



Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

Vinh Long Outlaws Fall Newsletter 2017

July-September.

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

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Inside this Issue:

National Directors Corner	Pg.1-2
VLOA 2018 Reunion Itinerary.	Pg.3
Why a Silent Auction?	Pg.4
How does the silent Auction work?	Pg. 5-6
Vietnam Helicopter crew Memorial.	Pg.7
The Back Pew.	Pg.8
Jackson's Travelogue	Pg. 9-13
Costa Rica Pictures	Pg. 14
An old friend.	Pg.15-16
Robert Guthrie obituary.	Pg.16
Gosta Peter Fredriksson obit.	Pg. 17
VLOA Treasures report. Frank Estes.	Pg. 18
VLOA Treasures report. Frank Estes.	Pg. 19
VLOA Membership application.	Pg.20

VLOA -2018
Reunion
Charleston, SC!!

National Director's Corner

By- James Donnelly



Hello all!!!!

Vickie's and my visit to Charleston went great. We got the bigger of the two hospitality rooms for the reunion and the meeting room looks fine. We talked with Jon the group sales manager about some small needs we will have for the farewell banquet and the general meeting. We also met Emma who will be handling the catering, so she has a face to put with our reunion.

The Hotel is only one year old from the remodel, so it is basically new, and looked good. The rooms are spacious and comfortable. The hospitality room I spoke of is large with windows on three sides, so it is bright and cheerful. It has plenty of space around the walls for the silent auction tables and all the items I am sure you will be donating.

We found a location for the group pictures out front, which will be taken on Friday when we get back from our City tour. We will be distributing the combined group (men and women) 8x10 picture (one per room) at the General Meeting on Saturday. I will have the additional group pictures and will send them to you via email by request.

We will be developing an hour by hour, day by day one-page quick guide that says exactly when we need to do what. (example) "Be in the lobby at 8:30 for the City tour which leaves at 9:00". This will give you more direction than the itinerary which is just a rough guide.

We have found some good items for the Welcome Bags. They will also include guides to North Charleston and the Tanger Outlets as well as the reunion guide, who's here list, and more.

Friday, we will begin the day with a two-hour guided tour of the Holy City, named for its many picturesque churches. Favorite sites include the Battery overlooking Charleston's harbor and Fort Sumter, colorful Rainbow Row, the Citadel, and White Point Gardens. After the tour there will be time for lunch and shopping on your own in the Market Area.

Cont from pg 1.

Charleston's historic marketplace is surrounded by restaurants and eateries of all types.

Saturday after the General Meeting we will be going to America's most photographed plantation, Boone Hall Plantation. Drive down the famous three-quarter mile avenue of massive, Spanish moss draped live oaks. Step back in time and relive the grandeur of the Old South when you tour the mansion, smokehouse, gardens, original slave quarters, and cotton gin house. There will be an approximate two block walk to the house from where the buses must stop. It is level walking, but please wear comfortable shoes.

Saturday night we will discover the history, beauty and fun of cruising Charleston Harbor while having dinner aboard the Carolina Queen. The evening will consist of great food, entertainment, and fun under the stars as we cruise Charleston's historic harbor.

Sunday afternoon we will tour Patriots Point, home of the largest naval and maritime museum in the world. We will have the opportunity to visit the carrier USS Yorktown, the submarine Clamagore, the Sumner-class destroyer USS Laffey, and a replica of a Vietnam Support base. War planes used in conflicts spanning from WWII to Desert Storm are featured aboard the Yorktown's 40,000 square foot hangar bay and atop the 888-foot flight deck. Patriots Point is also the home of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society and their official Medal of Honor Museum with interactive exhibits

Sunday night features the Farewell Banquet with our observance of the Missing Man Ceremony and awards presentation. After the Banquet will be the last chance to pick up the silent auction items.

Bottom line is: all is good now and we look forward to seeing each one of you in Charleston. The itinerary sheet is printed in this issue also. The registration website will be up soon, and the registration form will also be out soon.







James Donnelly.





Vinh Long- Itinerary Charleston Reunion

September 13-17, 2018

THURSDAY 13	FRIDAY 14	SATURDAY 15	SUNDAY 16	MONDAY 17
 <p>Check in at North Charleston Marriott HOTEL Check-in: 4:00 PM</p> <p>12:00 Noon Hospitality Room Open</p>  <p>7:00 p.m. WELCOME DINNER at Hotel</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Hospitality Room Open</p> <p>9:00 a.m. City Tour/ Lunch on own</p>  <p>Return to hotel at 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Hospitality Room Open</p> <p>Evening Free</p>	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>8:00 a.m. Executive Meeting</p>  <p>9:00 – 11:00 a.m. VLOA General Membership Meeting</p> <p>12:00 a.m. Boone Hall Plantation Tour</p>  <p>Return to hotel at 4 p.m.</p> <p>Free Time Before Dinner</p> <p>7 p.m. Carolina Queen Dinner Cruise</p> 	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Chapel Service</p>   <p>12 p.m. Patriots Point Tour: Includes USS Yorktown, Medal of Honor Museum/ Lunch on own</p> <p>Return to hotel at 3:00 p.m.</p> <p>Hospitality Room Open</p> <p>6:30-9:00 p.m. Farewell Banquet at Hotel</p> 	<p>Breakfast</p> <p>Depart</p> <hr/> <p>FULL PACKAGE</p> <p>Single: \$1045 Double: \$ 728 Triple: \$ 622 Quad: \$ 569</p> <p>Includes: Hotel Stay Hospitality Room Chapel Service Meals Listed Events Listed Transportation Reunion Website All Taxes and Gratuities</p>

Why A Silent Auction?

By Frank Estes

For any organization to survive, it must have a reasonably good cash flow that meets expenses and saves for a rainy day. The VLOA initially depended on membership dues to cover expenses, and this worked well when the VLOA was a young and emerging veterans group.

As the VLOA established itself by membership growth, it found that dues alone would not meet the expenses posed by the quarterly newsletter and website. As these two vehicles reached a wider audience, we found that an additional revenue stream was necessary to assure the VLOA remained on solid financial ground.

Olie Thornton (deceased) came up with the idea of getting VLOA members to donate items for a Silent Auction to be conducted during our biennial Roundups. His idea proved successful as he shepherded the first ever Silent Auction.

Since that time, Olie, Tom Anderson, and Jack and Fran Konopka have been our mainstay volunteers who planned, coordinated, and conducted our Roundup Silent Auctions.

The Silent Auction has proven to raise enough funds to pay for the quarterly newsletter and website fees and expenses. This becomes important to the VLOA because membership dues revenue has proved to be steadily decreasing as our members become older and no longer participate in the dues paying efforts.

Why is the Silent Auction important to you? Because, it requires all members to participate by contributing something of reasonable value and interest to another veteran so it can be used in the Silent Auction. You do not have to be present at the reunion to contribute an

item. For example, Jim Spiers donated a Joe Kline painting of the 175th Outlaws for the Silent Auction during the Savannah, GA Roundup, yet he was unable to attend the reunion.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you will find an article by Tom Anderson regarding the Silent Auction procedures. If you attend the Roundup, you will have a chance to bid on the many items available and at the same time helping treasury remain financially viable.

The bottom line to this article is this:

The VLOA depends on Silent Auction income, along with membership dues to ensure we pay our annual expenses.

We need all VLOA rostered members to know they are important to the success of our Silent Auction. We need you to contribute an item for use in our Silent Auction, whether or not you attend the Charlotte Roundup in September.

If you are going to contribute an item, please contact Tom Anderson at teander@cox.net or 703-451-4015 (home), and describe your item to him so he can finalize the Silent Auction listing for handout at the Charlotte Roundup. Including a black & white photo of the item would most helpful. Finally, please ensure that the item arrives at the right address in time for display at the Charlotte Roundup's Silent Auction.

Watch the quarterly newsletters for more information about the Silent Auction.

Frank Estes

How Does the Silent Auction Work?

By Tom Anderson

Elsewhere in this Newsletter you'll find an article by Frank Estes outlining "why" the VLOA needs the Silent Auction. The answer is simple. The Auction is our primary means of keeping the VLOA functioning as the vibrant and meaningful organization it has become. We have to have money to pay for the continued operation of the VLOA. But, **how** does the Silent Auction work? Here are all the answers.

First - We have to have donations. There are no ground rules for what might be donated, only that your donated items should be of a quality that you'd buy it yourself if you didn't already have one. Previous Auction items have included a wide and varied collection of useful, eclectic, comical and nostalgic items. For example, previous donations have included collector-knives, challenge coins, photos, model helicopters, military memorabilia, items intended for grandchildren, baskets of local food items, quilts, military patches, belt buckles, wines, hand-bags, hand-made articles and literally dozens of other interesting items.

Second - Donated items have to get onto the auction tables. Everyone who receives this Newsletter, even if you cannot attend in person, is invited to support the VLOA by submitting an item to the Auction. When you determine what your donated item(s) will be, contact me by phone or email (preferred) - see below. Give me a description of your article(s) and, if you have a picture, I'd like to have that too. This information will go into the Bid Booklet.

When you register, your Welcome Bag will include your own, personal Bid Number as well as a Bid Booklet showing every item in the Auction. Bid numbers are used on the Bid Sheets, rather than using your name, for the reason that you may not want to know who you are bidding against or who is bidding against you! You'll use this number for all bids you place on the Bid Sheet.

Third- The Auction begins - In the Hospitality Suite, tables surrounding the main room will display all the donated items. Next to each item will be a small "tent card" identifying the name and bid number of the item. Also beside each item will be a Bid Sheet, showing the item number, the name of the item and the minimum bid where the donor feels the bidding should start. The Bid Sheet is where you place your price-offer for the item. The next bidder will place his/her higher bid just below yours, using their Bid Number. Important! Bid on something!

Fourth,- Auction Complete! At 4:00 pm, Sunday afternoon, prior to the Farewell dinner, the auction will close. Auction closing time will be announced, in the Hospitality Suite, at 15, 10 and 5 minutes prior to closing time. All Bid Sheets will then be collected.

Finally -, Pay and Pick Up. Immediately after the Farewell Dinner, back in the Hospitality Suite, you may pick up your winning-bid auction items. The last Bid Number (name) on the Bid Sheet will be announced. The winner of that item will come to the Treasurer's table with either cash or checkbook. After your payment, pick up your newly acquired "treasure". If you are the successful bidder on more than one item, you may wait until all of your winning items have been announced and pay for all in one transaction payment.

Cont. from pg. 5

As a result of seeing the Silent Auction article in the last Newsletter, I have already begun receiving offers for items to be donated to the Auction. Please note that you are asked to bring your donation item(s) with you to the reunion. If, for some reason that is not possible, or if you cannot attend and have items you'd like to donate, please contact me (see below) and we'll work out a way to get your items to the Auction. If you want to forward your donation to the hotel to be held until your arrival, please use the following address:

Charleston Marriott Hotel

4770 Goer Drive Charleston, SC 29403

Hold for pickup by guest _____ for arrival on: _____

Event name:

Vinh Long Outlaws Association Reunion

Event date September 13-17, 2017.

One Last Thing! For the past two reunions, Jack and Fran Konopka did a fantastic job of pulling together all the many pieces (described above) necessary for a successful Silent Auction.. The VLOA Steering Committee, as well as everyone connected with the Washington DC and the Branson reunion planning, owes the Konopkas a deep debt of gratitude not only for all their tireless work but also for the resultant, and welcome, increase to our VLOA treasury. Thank you Jack and Fran!

For the 2018 Reunion Silent Auction in Charleston, please contact –

Tom Anderson.

7880 Rolling Woods Ct. #308 Springfield, VA 22152

Email - teander@cox.net Phone - 703-451-4015

From the Editor: Attention please.

I have an email from a relative of one of our KIA's Ronnie Roush. It reads-
Hi Bob... I just came across you newsletter detailing the Tet Battle at Vinh Long. My mother's brother, Ronnie Roush was KIA 1-31-68 during that battle. I was 15 at that time. We buried him at Arlington. This is the first description of what happened there that we know of. We never knew any details of how he was killed.

If there is any other information. It would be great to know. My mother passed away in 2015. She was devastated by Ronnie's death.

Bridget Finn.

Hi again Bob.

I was wondering if I could get in touch with Roger Anderson or Terry Smith.

Thank you. Please contact her at bfinn@live.com

Vietnam Helicopter Crews to be Honored at Arlington National Cemetery

Earlier this year I gave an update on the status of the placement of a permanent memorial in Arlington National Cemetery to honor all helicopter crewmembers Killed In Action in Viet Nam. At that time, approval had been received from nearly all agencies involved in the approval process, with the exception of the United States Commission of Fine Arts (CFA). The CFA is responsible for ensuring that any memorial design, in the National Capitol area, meets specific design and aesthetic values to preserve the dignity of the Nation's capital.

More than three years ago the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA), on behalf of all Vietnam military helicopter organizations, undertook an effort to have a monument placed in Arlington National Cemetery, to honor and memorialize the more than 5000 helicopter crewmen who lost their lives during Vietnam. The wheels of Washington bureaucracy turn agonizingly slow. During the planning process, thousands of people contacted their members of Congress to show their support for the monument. As a result, the final step in that process has now been completed with receipt of approval from the CFA. Monument construction has now begun.

Funding for the monument is being provided by the VHPA. The VHPA has contracted with Granite Industries of Vermont, (GIV) to begin construction of the 1100 pound granite monument, to be carved from Barre Granite. The VHPA Legacy Committee is also studying how to establish a trust fund for the perpetual maintenance of the monument. GIV will be asked to provide an estimate of possible preservation issues and costs for 50, 100 and 200 years.

Thousands of people visit Arlington National Cemetery each year. While many come to visit graves, most come to this national shrine to view the Tomb of the Unknowns and other military memorials. The helicopter crew monument will stand near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Memorial Amphitheater.



A date for a dedication ceremony has not yet been established. That event must be coordinated with a number of agencies to ensure the Memorial Amphitheater is available, develop appropriate military honors and to plan for a UH-1 helicopter honor flyby. The Legacy Committee anticipates a dedication ceremony will be scheduled prior Memorial Day 2018.

Tom Anderson



The Back Pew

By: Bert Rice



A Joyful Season

When we look at the calendar we see that several religious holidays occur. Hanukkah begins on December 13 and ends on December 20, Christmas is on December 25 and Kwanzaa begins on December 26. These and other religious celebrations remind us of things we hold dear that mean so much to us. Regardless of the religion, we take time to remember family and friends and to wish them a joyful season and extend best wishes for the coming New Year. Celebrations are held in accordance with the practice of each religion.

We need to be watchful during this busy time of year lest we lose sight of the reason for the season. Each in our own way, can turn to our prayer book(s) for comfort and contentment. Most certainly, we give thanks for our very being and for the many blessings that we share and enjoy. During this season, let us take a few minutes and turn to the Lord for comfort and peace.

In Psalms 121, we read, "I lift up my eyes to the hills – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip – he who watches over you will not slumber, indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you – the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore."

This is a powerful message that tells us that we are not alone and that we can turn to the Lord in time of need and that he promises that he will always be there for us. What a blessing for which we can be thankful.

Let us Pray:

Dear Heavenly Father, we pause to remember and to thank you for all our blessings. Our blessings include our families, friends, our freedom, the military service members who stand watch around the world on our behalf, the leaders at all levels of government, military leaders, and the essentials for a comfortable life itself. We thank you, Dear Lord, for your presence in our lives, in our communities, the nation and around the world. Lord, we ask forgiveness for the things we think, say and do that are not pleasing to you. Help us lead a life that reflects you in our daily living. Dear Father, we pray all these things in Thy Holy Name, Amen

Bert Rice

Las Vegas

A 2017 travelogue of the Jackson's by Larry Jackson

Costa Rica

Polly and I have had a very busy 2017 with numerous trips so far. We started out in January by flying out to Colorado for a surprise 75th birthday party for my brother Tom. We had a great time visiting with Tom and Terry, lots of nephews and nieces, and family friends dating back to our years in high school.

On our next trip we flew to Las Vegas with our next-door neighbors, Mack and Jane for a week. We had a very relaxing time. We attended 3 shows starting with A Tribute to The Beatles. They had a fabulous group of impersonators and they put on a really great show. The piano player (John Lennon) looked like him and could really tickle the ivories. Brought back a lot of memories. We also saw a show with an Elvis impersonator who put on an excellent show. He looked and sounded like him. We also saw a magic and illusionist show. The illusions were spectacular and mind boggling. He would put a young lady in a locked box on the stage and the next thing you saw was that she was dangling from a rope up on the ceiling. Probably was the best illusionist I've ever seen. We didn't gamble a lot but went sightseeing at the various hotels and casinos. Also, a lot of nice buffets so we didn't lose any weight with all our walking.

Our next trip was with Grand Circle Travel founded in 1958 to serve the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), is the leader in international travel and discovery for Americans over age 50. Grand Circle vacations have been recommended by *The New York Times*, *Conde Nast Traveler*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Travel + Leisure*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel*, and others. But our most impressive reviews came from our travelers. We had travelled on 10 trips with Grand Circle and with Mack and Jane on 9 of the trips. Jane became ill before the trip began so they cancelled out and she passed away while we were in Costa Rica. It was a very sad day in our lives as they were like family.

Day 1. Our next trip was to Costa Rica The trip was with the Grand Circle travel company and was a 14-day land tour of Costa Rican Treasures from Coast to Coast. We flew in to San Jose. As you can see, we found the way, si. The capital of Costa Rica, San Jose was founded in 1737 and is now one of the more developed Central American capitals—a small, lively city rich in culture and history. Our tour began at the National Museum, where we learned about Costa Rican history and culture. We then took a bus tour that included local landmarks including the National Park, National Library, and Morazán Park—dedicated to a 19th-century general who once tried to unite Central America under a common flag.

Cont from pg 9

We toured the National Theater, proudly regarded as the "jewel of the nation,"

Day 3. The next morning, we departed for Poas Volcano National Park. Our trip there took us up to almost 9,000 feet to the peak of the volcano—one of the largest active volcanoes in the country. From there, we could peer down into the smoking, steaming, bubbling sulfur lake that rests at the bottom of the nearly mile-wide volcanic crater—a testament to the geothermal forces at work beneath Costa Rica's serene surface. After lunch we took a tour of the Doka Estate, an award-winning plantation that specializes in the production of gourmet coffee. Locally owned by the Vargas Ruiz family for decades, the Doka Coffee Estate is a modern operation that uses time-honored techniques—the estate has the oldest working water-powered mill in all of Costa Rica. On our tour of the estate, we saw the various steps in the production of this important national export. We learned how the many varieties of beans are carefully separated for processing, how the water-powered mill and peeling machines work, as well as the roles of the fermentation tanks, sun-drying patios where the beans were hand raked several times during the day, and roasting hall. As the tour continued, we learned about the history of the coffee farm and its owners, the importance of its geographic location, and the value of traditional coffee-growing methods. We were able to savor the rich, intoxicating aroma of the freshly roasted beans, and have a chance to sip some of the plantation's tasty brews.

On day 4 we departed to the region dominated by the Arenal Volcano, our first stop was in the farming town of Grecia, where we visited the Cathedral of Our Lady of Mercy—distinctly constructed out of red metal imported from Belgium. We then traveled to the village of Sarchi where we saw the artisans at work on the most famous of Costa Rica's handcrafts—the *carreta*, or oxcart. (See picture).

Day 5 Our journey on this day presented the opportunity to interact with local people. Costa Rica is a nation with no standing army and a literacy rate of 96 percent—what must it be like to live in a land that is truly devoted to peace in the world and progress for its people? Where does progress still need to be made? Its citizens can tell us. We had the chance to become acquainted with some of them—and have opportunities to pose questions of our own—during a remarkable day of cultural interaction.

We experienced a feast for the senses as we traveled to a tropical garden plantation for an exclusive Discovery Series event. Here, we enjoyed a guided tour of the grounds, and discovered the many plants, fruits, and flowers that help make Costa Rica lush and vibrant. Among the vegetation we saw was bananas, bamboo, and medicinal plants, and many colorful birds and butterflies in their midst.

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We then traveled to a rural village in the Arenal region where we were the guests of honor during a visit to a local primary school supported by The Grand Circle Foundation. We were enthusiastically welcomed by the village's schoolchildren, who gave us a presentation on the folklore of their country—including traditional songs, dances, and costumes—after which we had the opportunity to interact with them one on one. (See picture) We enjoyed a discussion with the students, teachers and parents, who answered our questions about Costa Rica's education system—one of the best in Latin America. *“A portion of the profit from every Grand Circle trip goes to Grand Circle Foundation, which was founded by Alan & Harriet in 1992 to give back to the world we travel. Since then, we've pledged or donated more than \$97 million, and today, we support more than 200 schools in 60 countries around the globe”*. As frequent Grand Circle travelers, we rank opportunities to interact with local children like these as among the most memorable moments of our travels.

After this, we went to the home of a local family to meet our gracious hostess. She gave us a tour of her house and then we joined her in the kitchen to help prepare traditional tortillas. Costa Rican cuisine is simple, wholesome, and quite delicious. A typical meal features chicken, beef, or fish (sometimes grilled) served with tortillas, rice, and beans. We enjoyed the hospitality of our host and the opportunity to learn about everyday life and customs of rural Costa Rica. Our next adventure was a tour of a local pineapple farm. On this excursion, we enjoyed an in-depth look at the fields and facilities and learned about pineapple cultivation techniques throughout history, discovered how the Arenal region's fertile, volcanic soil nurtures these tropical plants, and enjoyed a taste of the “Fruit of Kings. We had a first-hand look at how the pineapples were graded, sorted and then packaged for shipment all over the world.

Day 6 started out with a Safari River Float tour. We slipped silently down the Penas Blancas River, in a boat with no motor to frighten off local animals. As we paddled lightly down this untouched waterway, a local guide talked about the wildlife and plants that we passed. We saw monkeys, crocodiles, tropical birds, iguanas, sloths, and colorful flowers. This was a truly unique photo opportunity, as well as a chance to learn about Costa Rica's storied ecology first hand. We then visited the town of La Fortuna. Known as the “front yard of the Arenal Volcano,” La Fortuna offered spectacular views of the beautifully cone-shaped Volcan Arenal (as it's called in Spanish), which had been one of the world's most active volcanoes since it awakened from a long dormancy in 1968. (See picture)

Later that afternoon, we headed to the organic farm of Don Juan Bautista, where we learned about the sustainable agricultural techniques being used to propel

Cont. from pg. 11

Costa Rican farming into the future during an exclusive Discovery Series event. During this visit, we also learned about the production of sugar cane. We ended the day with a dinner that featured ingredients fresh from the farm.

Day 7. We boarded our motor coach for Guanacaste. The journey took us through some stunning landscapes as we passed near Arenal Lake. Along the way, we stopped for an exclusive Discovery Series visit to a local family-owned horse ranch. Here, we learned more about the Costa Rican way of life as you get to know the resident family and their rich background in the art of horsemanship—including a demonstration in the unique skill of horse whispering. This was a very interesting horse show and the techniques used to calm down rescue horses who had been mistreated.

Day 8. After breakfast, we departed for the El Viejo Wetlands, which fringe Palo Verde National Park, we boarded a small watercraft to cruise through the wetlands' mangrove forest—a unique ecosystem of tropical trees growing in a saltwater marsh formed by a tidal estuary. Our guide helped us spot and identify some of the colorful plants and animals that dwell in this wetland sanctuary, including crocodiles, monkeys, anteaters, iguanas, coatis, and more than 300 species of birds. We saw numerous species of birds and many white-faced Capuchin monkeys. (See picture)

Day 9. Polly and I chose to join 2 other members of our group for an exciting half-day Canopy Tour. We rode a tour bus to this leafy locale, and then ascended into the very tops of the giant, tropical trees on a system of aerial platforms and cableways. This was a unique opportunity to observe the layers of canopy vegetation in the upper world of the forest and see this amazing and complex ecosystem up close, exploring recesses of the canopy that travelers have not had access to until very recently. It was also a chance to add an aspect of adventure to our trip as we enjoyed a thrilling descent through the upper forest along a series of sturdy ziplines, Charlie, a retired Air Force Pilot, Gay and I enjoyed the 11 segments of the zip line. It was exhilarating, and I did enjoy it, but I don't need to do it again. (See picture)

Day 10. We departed for Guanacaste for the scenic Puntarenas province on Costa Rica's Pacific coast. The Puntarenas region is home to many luxurious beach resorts, along with more than a dozen national parks and reserves, making it one of the nation's most environmentally preserved regions—no small feat in a country as green as Costa Rica. On our way to Puntarenas, we stopped for an exclusive Discovery Series event as the artisans of the village of Guaitil gave us an introduction to their ancient pottery-making traditions going back 5,000 years.

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These local craftspeople have perfected their art, which is known for the use of natural minerals to provide color. Potters also use local clay, though the clay mines may soon no longer be accessible, as land is bought by private companies. This was a fascinating glimpse into art and life in this region.

Day 11. This morning, we embarked on a cruise of a mangrove forest on the Tarcoles River. We cruised along this lush wilderness, we discovered the many ways in which mangroves contribute to their environment. The forest is a unique ecosystem of tropical trees growing in a saltwater marsh formed by a tidal estuary, and the trees provide a home for many kinds of fish and shellfish, as well as a hunting ground for larger predators such as crocodiles. As you float past the mangrove trees' sinuous, exposed roots, our guide helped us spot and identify some of the colorful plants and animals that dwell in this wetland sanctuary, including crocodiles, monkeys, anteaters, iguanas, coatis, and more than 300 species of birds. (See picture)

Day 12. We had the chance to discover the Manuel Antonio National Park, a critical habitat for migrating birds from the U.S. and Canada. Our tour of the park began with a nature walk. While comparatively small (just 1,700 acres), this lush park is home to several distinct ecosystems, each teeming with wildlife. The park includes four marvelous beaches, island bird sanctuaries, and a luxuriant rain forest. And perhaps because of its small size, enjoyed a morning full of wildlife sightings—including howler and Capuchin monkeys, sloths, coatis, and countless birds. We kept an eye out for the endangered squirrel monkey, as Manuel Antonio is one of only two of its habitats in the country., followed by time to relax on the beach and soak up some sun. We went for a swim with the chance to cool off.

Day 13. We began our journey back to San Jose. On the way, we stopped in La Garita for a tour of the botanical garden. We had a chance to learn more about the range of flora in Costa Rica. Orchids are some of the best-known flowers native to Costa Rica, and this plant, being very difficult to cultivate successfully, is coveted among gardeners the world over. We saw many varieties of these prized blossoms, and learned how to grow our own. Orchids bloom in this garden all year round, so we had the opportunity to see some impressive blossoms. There were also water gardens and walking trails that gave us the chance to get up close to the impressive range of plants in the garden, and to visit an aviary housing mainly rescued birds.

Day 14 we flew back to South Carolina.

More to follow?

Larry Jackson.

See all the beautiful pictures
on the following page No 14.



Costa Rican oxcart.



The Volcan Arenal.



Capuchin Monkey.



Larry zip-lining!!!



Macaw's in flight.



School visit.





An Old Friend

by Tom Anderson



Recently I received an email from Dwayne Williams, a 1966-67 Outlaw, who asked about putting an ad into the Outlaw Newsletter for a DVD about Army Aviation in Viet Nam which he and his grandson have produced. I responded that we normally do not solicit or even accept, advertisements for the Newsletter but I asked about his DVD. He went on to briefly describe the DVD and I was deeply interested in seeing it. He forwarded me a copy (which I paid for of course) and, after playing it, I was absolutely blown away, not only by the quality of the DVD but more specifically about the poignant, harrowing story it told.

Every aviation crew member has at least one Viet Nam combat experience that stands out above all others. In the case of helicopter flight crews, there were many to choose from since they played a major part in what became known as the “Helicopter War”.

The DVD is entitled “An Old Friend” and features the Vinh Long Outlaws exclusively, it begins with a young WO candidate leaving home and family for helicopter training at Fort Wolters. After graduation, he is immediately ordered to Viet Nam and is assigned to the 175th Outlaws in Vinh Long. Leap forward 50+ years. Now an old, ex-Army Aviator, he is driving past a country field where he spots a forlorn, decaying UH-1 sitting near a patch of trees. He stops to investigate and maybe even reconnect with *an old friend* with whom he shared so many stories. He walks through the field, opens the cockpit door, and sits down in the pilot’s seat. After touching several of the switches and gauges, his eye catches a small scrap of a red bandana, the same as was worn by an Outlaw platoon. He realizes he is sitting in an Outlaw Huey from years back. As he sits there, his mind goes back 50 years to vividly recall the Viet Nam combat assaults that he made in what could be this exact Outlaw aircraft!

The specific story recalls the Easter Sunday battle and the combat assault into LZ Alpha on March 26, 1967 as seen through the eyes of a young Army Aviator. Although that day’s battle is deeply embedded in Outlaw history and lore, the scenes depicted are intimately, and realistically, familiar to every pilot and crew member who lived through any number of similar actions during their tour with the Outlaws.

As the DVD ended, and the 50-year-old memories begin to fade, he steps out of the old Huey, says goodbye to that Old Friend, and returns to reality. Without disclosing the final scenes, the ending is particularly poignant for anyone who served in a helicopter unit in Viet Nam.

In the movie you’ll recognize many very familiar scenes from our Vinh Long compound, all from pictures taken by Dwayne and others who served at Vinh Long.

The genesis of the movie came from a short story Dwayne had written, primarily for his family. His grandson told him it would make a great movie, Dwayne was convinced, and the effort began. Dwayne has an old Army Aviator friend, living near Fort Wolters, TX who had assembled a large, private collection of Viet Nam era paraphernalia, to include helicopters! Then came months of planning, assembling movie props, locating Viet Nam era uniforms, creating Outlaw & Maverick nose art, making movie sets, assembling actors and crewmembers, and on and on!

Cont from pg15.

The movie itself is almost generic in nature because it could easily be the story of any of the thousands of Vietnam-era pilots who went through flight school at Fort Wolters, graduated, and almost immediately found themselves in Vietnam. For my part, I found that the most interesting part of Dwayne's description of how the movie came about, was that none of the young men, and women, involved in making *An Old Friend*, had any background in the movie business. The writing and making it was a very lengthy process, and definitely a family affair, but it was also a "labor of love"!

I thought it was a gripping, realistic and accurate recreation of the chaotic actions of those long-ago days. I was absolutely emotional when I finished watching.

And so, rather than have Dwayne place an "ad" in this Newsletter, I told him I would write an article about his efforts, let every Outlaw know of **An Old Friend**, and provide information on how one can purchase a copy. Dwayne is asking only \$20 a copy. He is forwarding any money received to his grandson and his business partner who, though they are not in the movie-making business, were dedicated to making this movie about Dwayne's experience in Viet Nam, not only to honor Dwayne but also all Outlaws and Mavericks of any year. (I think they succeeded). To obtain a copy of **An Old Friend**, please send \$20 to Dwayne Williams, at 3004 Spring Oak Place - Arlington, TX 76017. I can assure you, you will not be disappointed.

Tom Anderson

Robert Charles Guthrie, 71, a ten-year resident of Lake City, was called home to his Heavenly Father on Monday, October 30, 2017 with his wife was at his side. He was born on April 25, 1946 in Jacksonville, FL. He then lived 60 years in the Florida Keys. He enlisted in the United States Army, serving mostly as a door-gunner in helicopters in Vietnam. He was wounded under enemy fire and returned to the states where he served out the rest of his enlistment. He was awarded a Purple Heart, other medals and commendations, and was honorably discharged in October 1968. In later years, he was awarded a service connected disability compensation. He and his dad had a construction business and then they started a commercial fishing business in the FL Keys. He was preceded in death by his parents: Ralph Guthrie and Kathleen (Porter) Guthrie; his brother: Richard Guthrie all of Big Pine Key, FL

Robert is survived by his wife of 38 years, Marion (Thibeault) Guthrie, Lake City; one daughter, Wendy Peteck of Little Torch Key, FL; two step-sons: Williams Thibeault of Milton, NH, Jonathan Thibeault of Nottingham, NH; one step-daughter: Camella (Thibeault) Granara of Gulf Port, FL. Three grandchildren: Alicia Peteck of Portland, OR, Thomas Peteck of Menton, AL, and Spencer Peteck of Little Torch Key, FL. Seven step-grandchildren: William Thibeault, Jr., Brian Thibeault, Andrew Wigger, Sonya Blancato (Cory), Christyanna Umenhofer (Mike), all of NH; Shannon Waugh (Matthew) all of IL; Katrina Manolouis of MA and four step-great grandchildren. There are not any local services. In the early spring family will have a private ceremony near Big Pine Key, FL. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to the Serenity Place/Hospice unit or to the volunteer services of the Lake City VA Medical Center.



Gosta Peter Fredriksson

January 12, 1943 - October 18, 2017

AZLE - Gosta Peter "Pete" Fredriksson, 74, completed his journey on earth on Saturday, Oct. 18, 2017.

Peter was born Jan. 12, 1943, in Glen Cove, New York. He was a beloved husband, father, friend and grandfather. His passions included listening to music, watching TV, traveling and spending time with his family and friends. His other passion was aircrafts, he loved working on them and watching them fly.

His wealth of knowledge about life, history, politics, and religions was admired by those who had the pleasure of learning from him!

His parents were Gosta and Greta Fredriksson who immigrated to New York from Sweden at a very young age. He went to school in Sea Cliff, Long Island. At the age of 12, he moved to Sweden with his parents and attended school for one year. He and his parents moved back to the United States landing in Mount Dora, Fla., where he graduated from high school in 1961. Shortly after graduation he moved to Miami, and went to Emery Riddle. In 1964, he enlisted in the Army and was a helicopter crew chief in Vietnam. He proudly served his country. After his discharge he moved to Fort Worth, Texas working at several aircraft facilities while attending University of North Texas. After receiving his BS in Industrial Arts he taught high school in Denton, Texas for several years. He then moved back to Fort Worth and started his career at Lockheed Martin working on the many types of aircrafts, such as the F-16, F-22 and F-35.

He was preceded in death by his mother and father.

Survivors: Wife, Carolyn; sons, Craig (Dolly) Fredriksson and Andy (Chasiti) Goss; daughters, Carrie (Monty) Johnson and Sherrie Goss; seven granddaughters, Britanni, Jocelyn, Lauren, KateLynn, Emma, Lexi and Sheridan; great-granddaughter, Lillith; great-grandson, Aiden; and numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, sisters-in-law and brothers-in-law.



3rd. Qtr.- 2017- VLOA Treasurers Report by Ernest Estes.



Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)	Reunion 2016 Silent Auction payment
Balance effective 01/01/2017	\$25.00
\$34,975.10	Sub Total
REVENUES:	\$1,985.00
Dues - Annual	Annual Dues (AD): - 2017
\$375.00	Amilio Alvarado
Dues - Lifetime	\$25.00
\$1,700.00	Frederick W. Jacobs
Dues - Associate Lifetime	\$25.00
\$0.00	Richard M. Dyer
Sales & Miscellaneous	\$25.00
	Norris Marshall
\$1,985.00	\$25.00
TOTAL:	Michael Colaneri
\$4,060.00	\$50.00
EXPENDITURES:	Dale A. Roland
Newsletters, inventory, administration, miscellaneous	\$25.00
\$1,864.32	Harold E. Feathers
TOTAL:	\$25.00
\$1,864.32	Donald R. Hawk
CASH BALANCE - 6/30/2017	\$25.00
\$37,170.78	Mark W. Fontenot
Details: 3 month period - 1/1/2017 thru 9/30/2017	\$25.00
Revenues Detail	Eddie McGuire
Sale of Ourlaws coins	\$25.00
\$1,960.00	Donald S. Palmer
	\$25.00

Gordon K. Whitehead	Dennis J. Baker \$100.00
\$25.00	Stephen T. Bebel \$100.00
John W. White, Jr.	William E. Skelley \$100.00
\$25.00	Sub Total \$1,700.00
George M. Pettie	Associate Lifetime Membership (ALM): -
\$25.00	2017
Sub Total	Subtotal \$0.00
\$375.00	Total Revenues - 9 month period 2017
Lifetime Memberships (LM): - 2017	\$4,060.00
James A. "Spanky" Reese	Expenses Details
\$100.00	Bob Sharp - 4th Qtr. 2016 - Newsletter
Michael R. "Mike" Brady	\$591.68
\$100.00	Bob Sharp - 1st Qtr. 2017 - Newsletter
Richard W. Payton	Bob Sharp - 2nd Qtr. 2017 - Newsletter
\$100.00	Bob Sharp - 3rd Qtr. 2017 - Newsletter
Steven J. Hopkins	Admin - Postage, Deposit Tickets, Media,
\$100.00	Supplies \$40.44
Thomas C. Pratt	Paper bank statements \$1.50
\$100.00	Account checks \$17.90
Fred M. Rose	Purchase Outlaw coins (reimbursement to Jim
\$100.00	Donnelly) \$943.42
John E. Doyle	Stop Payment on Tim Cox check \$25.00
\$100.00	Commercial Bank fee on stop payment check
William B. Sturtevant \$100.00	\$4.50
Thomas. R. Overeynder \$100.00	Webhost annual renewal \$239.88
Joseph J. O'Neill \$100.00	Total Expenses - 9 month period 2017
Ivan W. White \$100.00	\$1,864.32
David M. Osborne \$100.00	INCOME (LOSS) - 9 month period ending
Richard H. Kimble \$100.00	09/30/2017 \$2,195.68
Roger D. Shook \$100.00	

Respectfully, Frank Estes.

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)
 c/o Robert J. Sharp, Editor.
 17489 US Hwy. 65
 Albert Lea, Minnesota. 56007
 handybobsharp@gmail.com
 Cell 507-828-3062 –H Ph.507-373-6452



Fall -2017

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” and “Bushwhackers” armed platoons) or any affiliated unit at any time between August 1964 and the present. These units include the 62nd Aviation Company, A Company 502nd Aviation Battalion, 175th Aviation Company, B Troop 1-158th Aviation Regiment (Iraq), 150th Transportation Detachment (“Roadrunners”), 28th Signal Detachment, and 25th 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 and relatives is available for a \$100 one-time donation. Higher levels of Lifetime Memberships are available; contact the National Director at: fbi_jim@hotmail.com. To pay initial or renewal membership dues for this calendar year, please complete and forward this form, with dues payment, to:

VLOA-Treasurer: c/o Frank Estes, 407 Country Club Drive, Ozark, AL 36360.

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: _____