficult eras in the history of our country. When he and thousands of his fellow servicemen arrived home, on the soil of their beloved country, a country they had fought for with honor and courage, they were subjected to abuse from those who, in my opinion, weren't worthy of shining their boots. But, this is America, and those maggots at the airports had the right to display their obnoxious behavior; a right that 58,000 soldiers sacrificed their lives to protect. Colonel Isbell is much too sophisticated to put it that way, but I'm not as classy as he is.

Born in Paducah, Texas in 1941, Ernie married Linda, his high-school sweetheart, in 1959. Six weeks later he enlisted in the Army, applied to officer candidate school and was sent to Fort Benning, Georgia. At the ripe young age of 19, he graduated as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Infantry. The transport and delivery techniques of infantrymen to engage in battle include marching, mechanized transport, airborne (by parachute), air assault (by helicopter), and amphibious support. Ernie Isbell became a helicopter pilot, rising to the rank of Major in command of a support services team. In addition, Isbell graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Business Administration, and holds a Master of Science Degree in Counseling and Guidance. He served three tours in Vietnam, flying over 1500 hours during some of the bloodiest battles in that Southeast Asian country.

Cont. on pg.7

Cont. from pg.6

## Heroes to reunite

Written by Bob Weir

Wednesday, 26 March 2014 00:00

Although he was never wounded, he remembers a time when the seat in his chopper was hit by bullets and a couple of people in the back seat were struck. However, one of the most memorable moments of the war came on June 21, 1972. Major Isbell was on the ground commanding the support services in the vicinity of the village of Tan Khai. Suddenly, the fearful message "Missile – Missile – Missile" was heard over the VHF radio. "I looked to my left front and saw a very large puff of white smoke at the tree line (about 500 meters) and a thin stream of the same smoke going over our heads," Isbell said. "I followed the smoke stream and saw the tail boom of a Cobra (helicopter) falling." The craft, being operated by Captains Mike Brown and Marco Cordon, had been hit by a shoulder-fired SA-7 missile while flying at an altitude of about 4000 feet.

"Next to come into view was the slowly turning and descending body of the aircraft. It appeared to be in a partially controlled autorotation. It was at about 2000 feet when it came into view, and it was plunging fast. We were picking up the South Vietnam Army Airborne Brigade, and my company, B/229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, was the first in to make a pickup. The Cobras were providing cover for us during the loading and withdrawal. I got the call that my number 5 aircraft was 'up' and that meant our flight was loaded. We took off and turned in the direction where the Cobra had crashed." The chopper had landed atop a thick grove of trees, which stopped the out-of-control spin of the powerless craft, and helped cushion the blow of the fall. The pilot had tried to jettison the remaining fuel and other combustibles before impact, but, since the wing store jettison circuit breakers and electrical power is located in the forward portion of the tail boom, he had no control over the falling craft. Yet, by some stroke of luck, and the cushioned landing in the trees, there was no fire on impact.

"I directed my number 5 aircraft to go check for survivors. We found Captains Brown and Cordon out of the Cobra and walking about in an area covered by jungle. With no clear place to land, the rescue commander decided to lower his helicopter into the trees like a large lawn mower. This maneuver damaged the main rotor blades, but it allowed him to get low enough for the 2 pilots to climb onto the Cobra fuselage, grasp the skids of the craft, and pull themselves aboard. They were flown to safety at a friendly base named Lai Khe." It's significant to mention that no other helicopter pilots have ever survived an SA-7 missile strike. The rescue pilots received the Distinguished Flying Cross for their heroic act.

After 31 years of active service, Ernie Isbell retired in 1990 as a full-bird colonel. He was too humble to mention it during our interview, but I looked up his record. I don't have room in this article to cite them all, but he's a sample: 3 Legion of Merit awards, 2 Distinguished Flying Cross Medals for heroism in combat, 2 Bronze Stars, 22 Air Medal Awards, of which 5 were for heroism, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, National Defense Service Medal, etc., etc. Shortly thereafter, he established the firm of LPL Financial Services of Flower Mound.

On April 1st, around noon, Colonel Isbell will have a ceremony at his office, 2904 Corporate Circle, Flower Mound, in which he will be reunited with retired Captains Brown and Cordon, who are traveling here for the event. It's open to the public. I'm looking forward with great anticipation to seeing these brave veterans together again, more than 40 years after their death-defying experience on the other side of the world.

Cont. on pg.8

Cont. from pg.7

## Heroes to reunite

Written by Bob Weir

Wednesday, 26 March 2014 00:00

*Bob Weir is a long-time Flower Mound resident and former local newspaper editor. In addition, Bob has 7 published books that include "Murder in Black and White," "City to Die For," "Powers that Be," "Ruthie's Kids," "Deadly to Love," "Short Stories of Life and Death" and "Out of Sight," all of which can be found on Amazon.com and other major online bookstores.*



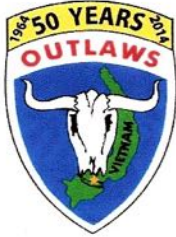
Here is a picture of **Cobra** pilots that survived the **Estrella** Missile strike. **Marco Cordon** is on the left, he was in the front seat, and **Mike Brown** is on the right, he was in the back seat. Hearing hem tell about their experience was very emotional for those Present.

I think we can all relate to this: (The stranger in the house.) A very weird thing has happened. A strange old person (he or she) has moved into my house. I have no idea who she is, where she came from, or how she got in. I certainly did not invite her. All I know is that one day there she was. She is a clever old lady, and manages to keep out of sight for the most part, but whenever I pass a mirror, I catch a glimpse of her. And whenever I look in the mirror to check my appearance, there she is, hogging the whole thing, completely obliterating my gorgeous face and body. This is very rude. I have tried screaming at her, but she screams right back. If she insists on hanging around, the least she could do is offer to pay part of the rent, but no. Every once in a while, I find a dollar bill stuck in a coat pocket or some loose change under a sofa cushion, but it is not nearly enough. I don't want to jump to conclusions, but I think she is stealing money from me. I go to the ATM and withdraw \$100.00, and a few days later, it is all gone. I don't spend money that fast, so I can only conclude she is pilfering from me. You'd think she would spend some of that money on wrinkle cream, Lord only knows she needs it. I think she is stealing food also. Especially the good stuff like ice cream, cookies, and candy. She'd better watch it as she is really packing on the pounds. She has been tampering with my scale to make me think I am gaining weight also. She is quite childish. She plays nasty games, like going into my closet and altering

my clothes so they don't fit. She messes with my files and papers so I can't find anything. This is annoying as I am neat and extremely organized. She also fiddles with the VCR so it does not record what I have carefully and correctly programmed. She gets into my mail, newspapers, and magazines and blurs the print so I can't read it. She has done something sinister to the volume on my TV, radio, and telephone. Now all I hear is mumbles and whispers. She has done things like make my vacuum heavier, the stairs steeper, and all my knobs and faucets harder to turn. She even made my bed higher so that getting in and out of is a real challenge. Lately, she has been fooling with my groceries before I put them away, applying glue to the lids, making it impossible for me to open the jars. Is this any way to repay my hospitality? She has taken the fun out of shopping for clothes. When I try something on, she stands in front of the mirror and monopolizes it. She looks totally ridiculous in some of those outfits, plus, she keeps me from seeing how great they look on me. Just when I thought she couldn't get any meaner, she proved me wrong. She came along when I went to get my picture taken to re-new my driver's license, and just as the shutter clicked, she jumped in front of me! No one is going to believe that the picture of that old lady is ME!!!!

"The stranger in my house" by Rose Madeline Mula.





# 2014

## VINH LONG OUTLAWS GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY ROUNDUP



Washington DC Area  
September 18–22, 2014

Come and join the celebration of 50 years of Vinh Long Outlaws history at the Marriott Tyson's Corner hotel in Fairfax, Virginia. Registration fee of \$1074 per couple or \$792 per single covers all expenses. Reduced hotel parking rate. Registration fee includes:

*Welcome bag with name badge, itinerary, list of attendees and much more!*

*One-of-a-Kind Commemorative Keepsake Gift*

*Hospitality Room Stocked with Snacks and Beverages all 4 days*

*Complimentary breakfast Friday-Saturday-Sunday-Monday*

*Thursday Welcome Back Dinner*

*Friday Wreath-laying at the Viet Nam Memorial*

*Tour of Arlington National Cemetery*

*Saturday visit to the Huge Dulles Air & Space Museum*

*Lots of "On-Your-Own" time for Sightseeing*

*Sunday Evening Farewell Banquet*

### VIENT NAM VETERAN'S MEMORIAL

Attendees will gather at "our" memorial to pay tribute both to the members of the Outlaws who were killed in action but to all US service people who were lost in that conflict. A short ceremony will conclude with the laying of a wreath of remembrance at the apex of the memorial.

### ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Among the nearly 300,000 burials in Arlington are a number of our fellow Outlaws who are at their eternal rest in this, a national shrine and the most hallowed ground in our nation. The tour will feature stops at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Kennedy grave site while a narrator will fill in facts about the cemetery itself.

### SMITHSONIAN DULLES AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

Among the thousands of aircraft and space artifacts in this HUGE museum, is the B-29 Enola Gay, a Lockheed SR-71, a Concorde, the space shuttle Discovery and a Viet Nam battle-tested UH-1.

Come to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion, share old memories and make new ones !!

Complete the Registration Form on the website ([www.vinhlongoutlaws.com](http://www.vinhlongoutlaws.com)) or for more information, contact

SLM Events, LLC  
6848 Tiddle Way  
Lorton, VA 22079  
Ph: 703-627-7992



## 50<sup>TH</sup> GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY ROUNDUP

SEPTEMBER 18-22, 2014

MARRIOTT TYSON'S CORNER

8028 LEESBURG PIKE, VIENNA, VIRGINIA 22182

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME ON NAMETAG: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME(S) OF YOUR SPOUSE/GUEST(S): \_\_\_\_\_

SUNDAY BANQUET MEAL SELECTION: BEEF: \_\_\_\_\_ CHICKEN: \_\_\_\_\_ VEGETARIAN: \_\_\_\_\_ FISH: \_\_\_\_\_

HOTEL ROOM CHOICE: KING: \_\_\_\_\_ TWO DOUBLES: \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTURE DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL NUMBER OF NIGHTS: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS (DIETARY, WHEELCHAIR, ETC): \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY: NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

### REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDES

- Hotel room with breakfast daily (maximum 2 per room)
  - Welcome packet
  - Hospitality room stocked with snacks and beverages
  - Thursday night welcome dinner
  - Friday Lunch
  - Saturday lunch voucher at A&S museum
  - Sunday Farewell banquet dinner and program
- Tours of:
- Air and Space Museum – Dulles Airport
  - Viet Nam Memorial
  - Arlington National Cemetery
  - Commemorative 50th Anniversary gift

### REGISTRATION FEES

Price per Person (2 per room/by check: \$537 each)	Total	\$1074	_____
Price per Person (2 per room/by credit: \$557 each)	Total	\$1114	_____
Price per Person (1 per room/by check: \$792)	Total	\$792	_____
Price per Person (1 per room/by credit: \$822 each)	Total	\$822	_____
Add'l persons (3 <sup>rd</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> ) in 2 person room: \$354 (check)/\$369 (CC)	# add'l	_____	_____
Add'l Hotel Nights (max 3 nights prior/after): \$128 (check)/\$133 (CC)	# nights	_____	_____
	Total:	_____	_____

**REGISTRATION FORM AND 50% DUE NO LATER THAN June 12, 2014**

**Final Payment due No Later than September 1, 2014 – Prices will increase after September 1, 2014**

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address for Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

I am paying by personal check. Check # \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed.

A cancellation fee of \$20 per person will apply for all cancellations received from 30 days prior to the event until 10 days prior to the event. Cancellations received after 10 days prior to the event are non-refundable.

Note: Parking fee \$3 per night not included in registration fee.

Send this Form – Along With Check or Credit Card Authorization to

SLM Events, LLC  
6848 Tiddle Way  
Lorton, VA 22079  
Phone: 703-627-7992

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## ***The Director's Award and the Outstanding Outlaw Award.***

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### Award Nominations:

The Directors Award and the Outstanding Outlaw Awards are presented at each meeting of the VLOA to recipients who have added greatly to the development and mission of the organization. For each Bi-annual meeting the nomination process allows VLOA members in good standing to submit nominations for these awards. Please submit one nomination for the Directors Award and not more than eight nominations for the Outstanding Outlaw statuette.

I am serving as Chair of the nomination committee and it is time for all VLOA members to give thought to the nomination process. The awards are presented to the person or persons that have distinguished themselves by furthering the goals and objectives of the VLOA through their active service as an officer, or committee member or chair, or support staff, and through attendance at the National Meetings. The nominee must be in good standing with current dues or be a life member.

I am asking that all nominations be emailed to me at [ernieandlinda2@yahoo.com](mailto:ernieandlinda2@yahoo.com) not later than 1 July 2014. There will not be a set format for the submittals and each nomination will be considered on its own merits. Supporting recommendations from all VLOA members are encouraged. The committee will consider all nominations and the selection will be announced at the Washington meeting.

See you in Washington—Ernie Isbell

Former Award winners—Savannah, Ga. 2012





## How About A "Tip" For the VLOA?

As most of our regular VLOA members know, over the past several years our great little group has become a professional, first class organization of which every Outlaw can be proud. Our reunions have always received rave responses from those who attend. We maintain a first-class web site. We have a regular newsletter that attempts to keep all Outlaws informed about items of interest to us all. It takes two things for the VLOA to continue year after year: A few dedicated people to keep it running and enough money to pay the bills.

We have been fortunate that there have been enough members who regularly step up to keep the VLOA alive. But, there is no question that we need a sustaining revenue source to pay for the continuing costs. It costs **bucks** to continue mailing the Newsletter to over 275 recipients four times a year. It costs **bucks** to maintain the website in a professional manner. It costs more **bucks** than we take in to hold each reunion. Our web site continues to encourage everyone to become annual dues paying members.

Last year, we made an attempt to solicit corporate support from aviation-related industry companies to defray some of the 2014 reunion costs. None of those who we contacted responded. So we continue to press for annual dues.

Our annual dues are only \$25 per year, just a little over \$2.00 per month. Every month, most of us leave often that much for a waitress' service tip. Why don't you consider sending a \$25 "tip" to the VLOA for the service it continues to provide to all Outlaws. Write a small \$25 "tip" check, payable to the VLOA, and send it to **Chester Voisin, 1657 Dr. Beatrous Road, Theriot, LA 70397.**

If only 100 Outlaws, who are currently non-dues-paying members, would send in an annual dues payment, the VLOA treasury would be enriched by \$2500. That would cover the costs of the Newsletter for a year.

Please, if you receive this Newsletter, and have not sent in your annual dues, "tip" the VLOA with a little "**bucks**



Yr. 1955. Brothers:  
L/R. Bruce Sharp -U.S.  
Army.  
Timothy-U.S. Navy.  
Robert Sharp- U.S.  
Army .  
We will put to rest, my  
brother- Timothy, my  
son, Joel Robert Sharp -  
USAF. and our mother,  
Lois on 7-12-14.



## Silent Auction Needs Your Help !

(From Tom Anderson)



C'mon guys !! Your help is needed, NOW. The Silent Auction is not only one of the most entertaining parts of the reunion but, just as importantly, it is a critical component of the fund-raising needed to sustain the VLOA. Silent Auction coordinators Jack and Fran Konopka report that the number of items submitted to the 2014 Silent Auction is far behind the pace of items received in previous years.

From experience we know that many of us identify, weeks or months ahead of time, two or three items we plan to put into the auction. But, being procrastinators by nature that we are, we also, then, put off until the last minute sending in a description of those items we have selected for donation to the Auction.

At the Savannah reunion, the Silent Auction received a total of 76 items. All but one item were purchased by the 106 attendees! In contrast, by mid-May, descriptions of only 17 items had been received by Jack and Fran.

The Konopkas have prepared and forwarded a number of email posters to all Outlaws for whom they valid email addresses. The posters have been uniquely designed and cleverly coordinated with a recognized national event. Their approach to drumming up interest in the Silent Auction has been very different from previous years. Their requests for help have been both timely and appealing. But, their efforts apparently haven't yet prompted many of us to let them know what we plan to submit to the auction.

The Konopkas are anxious to start building the Bidding Booklet, which will describe (hopefully with pictures) all the items which will be on the auction block.

Now is the time! Contact Jack and Fran with the item(s) you're submitting to their Silent Auction. Call the Konopkas at 1-516-676-4313. Do it now, while the thought is still fresh in your

mind. *Thank You!!!!!!*

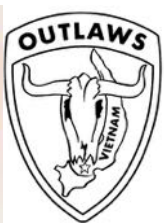
## THERE, HERE and BEYOND

Strange title for a Newsletter article? Yep. Some explaining is in order. As pertains to the “THERE” the reference is to VLOA’s first reunion in Branson, Missouri, September 2000, known as R2K. Since then, six more biennial reunions have been held, each at a different and interesting location for the enjoyment, camaraderie and pleasure of the attendees. We all realize the strength of an organization comes from its membership. It has been from that strength that many have willingly filled the various necessary administrative positions within the organization and those volunteering to plan, organize and direct our many successful reunions.

Now “HERE” comes the soon to be 2014 VLOA Eighth Reunion in Washington, DC celebrating a Golden Anniversary of 50 years since the Outlaws first arrived in Vietnam at Vinh Long, September, 1964. The Outlaws, as a unit remained there until 1972 spanning almost eight years of continued combat service in VN. During that period, probably as many as several thousand soldiers served in the Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners, Bushwhackers and attached units with honor, dedication, distinction and self sacrifice. The 2014 VLOA Reunion is not only in recognition of the 50 years, but also for ALL who served with the Outlaws from 1964 - 1972. All reunion accommodations, activities, venues and amenities will be first class. This reunion is bound to be exciting and long remembered for all who attend.

And finally, the “BEYOND” or where do we go from here, both as an organization and future reunions. Looking back over the year ’64 when the Outlaws first arrived in VN, the age groups were somewhere in the range of 34 to 19 years old, those same are now 84 to 69 years old. If we apply those same age groups to the year ’72 when the Outlaws left VN, we can assume their ages are now around 72 to 61 years old. A quote from the VLOA Director, Angelo Spelios in the July-September 2013 Vinh Long Outlaws Fall Newsletter is most appropriate for many of us, “...most of us now have fewer years in front that behind us.” With all things in mind, we all need to consider the “BEYOND”, or where do we go from here. Most importantly, who will be the ones to willingly step forward and lead from “HERE” to BEYOND” 2014?

Commentary by: Al Iller



VLOA  
2014—??



## The Future of the VLOA Could Be in Your Hands !!!!!



For more than a decade and a half, the VLOA has been fortunate to have had great leadership and direction from among a wide

number of members, all of whom have been deeply committed to building, and maintaining, a first-class organization. As a result, the VLOA has been able to consistently project that image, both to its members as well as to the general public. A look at the entries in the website Guest Book will reflect the positive feelings expressed by nearly all those who sign onto the site.

The primary function of the VLOA is to hold biennial reunions where former Outlaws can come together to renew the bonds of friendship forged so many years ago.

As you can probably assume, there has been increasingly more discussion about the direction the VLOA will have to take following the upcoming major-milestone reunion in September 2014. After 50 years, it is obvious that our membership is aging. The leadership roles, which are such a vital part of keeping the VLOA alive and robust, must be taken over by younger members.

More importantly, those members who have been instrumental in coordinating, staging and hosting the always-successful previous reunions probably will likely not want to take on those responsibilities again in the future.

In addition to a Reunion Coordinator, the VLOA depends on a number of other critical positions which must be maintained if the organization is to remain viable: To name just a few; the website manager, the newsletter editor, roster maintenance manager, treasurer, secretary, chaplain and historian. We have been fortunate that some of these positions have been in the capable hands of the same people for a number of years. Hopefully, many in those positions will be willing to continue with their volunteer duties.

In addition, our Steering Committee membership must continually be filled with those who are willing to participate in the governance and direction of the organization.

Therefore, one of the most important agenda items for those who attend the September reunion, and meet in general session on Saturday morning, will be a discussion of the future direction of the VLOA. Whether the organization can move forward into the future will require a commitment from the members who attend the General Membership meeting.

For those who cannot attend the reunion, but who have thoughts, suggestions, recommendations or strong feelings about how the VLOA should proceed, are urged to communicate their feelings to the National Director, Angelo Spelios, prior to the reunion. Send your thoughts to Angelo Spelios at [angelo\\_spelios@yahoo.com](mailto:angelo_spelios@yahoo.com). Along with comments received, those who attend will be base for the discussions which will shape the future of the organization.

### Welcome!!! New Members!!!!!!

Lynn Chadwick

250 Berry Drive #A-11

Branson, MO. 65616

lynnchadwick19672002@yahoo.com

Gregg A. Biggins

33451 US Hwy 18

Gregory, SD. 57533

biggins@gwtc.net

Kenneth E. "Ski" Bemowski

1222 Martin Is. Drive

Stevens Pointe, WI. 54481



## VLOA 50TH REUNION SILENT AUCTION



### ITS UP TO YOU!!! THE TIME HAS COME!!!

**The Silent Auction is depending on you**.....This has always been the our best producing fund raiser and also the highlight of our reunion. Many members in the past have contributed to the bidding frenzy to obtain that special item. This is what builds our treasury and future reunions. We have in past reunions had many wonderful items----some unique, others eclectic, military memorabilia and handmade treasures for our members to bid on to take home. Just remember, the items should be something ***you*** would like to have and also, your fellow VLOA members.

**Please donate!!** If everyone attending the reunion donates at least one, if not more, items that would be great. The more we have to bid on, the more it increases our treasury!!

As in the past all items will be displayed on tables in the Hospitality Suite with a brief description. A Bid Sheet will be placed along side each item on which bidders write their name and the next higher bid amount. Its a fight to the finish to see who is the victor to get that special item. Here are the details:

**Bid List** In order to develop the Bid List, I will need to know what you will be contributing. We will need a photo, a description of the item and a starting bid. Then, email the info to me.

**Getting your item to the reunion** Driving it yourself is the surest and least expensive way of getting your item(s) to the reunion. If, however, you are not attending the reunion and still have something to donate, please let me know. Do this as early as possible.

**If Your are Flying and Need to Ship** Please note that shipments should be scheduled to arrive at the Marriott no earlier than five days prior to the event.

**Shipping Address** Make sure the following information is included on your shipping label. Showing your name as Guest.

Ship To: Marriott Tyson's Corner  
8028 Leesburg Pike, Vienna, Virginia 22182

Group Name: Vinh Long Outlaws Assoc. Reunion  
Event Date: Sept. 18-22, 2014  
Hold for Pickup by Guest: \_\_\_\_\_  
your name here

Any questions contact me

**Jack Konopka**

7 Foxboro La, Old Brookville, NY 11545

email: [jkonopka624@gmail.com](mailto:jkonopka624@gmail.com)

phone: 516 676-2017

**IF YOU HAVEN'T RECEIVED EMAILS  
FROM ME IN THE PAST 6 MONTHS  
PLEASE UPDATE YOUR EMAIL  
ADDRESS**

***we need your help!!***

## TIME TO REGISTER – NOW - FOR THE 2014 /REUNION

If you're hoping to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion in the Washington DC area, you **MUST** get your Registration in to SLM Events NOW! Although the date to send in the form is several weeks ahead of the reunion, it is necessary to attempt to Get a head count early so as to finalize many of the reunion activities details. In many cases, those details translate to "costs". The Registration Form is included in this Newsletter. The form provides all the information you'll need to secure your place at the Welcome dinner tables, in the hospitality suite, on the buses, at the VN Memorial, at Arlington National Cemetery, at the Air & Space Museum and at the big Farewell Dinner on Sunday evening.

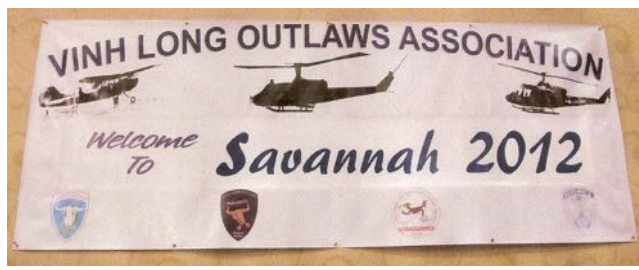
But most importantly, if you attend, you'll be part of the comradeship that comes from being with old friends from half a century ago, as well as with new friends with whom you shared many of the same experiences in those half-century-ago days in Vinh Long.

For a decade and a half, the Vinh Long Outlaws Association has been a rallying organization for literally hundreds of former Outlaws who cherish the friendships, the interactions, and remembrances of our time together during the Viet Nam war.

Who knows when, where, or even **IF** there will be another reunion with the same focus as we have had over the past 16 years. As with attendance at school reunions, if you don't go, and say you'll go to the next one, you may not have another opportunity. The same applies to military reunions. If you attend the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Outlaw reunion, in September, you just might run into that certain old friend you wish you had been in contact with over the years. This could be your chance to make those contacts with so many friends once more. **SO, DON'T WAIT!** Sign up NOW to be at the reunion in the Washington DC area in September!!! Guaranteed, you'll NEVER regret it!!

From the editor:

I have been to every reunion and I believe I can speak for most of my friends and fellow VLOA members that these have been some of the most memorable times in our lives. The best ever!!!



## GET YOUR REUNION SHIRTS HERE !

Orders for the gold reunion shirts are coming in rapidly. By early May over 30 shirts had been ordered with more coming in every week. This year's shirts are "gold" to match the GOLDEN Anniversary theme of reunion. The majority of orders received thus far are from those who will attend the reunion. However, anyone can order one of these great-looking shirts. Even if you do not intend to attend the reunion, but would like to have one of the unique, gold polo shirts, you can place an order and it will be mailed to you after the shirts are made up.

How do you get a shirt ordered? First, call up the picture of the men's and women's shirts on the website, sit back and admire how good they look. ([www.vinhloungoutlaws.com](http://www.vinhloungoutlaws.com)) However... be forewarned! The pictures of the handsome man and the pretty young woman, come with a caveat! The shirt is not guaranteed to make you look as good as they do. But, on the other hand, you **MIGHT!**

Then, use either the Shirt Order form found in this Newsletter or pull down the Order Form from the web site. On the website, click on the REUNION tab on the left side. This will bring up the 2014 Reunion information page. At the bottom of the page are links to the [Registration Form](#), [the reunion schedule](#), the [shirt order form](#) and a [picture of both the men's and women's shirts](#).

Even if you're not able to totally convince yourself that wearing one of the shirts **MIGHT** bring back some of your youthful appearance, but you still want to give it a try, fill out the form, write a check for the appropriate amount shown on the form, and mail it to Tom Anderson. All orders must be received by August 15<sup>th</sup>. Reunion attendees will receive their shirts in their Welcome Bags at registration. Non-attendees will receive their shirts by mail in early September.

Look good! Look sharp! Look "golden"!





**50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OUTLAW ROUNDUP****SHIRT ORDER FORM**

The official **2014 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Outlaw Roundup** shirt emphasizes the Golden Anniversary theme of the reunion. The Men's shirt is primarily gold with a white panel spliced into both sides and inside the sleeves. Women's shirts are also gold with similar white side panels plus a white detail on the "Johnny collar" neck. The Golden Anniversary shirts are a similar material to the 2012 shirts, made from "tricot micropique" for smooth, snag-resistant, moisture-wicking, comfortable wear! Made by Sport-Tek, all shirts will feature the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Outlaw logo embroidered on the left breast.

**Cost for each shirt is \$30.** NOTE: Added cost for sizes 2XL = \$32 3XL = \$34 4XL = \$36 men's or women's. Please pre-order your shirt(s) on the form below. Shirt orders for Reunion attendees will be in the welcome bag at the VLOA registration desk. If you are not attending the Reunion, see info below. A limited quantity of additional shirts may be available for sale at the Reunion.

**Please Indicate Quantity Desired by Size****MENS' SHIRT SIZES:**

	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL*	3XL*	4XL*	TOTAL#	COST
	32-34	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49	50-53	54-67		
Qty	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**LADIES' SHIRT SIZES**

	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL*	TOTAL#	COST
	0-2	4/6	8/10	12/14	16/18	20/22		
Qty	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**Note: Cost for sizes 2XL = \$32 3XL = \$34 4XL = \$36 Men's or Women's**

For Reunion attendees, please indicate name(s) and sizes needed, below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Size: \_\_\_\_\_

(Use the reverse side of this form for any additional information or comments)

If you are not attending the Reunion, please add \$5.00 for shipping costs and provide the following information:

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (Phone #) \_\_\_\_\_

**ALL ORDERS ARE PRE-PAID AND MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 15, 2014.**

Send this shirt Order Form, with payment – made payable to VLOA, – Mail to \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Tom Anderson 7880 Rolling Woods Ct #308 . Springfield, VA 22152

**Make checks or money orders payable to: VLOA . . . . . not to Tom !**

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)  
 c/o Robert J. Sharp, Editor.  
 17489 US Hwy. 65  
 Albert Lea, Minnesota. 56007  
 handybobsharp@gmail.com



Spring-2014

**Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)**  
**Membership Application/Renewal Form**

Memberships in the VLOA is open to any person of any rank who served with any lineage unit known as the “Outlaws” (and “Mavericks” armed platoon) or any affiliated unit at any time between August 1964 and the present. These units include the 62<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Company, A Company 502<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Battalion, 175<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company, B Troop 1-158<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment (Iraq), 150<sup>th</sup> Transportation Detachment (“Roadrunners”), 28<sup>th</sup> Signal Detachment, and 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division’s “door gunners.”

Active (with vote) or Associate (without vote) Membership is \$25.00 annually, payable each January. A Lifetime Membership (with vote) is a \$100.00 one-time fee. A Lifetime Associate Membership (without vote) for spouses is available for a \$100 one-time fee. Higher levels of Lifetime Memberships are available; contact the National Director at: [angelo\\_spelios@yahoo.com](mailto:angelo_spelios@yahoo.com). To pay initial or renewal membership dues for this calendar year, please complete and forward this form, with dues payment, to:

**VLOA; c/o Chester Voisin, 1657 Dr. Beatrous Road, Theriot, LA 70397.**

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

Telephone # (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse’s Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Rank (while assigned to unit) \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Dates assigned in Outlaws/attachments (Mo/Yr to Mo/Yr) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

Unit/plt/sect/position \_\_\_\_\_ Radio Call sign \_\_\_\_\_

- Please initiate \_\_\_\_\_ or renew \_\_\_\_\_ my Active \_\_\_\_\_ Associate \_\_\_\_\_ VLOA membership. **Make \$25.00 check payable to VLOA.**
- Please initiate my Lifetime \_\_\_\_\_ Lifetime Associate \_\_\_\_\_ VLOA membership. **Make \$100.00 check 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 unless I am a current dues paying VLOA member.

\_\_\_\_\_ I know a former Outlaw/Maverick/Roadrunner or other affiliated unit member and have indicated his/her name, address, and phone number on this form.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_