



Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

Vinh Long Outlaws Spring 2019 Newsletter

January-March

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

1st. Quarter 2019

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National Director's Corner

By- Bert Rice



What a wonderful reunion in Charleston, SC! Many thanks to all who helped plan, coordinate and conduct the reunion. This page is not big enough to go into specific requirements and the myriad tasks that had to be accomplished to make this reunion such a resounding success. However, I must extend hearty thanks on behalf of all of us to Jim and Vickie Donnelly for their superb effort and hard work. I call them our "miracle team!" And, I am so very grateful that they expressed their willingness to assist me during my tenure – what a relief that is!

And to everyone else who were key players in reunion planning and execution you have our gratitude. I want to especially thank Tom Anderson for putting together the silent auction, Frank Estes for serving as Treasurer and giving a wonderful message at the worship service, Phil Van Alst for keeping the website current, Doug Wilson who is the Secretary and maintains the roster, Bob Sharp for publishing a very fine newsletter, Terry Kachadourian who is our Distaff Advisor and to all Members at Large who have made significant contributions. All do much more than what I have listed which helped make the reunion a success and serves to make VOLA a viable organization.

At the reunion, we had Bob Allen volunteer to plan and coordinate the 2020 silent auction in San Antonio, TX, and Ernie Isbell agreed to serve as the VLOA Chaplain. Filling these two positions is critical to the financial and spiritual health and well-being of the organization. What a blessing it is to have such dedicated members.

Finally, reunions are not worth much unless you have good attendance by its members. So, to all who were able to attend thank you very much for coming and sharing with others. I learned more than I had expected. I really enjoyed the varied stories to include the humorous ones! Humor adds to the event and helps develop that close bond that exists between us. Thanks for your attendance and enthusiasm! To those were unable to attend this reunion, I hope you will strongly consider attending the next reunion in San Antonio. It will be another fun gathering!

In future newsletters I will share a little more about myself. I take on this job of National Director seriously and will do my best to perpetuate the VLOA. It is a wonderful organization and I am honored to be a part of the organization. I look forward to hearing from you and reading your articles. I am sure Bob Sharp would welcome your input.

My first order of business is to find a good event planner. Jim Donnelly and I have some ideas that we are working on and will keep you apprised of progress. Until next time, I wish you good health, long life and happiness. God Bless!

Bert Rice

ARE YOU READY!!

Sept. 2020 !!

Save the Date !!

VLOA Reunion !!

San Antonio, TX!!

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

- Bert Rice, - National Director
Odenton, MD.
- Irwin Katz,- Deputy Director
Buffalo Grove, IL.
- Doug Wilson, -Secretary
Costa Mesa, CA
- Frank Estes, -Treasurer
Ozark, AL
- Jim Donnelly, -Historian
Virginia Beach, VA
- Bill Hensinger, -Member-At-Large
Palmyra, PA.
- Irwin Katz, Member-At-Large
Buffalo Grove, IL
- Eric Ragsdale, Member-At-Large
Mesa, AZ.
- Bob Allen, Member-At-Large
Piqua, OH.
- Fred Rosenberg, Member-At-Large
Leesburg, FL.
- Bob Sharp, -Newsletter Editor.
Albert Lea, MN.
- Phil Van Alst, -Web Master
Hau'ula, HI..
- Ernest Isbell, -Chaplain
Highland Village, TX..
- Terry Khachadourian, -Distaff Advisor
Lilburn, GA.
- Tom Anderson, -Permanent Advisor
Springfield, VA.
- Ernie Isbell, -Ex Officio (2002-04)
Highland Village, TX.
- Tim Bisch, -Ex Officio (2004-06)
Huntsville, AL
- Joe Clelan, -Ex Officio (2006-08)
Mechanicsburg, PA. (deceased)
- Frank Estes, -Ex Officio (2008-10)
Ozark, AL.
- Bob Koonce, -Ex Officio (2010-12)
Tacoma, WA.
- Angelo Spelios, -Ex Officio (2012-14)
Weatherford, TX.
- Larry Jackson, -Ex Officio (2014-2016)
Hilton Head Island, SC.
- James Donnelly, -Ex Officio (2016-2018)
Virginia Beach, VA..

**Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)
FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

| | |
|--|------------------------|
| Balance effective 01/01/2019 | \$30,019.42 |
| <u>REVENUES:</u> | |
| Dues - Annual (2) | \$50.00 |
| Dues - Lifetime (5) | \$500.00 |
| Reunion - coin sales | \$421.00 |
| Reunion - Silent Auction (119 items) | \$4,264.00 |
| Reunion - Verbal Auction (2 items) | \$175.00 |
| Reunion - 50/50 raffle | \$700.00 |
| TOTAL: | \$6,110.00 |
| <u>EXPENDITURES:</u> | |
| Newsletter | \$713.11 |
| Reunion printing | \$81.99 |
| Bank account statement | \$3.00 |
| TOTAL: | \$798.10 |
| INCOME (LOSS) - 3 months ending 3/31/2019 | \$5,311.90 |
| <u>CASH BALANCE</u> - as of 3/31/2019 | \$35,331.32 |



Armenian Republic Day—May 28, 2019,
Celebrated annually as a national holiday marking the anniversary of the First Armenian Republic in 1918 bringing an end to the Armenian genocide . sub.by member.Harry Khachadourian



OMG, I'M RICH!

Silver in the hair, gold in the teeth, crystals in the kidneys, sugar in the blood, lead in the butt, iron in the arteries and an inexhaustible supply of natural gas. I never though I would accumulate such wealth!





A Final Word or Two

Jim Donnelly (out-going national director)



Hello to all. As your longest serving Director (I think), I would like to again thank you for your support and understanding during the last 30 months. I know the reunion cancellation and the following refund process was a challenging time for the more than two dozen members who found themselves unable to attend the rescheduled reunion in March.

The reunion itself had a few bumps but I think we managed to smooth them out and I hope all who attended had a good time. No rain, that in itself is a minor miracle.

I would like to give my special thanks to Tom Anderson for his near heroic efforts putting on the silent auction. Also, a special thanks for all the help and guidance that Frank Estes provided me. Ernie Isbell did a wonderful job on the 50/50 and it's drawing. Without these three the reunion would not have been a success.

I look forward to the 2020 reunion in San Antonio and pledge my full support to Bert in his upcoming efforts. I am sure that it will be a great one. Lori Hausenfluke has volunteered to help in the planning efforts having already planned a reunion there years ago. Lori was a B Troop pilot from 2003 to 2008 and is our Member at Large for that period. Her help will be much appreciated.

Life here in Virginia Beach for Vickie and myself just keeps rolling along. We both have hobbies that keep us busy when we so choose. I received a new rifle for Christmas which is rated one of the best in the world so I have been shooting holes in paper quite a bit now that the weather is warm. I am very happy with it and thankful to Santa. I also received a present of a new massage chair so I can relax after a tough day of well, "nothing."

Vickie has taken up another hobby, quilting and so Santa brought her a new sewing machine although she does much of it by hand. She has made some beautiful quilts already and a few are hanging on our walls. Now that Spring is here, we like so many of you, find ourselves out in the yard and garden working until we drop. That doesn't take much in my case! But you've got to love this weather.

Well I just wanted to let you know there is life after reunion planning and that the VLOA is in excellent hands and set to prosper for years to come. I'm still here should you need anything.

Thanks again and stay well and safe, see you all in less than eighteen months in San Antonio.

Respectfully, Jim Donnelly.



OUTLAWS AWARDS AT CHARLESTON ROUNDUP

The VLOA Awards Program began several years ago, to recognize those members who step forward to help the VLOA in supporting, promoting, and administering to the goals and objectives of the organization.

Awards were developed to recognize two categories of awardees: The *Outstanding Outlaws Award* goes to those who demonstrate service above that expected for the position the person holds, and the *Director's Award* is the VLOA's highest award and for that individual member or member and spouse for the service to the VLOA that is considered above all others in consideration.

This year's awards were given to the following:

Doug Wilson, *Outstanding Outlaws Award (2nd award)* – for his work as Secretary, keeper of the official VLOA roster (which now contains 514 active members), and backup VLOA Historian.

Phil Van Alst, *Outstanding Outlaws Award* – for the work he has done to take over the duties as Outlaws Website Manager over two years ago and expedite updates and adding new information in a timely fashion.

Bob & Gloria Sharp, *Director's Award* – for continuous and professional publication of the quarterly *Outlaws' Newsletter*, finding ways to contain production costs as the quantity published increased by 34 percent, and accumulating articles, photos, and information that make the publication relevant to VLOA members.

Jim & Vicki Donnelly, *Special Outstanding Outlaws Award*, for dealing with cancelling last September's Outlaws Roundup and planning, coordinating, and conducting a rescheduled Outlaws Roundup this March.

Outgoing National Director, Jim Donnelly presented two special stained-glass "Eagle" awards to Tom Anderson and Frank Estes for their behind-the-scenes support and assistance to Jim and Vicki Donnelly during their recovery from a cancelled reunion and efforts required for a recovery reunion. Congratulations to you all.

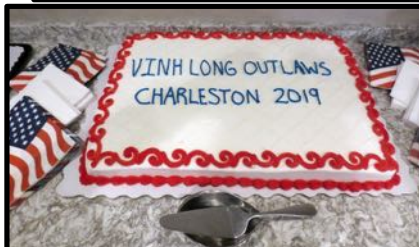
CHARLESTON'S OUTLAWS REGISTRATION



OUTLAWS HOSPITALITY ROOM



OUTLAWS WELCOME DINNER





Importance of VLOA Membership

by Frank Estes

There are several reasons why former Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, Roadrunners, 28th Signal, 25th Infantry Division door gunners, and other attached unit members should be dues paying members of the VLOA.

Let me first provide a little background on our membership by discussing the types of memberships, number of dues paying members, number who are not paying dues, and where our funds are spent. Then, I'll close with a discussion of who is financially supporting the VLOA

The VLOA has six membership types: Charter, General, Active, Honorary, and Associate, with Life Membership (one-time dues of \$100) and Regular Membership (annual dues of \$25) available for Charter, General, and Active members. Anyone desiring to be an Associate or Honorary member may be one for a donation equal to the dues level required for Life Member or Regular Member. Annual dues are required to be paid in January of each year, but records are kept as of the date received, and membership cards are issued with expiration date as of the date the annual dues were received by the Treasurer.

Currently, our roster contains 563 names with 528 of these being veterans. We have 175 who have paid Life Member dues, 9 who are current with Regular (annual) Member dues, and 341 who have not paid dues for this year. Also, we have 34 spouses or family members of veterans who have donated the equivalent of Life Member dues and are considered to be Associate Life Members. As you can see, we have 341 members who are not current on their dues. If these members only paid the annual dues renewal, that would be an additional annual income of \$8525.

Funds received by the VLOA pay for a number of critical annual expenses: producing the quarterly *Outlaws Newsletter* (approximately \$2500 annually); protecting the VLOA website's three domain names (\$50 annually); paying for the web-host company (approximately \$250 annually); cost of awards (\$300-500 every other year); and, administrative expenses such as postage and office materials (approximately \$150 per year). So, the total estimated costs to run the VLOA per year is approximately \$2900-3200.

Each of our biennial reunions produces about \$4000 to \$4500 of revenue, but this year was a banner year with revenue being about \$5600. Still that is barely enough to cover two years of expenses. That is why this article is bringing this to your attention.

The members who are carrying the financial burden of the VLOA are those who pay their membership dues and those who attend our biennial reunion, purchase 50/50 raffle tickets, donate and bid on Silent Auction items, and bid on Verbal Auction items. Because of these individuals, the quarterly *Outlaws Newsletter*, website, and biennial reunions operate without disruption. Newsletters are currently sent to everyone on the VLOA official roster; 563 former members of the Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, Roadrunners, 28th Signal Detachment, 25th ID door gunners, and support personnel, AND Honorary Members.

We encourage those who are not currently dues paying VLOA members to strongly consider becoming a Life Member, or as a minimum, pay annual Regular Member dues. By paying your dues, you can continue receiving your quarterly *Outlaws Newsletter*, ensure our website continues in operation - - - giving you immediate information about Outlaws activities, and ensure our biennial reunions continue unabated. Won't you join us? A membership application form is contained on the last page Thank you so much!

MORE OUTLAWS WELCOME DINNER



OUTLAWS ON THE BUSES



OUTLAWS TOURING AROUND CHARLESTON





Charleston Reunion Was Fantastic!

Yes, the Charleston Outlaw reunion was indeed fantastic. Not just because of the planned dinners, travel venues, welcome bag gifts and the other trappings that accompany reunions. It was because no one knew everybody but everybody knew somebody !

Knowing somebody you knew half a century ago, and being able to again share a little bit of ourselves with each other, even for a few days, is why the reunion was fantastic! You could hear it in the laughter from all around the Hospitality room. And you could SEE it in the many hushed tones of conversations between those “somebodies” from all those years back.

We all know that you can't sit down with a non-veteran and talk of your experiences from your Viet Nam service. There is a bonding among those who served together, especially in a combat environment, that non-veterans can never be a part of. Sometimes words like “bonding” and “healing” may seem like clichés, but those feelings are real when a group such as the Outlaws get together after so many years. And, it makes for a fantastic experience!

Everyone reacts to their military service in different ways. Some hold their feeling in and find it difficult to express those feelings. Reunions provide a way for those feelings to express themselves just by being with someone who was a part of your younger life. Verbalizing our memories, with someone we know who we shared that military time with, can help bring out many suppressed feelings.

Certain things are likely true for all of us who spent time in Viet Nam. Probably none of us had altruistic intentions when we went off to war. We went because we had elected to serve our country when it called. However, serving in Viet Nam gave us the honorable title of “veteran”. Most of us probably developed a better knowledge of what the word “patriotism” means, and we feel a higher degree of that patriotism. Most of us, inside, have a feeling of immense pride when we see our country's flag pass by in a parade, or flying on the court house lawn, because “we served”. We wear the caps, badges, pins on our “veteran” caps to show the pride we have displaying our “veteran” status.

The reunion Hospitality Room proved to be a fantastic gathering place. Far more laughs than tears. And, seeing those once-young men who now share the experience of going through frustrating body configurations we never thought we'd have. But we found we were among friends, even though we did not know everyone, but we knew someone.

Many Charleston attendees were veterans of earlier Outlaw reunions. From a show of hands at the Farewell Dinner, it appeared that 30- 40% of attendees were first-timers, which speaks well for the future of the VLOA and more fantastic future reunions.

Yes, the Outlaw reunion was indeed FANTASTIC. Let's do it again in 2020 in San Antonio.



OUTLAWS RIVERBOAT CRUISE & DINNER



Thanks to the generosity of all who attended our Charleston Outlaws Round-up. We raised over \$5000 that will keep our organization financially sound for the coming two years. THANK YOU!!!!

STEPPING UP

by Frank Estes

Most of the successful organizations survive and grow when members believe in giving of their individual time, energy, and money for the good of the organization. When they "step up" to fill a vacant position, that very action could very well ensure the organization continues to operate at peak performance. The VLOA has experienced this "stepping up" by many members from the very beginning and continues to experience it even up through the just completed Charleston Outlaws Roundup.

In 1997 and 1998, a few of the original Outlaws came together to see if they could find as many of the original Outlaws as possible, for the purpose of getting together just one time to renew old acquaintances in a spirit of camaraderie. That happened in 2000 in Branson, MO. Those attending had such a great time together that they voted to continue the Roundups every two years. To do that, some stepped up to fill much needed positions to permanently form what is now the VLOA.

In 2002, the San Antonio Roundup took place. The attendees decided to hold the next Roundup at Fort Rucker for the 40th Reunion of the Outlaws deployment to Vietnam. At the 40th Anniversary Roundup, the VLOA opened its doors to all Outlaws year-groups through 1972. The VLOA expanded its officers' and directors' positions; again, members stepped up to fill the new positions.

In 2006, the Outlaws went to Pigeon Forge, TN. In 2008, it was Hershey, PA. In 2010, Nashville, TN. In 2012, Savannah, GA. In 2014, a 50th Anniversary Roundup in Washington D.C. In 2016, back to Branson, MO. For and during all these Roundups, we saw member after member step up to perform a task, fill a position, give time behind the scenes, and help conduct VLOA business and activities.

Between 2014 and 2018, the number of officer and director positions expanded. Once again, members stepped up to fill the positions. The stepping up continued at the Charleston Roundup. Tom Anderson previously stepped up to plan and conduct the massively successful Silent Auction. Ernie Isbell (our very first National Director) stepped up to be the Chaplain. Bob Allen volunteered to plan and conduct the Silent Auction at the San Antonio, TX Roundup in 2020. Lori Darling Hausenfluke stepped up to fill a new Director-At-Large position representing the Outlaws of B Troop 1st Battalion 158th Aviation Regiment "Outlaws" of Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Finally, many others who filled positions during the 2016-2019 timeframe agreed to continue in their positions.

Examples of those members continuing to serve in positions they have held are:

Irwin Katz stepped up from a Director-At-Large position to be the Deputy National Director.

Doug Wilson continues as the Secretary.

Bob Sharp continues to amaze us with his masterful production of the Outlaws Newsletter every quarter, which is a vital aspect of keeping our members informed and coming to our biennial Roundups. It is no easy task to pull the newsletter together and get it out to over 500 members, but he did so while undergoing cancer treatments.

Phil Van Alst continues keeping the website current, which serves to keep our membership informed and hear back from those visiting the website.

Terry Kachadourian continues representing the distaff side of our organization even though she continues working full-time.

Bill Hensinger, Walter Cieslak, Eric Ragsdale, Bob Allen, and Fred Rosenberg continue serving as year-group Directors-At-Large.

This "stepping up" is why the Outlaws has been so successful in every reunion. This is why our VLOA has gone from just over 100 members in 2000 to over 528 veteran members and 64 honorary members on the current roster. This is why our VLOA went from a handful of members donating \$100 each to start the VLOA treasury, to today where the treasury is currently over \$35,000.

I want to finish by recognizing the group that "steps up" every two years to keep the VLOA financially sound: the Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, Road Runners, 28th Signal, 25th ID door gunners, and other support personnel who attend the biennial Roundups, renew their memberships annually or join as Life Members, donate and spend money on Silent Auction items and the 50/50 raffle, participate in the Roundup's activities, and most importantly, matriculate among other year-groups and share stories and build our camaraderie across the 1964 through 1972 years spent in Vietnam.

From the bottom of my heart, thanks to all of you who have stepped up in the past and present. Without you, the VLOA cannot survive for very long.

OUTLAW AWARDS & SILENT AUCTION



THANKS to all Reunion attendees for your continued support!!!

REMINDER
The next Outlaws Roundup will be in San Antonio, TX in early September 2020. Mark your calendar.





Some after-thoughts on the Silent Auction



The Silent Auction is always one of main attractions at the Outlaw reunions. The recent Outlaw Silent Auction at the Charleston reunion was a smashing success from every stand point. The number of individual item donors **31**, exceeded any previous donor total. The number of individual items donated by those 31 people was more than **120** ! Another record breaker.

As people checked in at the Registration desk, in their Welcome bag they found their personal BID Number, to be used when they bid on an item. Bid numbers were used so that other individuals who were also bidding on the same item, would not know who they were bidding against. A total of **119** individuals with Bid Numbers were registered. While a number of couples used only one of their two bid numbers to bid, and some people just plain didn't see anything they desperately needed, or wanted a total of **102** individuals put their bid number on one or more items.

Our total item count was somewhat skewed when a number of people brought items for the Silent Auction without first notifying us that they had a donation. Every item was ultimately placed on a table for bid, accompanied by a valid Bid Sheet. In the future, it would be helpful if you have an item to bring with you, and have not entered it into the list of Auction items, please let the Coordinator know so he/she can make sure all the proper processes are made to help get it sold..

Of course, not everyone won the bidding on hoped-for items that they had bid on. With the final 15 minutes to bid closing time being announced at 5-minute intervals, a subtle rush was noted to place a last-minute bid on their hoped-for items. At the 5-minute-to-closing time, each minute was called out. A somewhat more hectic flurry was noted on the last-minute bidding time for several items. Disappointment reigned for several losing bidders.

All Bid Sheets were immediately picked up from the tables after closing time. (A few complaints were voiced by some who said they personally saw individuals voting after the closing time. We had to think that no one of our Outlaws would stoop that low.) Then began the tedious process of going through each individual Bid Sheet to record the winning bidders. Many bidders had bid on several items. Each of those individual items, and the winning bid AMOUNT had to be recorded against the winning bidders name. Then each bidder's total bid amounts had to be tallied and placed in a column sequenced by bid numbers, so that when it came time to pay up, their totals could easily be found.

We experienced one interesting incident. Somehow, the driver of one of the buses, found his way into the Hospitality Room, liked a few items he saw on the tables, and decided to bid on them!!! Not having a bid number, of course, he merely printed his "name" on the Bid Sheets and kept going down the line. When it was discovered that he was Injecting himself into the process, he was asked to leave We then had to try to locate every Bid Sheet on which he had placed his name and restore good order to the Auction process. This incident did have an effect when those whose number was already on the Bid Sheet found that, at pay-up time, there were a few questions of who actually had the final bid. After some discussion, hopefully we made everyone happy. (A lesson learned there !)

So, now that you've read all the boring little details of how many, how much, why, who, etc. you're likely wondering just how successful the Auction was. The bottom line, after all the incidents, occurrences, bidding wars, disappointments, etc. have been resolved, the total revenue brought into the Outlaw treasury was a whopping **\$4,264** ! The most revenue from an Outlaw Silent Auction from any previous Auction. The Outlaw treasury is feeling quite smug about its full tummy.

From those of us who coordinated all the Auction actions, starting in early 2017 when we first announced the 2018 (aka 2019) a hearty THANK YOU for all your donations, bidding, buying and taking home the wonderful "treasures" you came home with.

The 2020 Outlaw Reunion is already on the horizon. Bob Allen has stepped up to coordinate the Silent Auction for that reunion to be held in San Antonio. Please give Bob the same wonderful support you have shown for the recent Reunions. Thank you. Tom Anderson.

OUTLAWS FAREWELL DINNER



The Back Pew

By: Ernest Isbell



I am pleased to once again take on the role of Chaplain for the VLOA. I am not a Minister or a Preacher but I am proud to be called a Christian. My belief in Jesus Christ started a long time ago and has been reinforced by my marriage of almost 60 years to my wife Linda and by many things that I experienced while serving in Viet Nam. Here is a story for your consideration about a day in my life during my third tour in Viet Nam.

It was a bright spring day in March 1972, and I was flying with Major John Hatcher on a routine resupply mission for a rifle company in the 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division. The company was searching a tunnel complex approximately 40 miles northwest of Saigon. At the time I was the S-3 of the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion (Reinforced) and John Hatcher was the commander of B Company, 229th assault Helicopter Battalion (Reinforced). We were to trade jobs in the next week and this mission was a part of my orientation before taking command.

We were accompanied that day by a Pink Team consisting of an OH-6 Loach and an AH-1G Cobra. Both were flying low over the jungle and providing cover for us. We were hovering approximately 120 feet above ground and just above tree top level while dropping crates of rifle ammunition and rations. At the same time, we were lowering a sack of hand grenades by rope so that they would not scatter in the jungle. The Infantry company's supply support specialist was lowering the grenade sack while sitting in the back of our aircraft. The rifle company had formed a large circle in the jungle in order to avoid being injured by the falling supplies.

I was in contact with the rifle company commander via FM radio and with our cover aircraft by UHF radio. Suddenly an enemy soldier directly below us opened fire with an AK47 rifle. We heard the rounds hitting the bottom of our aircraft and the young supply specialist reeled back after being hit in the head. The bag of grenades was still attached to an D ring in the cargo area. The Infantry commander shouted "Pull out log bird, you are taking fire". At the same time the Pink Team leader shouted "Pull out log bird – you are ON FIRE". I checked the instruments and told John Hatcher that everything was in the green. He acknowledged my information and told me we were proceeding to Fire Support Base Hall. This was approximately a ten minute flight.

I switched our transponder to EMERGENCY, switched our radios to the EMERGENCY CHANNEL, and made the following transmission." MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, ARMY

Contd. From pg. 14

HELICOPTER 229 ON FIRE PROCEEDING TO FIRE SUPPORT BASE HALL". Saigon Approach Control came up on guard channel and acknowledged our broadcast and asked me to turn off the transponder emergency mode and told us that we were on his radar. I told him we were going to FSB Hall, which he acknowledged.

I told the crew to cut the rope and drop the bag of grenades, which they did. They were providing aid to the supply specialist and we were still in the green for all instruments. I looked for a clearing in which to land but saw none. At this time John Hatcher had the aircraft showing 130 knots. The UH1H max airspeed was 120. We didn't slow down. During this time an Air Force C130 aircraft in the vicinity of Saigon asked for our position. I did not know the coordinates for Fire Base Hall and my map was a one to one million scale map of South Viet Nam. I told him our situation and we had no further conversation. In retrospect I have often thought about his offer to help but as far as I know there was nothing he could have done.

We had been flying approximately five minutes at max airspeed plus and I was concerned about the potential for actually being on fire. I asked the crew chief to get out on the skids and see if he could find any evidence of fire. He did as I asked and reported nothing on fire that he could see. A couple of minutes later we saw FSB Hall. It was about 3 acres of cleared jungle with two artillery tubes and an Infantry company for defense. Their position was reinforced with rows of concertina wire and a command detonated mine field. We were too close and too fast. We overshot the landing pad and landed in the mine field. I simply turned off the fuel and reduced the throttle to off. The fuel in the lines ran out and the engine died.

I jumped out of the aircraft looking for the wounded specialist. He wasn't anywhere I could see. About that time a UH1H that had followed us in lifted off the helipad with the specialist on board. He was flown to FSB Mace where the medics removed the bullet just under the skin on the right side of his head. They patched the skin and he was OK with only minor injuries.

This event was truly a harrowing experience with the potential for being a disaster for the crew and others. Both the pilots and co-pilots seats had been hit in the bottom three time each. No injuries. We were not on fire. The bullets coming through the belly of the aircraft hit a fuel cell pump for the belly tanks and the smoke was actually JP-4 that was leaking and turning to mist. The mist resembled smoke as it poured out the bottom of the aircraft. The engine had been hit three times but none of the hits caused serious damage. As it turned out the aircraft was recovered, repaired and returned to service.

In conclusion, this incident was only one of thousands of stories about our aircrews doing their job and trusting in their training and skills to pull them and others through. Some have said we were lucky. In a way that was true.

But as a Christian, I prefer to think that God and his Son Jesus Christ were watching out for us that day. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

God Bless All Who Read This.

Ernie Isbell, VLOA Chaplin

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Spring-2019

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: bert07@comcast.net 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: _____