



Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

"www.vinhlongoutlaws.com"

Vinh Long Outlaws Spring/Summer 2023 Newsletter

January-April

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

1st. Quarter 2023

Inside this Issue:

National Directors Corner.	Pg.1-2
VLOA Treasurers Financial report.	Pg.3
Tribute to Tom Anderson.	Pg.4
Tribute Cont.	Pg.5
Fort Rucker-Renamed.	Pg. 6
Rucker to Novosel.	Pg.7
WO-4 Novosel.	Pg.8
Do you remember when?	Pg. 9
That Old Morning Report. Tom A.	Pg.10
The Final instructions. Frank E.	Pg.11
Vietnam Snail Mail-Ivan White.	Pg.12
The Back Pew. Ernie Isbell.	Pg.13
Membership/Dues.	Pg.14
The 150th. Old Timers. Doug W.	Pg.15 /16
New Crew-Chief. Doug Wilson	Pg.17
Post Vietnam Careers.-Phil Van Alst	Pg.18 /20
Obituaries.	Pg.21 /23

National Director's Corner

By- **Bob Allen**



Greetings from our National Director:

Spring has definitely arrived, Easter has been celebrated, and the V.L.O.A. continues to move forward with planning for our 60th anniversary reunion in Nashville, Tennessee. September, 2024, promises to be an exciting and enjoyable opportunity for our entire unit family. Planning is being finalized for an appropriate hotel, and many wonderful excursions/outings are being selected for your participation.

Our Deputy National Director, Ivan White, and his wife Sheila, were able to join Shari and I as we investigated what Nashville might be able to offer us during a site visit at the end of March. Nashville is vibrant with many attractions and historical landmarks and is a wonderful location to host the celebration of our 60th anniversary gathering. While we never know what the future will hold, I hope you will continue to plan on being there so that we can celebrate in both high attendance and high spirit.

At the beginning of March, Shari and I took a cruise through the eastern Caribbean and had a wonderful time of replenishing and celebration. Our 50th anniversary tour began with that cruise and we visited the Virgin Islands, West Indies and others as we sailed for 11 days. The weather was always sunny and in the 80's, the cruise was delightful and relaxing, and we spent quality time both on and off the ship as we ported at eight different locations.

(Cont. on Pg.2)

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Bob Allen, - National Director
Columbus, Ohio.

Ivan White- Deputy Director
French Village, MO.

Doug Wilson, -Secretary
Costa Mesa, CA

Frank Estes, -Treasurer
Ozark, AL.

Bob Sharp, -Newsletter Editor.
Albert Lea, MN.

Phil Van Alst, -Web Master
Hau'ula, HI.

Ernest Isbell, -Chaplain
Denton, TX..

Jim Donnelly, -Historian
Virginia Beach, VA.

Ernie Isbell -Mem-At-Lge. (64-65)
Denton, TX.

Walter Cieslak- Mem-At-Lge (66-67)
Darian, WI.

Eric Ragsdale, Mem-At-Lge (68-69)
Mesa, AZ.

Position Open, Mem-At-Lge (70-71)

Fred Rosenberg, Mem-At-Lge (72-75)
Leesburg, FL.

Lorie Hausenfluke M-At-Lge (03-08)
Hedenheimer, TX.

Terry Khachadourian, Distaff Adv.
Lilburn, GA.

Tom Anderson, -Permanent Advisor.
(1998-2023), Spfld, VA. (Decd.)

Al Iller -Ex. Offico (2000-2002)
Fayetteville, AR.

Ernie Isbell, -Ex Officio(2002-2004)
Denton, TX.

Tim Bisch, -Ex Officio (2004-2006)
Huntsville, AL

Joe Clelan, -Ex Officio (2006-2008)
Mechanicsburg, PA. (deceased)

Frank Estes, -Ex Officio (2008-2010)
Ozark, AL.

Bob Koonce, -Ex Officio (2010-2012)
Tacoma, WA.

Angelo Spelios, -Ex Officio (2012-2014)
Weatherford, TX.

Larry Jackson, -Ex Officio (2014-2016)
Hilton Head Island, SC.

James Donnelly, -Ex Officio (2016-2019)
Virginia Beach, VA..

Bert Rice-Ex-Officio (2019-2022)
Odenton, MD.

(Cont. from Pg.1.)

Of course, shopping and sunning and taking advantage of a variety of excursions was also on the agenda, and we took part in as much as possible and practical. The cruise line was Holland America, and while I don't own stock in that company I highly recommend them for service and ease of organization.

As May approaches, Shari and I will continue our anniversary celebration by flying to Rome, Italy, and cruising the Mediterranean for 9 days. Italy was my mother's birthplace and we will spend some time there exploring her roots and family history. So, when that trip is done I will write an article and share pictures of our adventure. My hope is to balance this year with celebration and work as the specifics of our unit's 60th come together. My goal is to keep all of you updated on the progress of both!

When our next newsletter comes out I should have most of our reunion plans ready to preview and share with everyone. It will be an exciting and rewarding event and you won't want to miss this one. I challenge each to contact those with whom we have maintained a connection from our unit and encourage them to join you in Nashville. Missing one VHPA, or VHCMA event in 2024, won't be a big deal, but the 60th year celebration of our unit will only happen once.

Celebrate 60! Bob Allen

Maverick Guns!!!

(To the tune of sink the Bismark)

In the year of 1964 the Mavericks came to life.
The gunships of the Delta soon feared both day and night.
They never liked the killings but never turned one down.
For they knew that this was their job so they cut them to the ground.

The horn would blow and men would run to put their ships in the air,
For somewhere in the jungle came signals of despair.
The Mavericks had to get there to cover for the crash,
Soon rotor blades were slapping and rocket heads would flash.

They covered slicks from Soc Trang, from Bien Hoa and Saigon, they passed up not a one.

—There never was a mission that could make them turn and run,
Their punch was hard, their bite was deep, and to some it seemed like fun.

Some nights with parties going strong the horn would interfere,
Drunks would run and stumble and throw up all their beer,
They couldn't see but made it to their ships and showed no fear.
For they knew the air would sober them, their heads would soon be clear.

They flew to Cam Ranh Bay to help the air-borne in distress,
And ended up in An Khe with all their very best.
Some new men took their first hits but held their heads up high,
For they knew they'd make good Mavericks and PROUD each time they'd fly!

(Author unknown)

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION (VLOA) Financial Statement - 3/31/2023

Balance effective 01/01/2022 \$37,130.31

REVENUES:

Dues - Annual	\$150.00
Dues - Life	\$100.00
Bumper sticker sales	\$24.50
TOTAL:	<u>\$274.50</u>

EXPENDITURES:

Newsletter, bank statements	\$1,472.48
TOTAL:	<u>\$1,472.48</u>

CASH BALANCE - as of 3/31/2023

\$35,932.33

Details: 3 months period ending 3/31/2023

Revenues Detail

Bumper stickers - Tina Lightner	\$24.50
Sub-Total	<u>\$24.50</u>

Dues: - 2023

Annual Memberships (AM): - 2023

John Salzer	\$25.00
Eddie McGuire	\$25.00
George Arnold	\$25.00
John Diamond	\$25.00
David Hicks	\$25.00
Jon Elsea	\$25.00
Sub-Total	<u>\$150.00</u>

Lifetime Memberships (LM): - 2023

Joe Gossom	\$100.00
Sub-Total	<u>\$100.00</u>

Patriot Lifetime Membership (PLM) - 2023

	\$0.00
Sub Total	<u>\$0.00</u>

TOTAL REVENUES -3 months period 2023

Expenses Details

Bob Sharp - 4th Qtr 2022 - Newsletter	\$839.72
Bob Sharp - 1st Qtr 2023 - Newsletter	
Bob Sharp - 2nd Qtr 2023 - Newsletter	
Bob Sharp - 3rd Qtr 2023 - Newsletter	
Reunion shirts - Jim Donnelly	\$628.26
Paper bank statements	\$4.50
TOTAL EXPENSES - 3 months period 2023	<u>\$1,472.48</u>

INCOME (LOSS) - 3 months period ending 3/31/2023 -\$1,472.48



Tribute to Tom Anderson

By- Frank Estes.



I first met MAJ Tom Anderson at Fort Benning, Georgia in 1964 during my assignment to the 11th Air Assault Division's 11th Aviation Group. The Division had just completed Phase II of the Air Assault Division Test. I was one of six UH-1B armed helicopter pilots assigned to "C" Company, 227th Aviation Battalion for the Test.

After completing Phase II of the Test, commanders let a lot of the soldiers take time off before starting Phase III of the Test. Ann and I took a two-week vacation to the Florida beach, and upon returning, Tom met with those of us on leave to inform us that we had been selected to form the 62nd Aviation Company for deployment to Vietnam in September 1964.

Since I'd not met him before that moment, my first impression was that he was the kind of leader that knew what he was doing, had that "in-charge" mentality, and had that "up-beat," positive attitude. My year-and-a-half experience in armed helicopters convinced Tom to assign me to the Mavericks as a Section Leader, a decision for which I'm most grateful.

After arriving in Vinh Long, Vietnam, Tom led the Outlaws and Mavericks through our transition-to-combat period with the panache of an experienced, consummate combat leader. He exuded the qualities that made you want to be the best you could be for him; competence, courage, candor, commitment, and dedication. When things went right, he gave you the credit. When it didn't go right, he wasn't bashful about taking the blame.

Volumes could be written about all the ways Tom led the Outlaws and Mavericks in combat. Pulitzer Prize winner Eugene Patterson, Editor of the Atlanta Constitution best describes this in a series of articles he wrote for the Atlanta Constitution during his five-day December 1964 trip to ride with the Outlaws and Mavericks, and see first-hand that "nasty little guerrilla war." Patterson drew his impressions of the "war" from those he met first in Vinh Long and later moving into other areas of the country. Tom's leadership laid the granite cornerstone for Patterson's impressions of the Vietnam War in 1964.

I lost track of Tom after my tour with the Outlaws. Then, in 1998, he called me, stating that he was rounding up the original Outlaws for a one-time reunion in Branson, Missouri. Tom said that a handful of former members, including my old Crewchief, John Doyle were helping locate former members.

The Branson Roundup resulted in such a great time for everyone, that a decision was made to continue the reunions every two years, in other locations selected by the members. It was during this reunion that Tom established the atmosphere for a "no-ranks" attitude by reunion attendees. He was adamant that we would not allow anyone to be called by their rank during the reunion. He wanted everyone to be called by their name/nickname, minus the rank, so as to establish a true "camaraderie" atmosphere.

Tom kept coming up with actions that would solidify this emerging organization. Formation of the Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA) was one of the very first actions. That was followed by a newsletter, and later a website. Anyone who knew Tom, knew that he was in love with the VLOA. During the 2004 reunion, he subtly brought up the subject of opening the VLOA to all year-groups of the Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners, and 28th Signal Detachment through 1972 when the Outlaws' deployment ended. Later, we started hearing from Outlaws in Germany and Iraq, and the doors were opened even further at Tom's insistence.

In 2009, Tom and I were updating each other on how life was going, and he asked about the VLOA's tax-exempt status. Further checking indicated that the VLOA had applied for an IRS Employee Identification Number (EIN), but had not applied for an IRS tax-exempt status. Further research indicated that we did not fit into one of the IRS categories for a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, but did fit the 501(c)(19) war veterans' category. However, there was a lot of documentation required to file for that category of tax-exempt status.

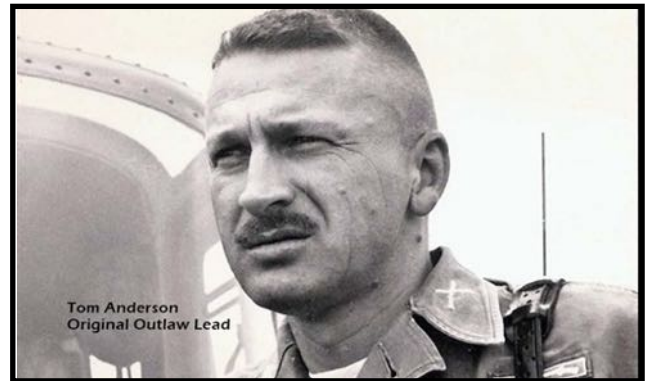
So, Tom took on the task of writing the draft copies of the VLOA Constitution, ByLaws, history, and purpose. Meanwhile, Tony Clemente (past-Treasurer and a CPA) and Charles Bouton (Treasurer) developed the VLOA purpose, revenues, and expenditures to meet IRS requirements. Then, Tom and I consolidated the IRS required documentation, completed the IRS Form 1024 application for a "war veterans' organization," and Tom made the final review and continuity changes prior to submission.

Tom's fingerprints were all over a number of other VLOA actions: design, purchase, and installation of the VLOA monument in Fort Rucker's Veteran's Park; design, purchase, and installation of the _____

(Contd. On pg. 5)

(Cont. from pg.4) plaque in the Army Aviation Museum; development of the original VLOA Membership Card and replacement Membership Cards; development of the VLOA Policy Files to provide continuity for future officers/directors; initiation of the Silent Auction; implementation of the 50/50 Raffle; *Outlaws Newsletter* articles for virtually every issue; website upgrades; Outlaws history; the 2006 and 2014 reunions in Pigeon Forge and Washington D.C.; the Missing Man Ceremony at our reunions; implementation of the Outlaws' Awards Program; and Officer/Director Nominations Committee.

In closing, Tom demonstrated over time that he was truly a "southern gentleman" even though he came from Montana. Always courteous, always smiling, many times joking (mostly at his own expense), assured of what he was doing, and always with the other person uppermost in his mind and actions. Tom freely gave of himself to so many efforts and causes. To say that he loved the VLOA members is truly an understatement. He was an enormous mentor for me, both in combat and in civilian life. Tom was truly "one of a kind." His presence at our Outlaws Round-ups will be sorely missed. Rest in peace, my friend and mentor. Frank Estes.



Post Renamed for “Committed Soldier, Preeminent Army Aviator”

MICHELLE MANN mmann@dothaneagle.com
extracted from The Dothan Eagle April 10, 2023

FORT NOVOSEL- With the flick of the ceremonial Huey helicopter cyclic control stick (*right*), signs bearing the name Fort Novosel (*left*) were simultaneously unveiled at each of the entrances to the Home of Army Aviation Monday morning. Members of the Novosel family, Wiregrass elected officials, and civic leaders gathered with active duty and military retirees at Veterans Park here as Fort Rucker became the first active-duty Army installation to be renamed as part of a 2021 National Defense Authorization Act’s Renaming Commission’s recommendation to change the names of military installations named for Confederate soldiers.



Novosel family & Commanding General unveiling Fort Novosel gate signs via-use of Huey cyclic stick.

The Virginia National Guard post formerly known as Fort Pickett was renamed Fort Barfoot after Tech. Sgt. Van T. Barfoot on March 24, making the Home of Army Aviation’s name change the first at an active Army installation.

“An incredible man, a dedicated American, a committed soldier, a preeminent army aviator,” is how United States Army Aviation Center of Excellence and Fort Novosel Commanding General Maj. Gen. Michael McCurry described the late Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael J. Novosel Sr., a Medal of Honor recipient and veteran of World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War during his 44 years of service.

Born in Etna, Pennsylvania, the son of Croatian immigrants, Novosel enlisted in the Army-Air Corps at the age of 19, months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor, McCurry said. Novosel later joined the Air Force Reserve and was ultimately promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel. After a stint as a civilian, Novosel joined the Army as a warrant officer aviator and served his first tour in Vietnam flying medevac helicopters—Dustoff—with the 283rd Medical Detachment. His second tour in Vietnam was with the 82nd Medical Detachment. During that war, Novosel flew 2,543 missions and extracted 5,589 wounded personnel, among them his own son Michael J. Novosel Jr. The following week, Michael Jr. returned the favor by extracting his father after he was shot down, McCurry said.

When he retired in 1985, Novosel was the last WWII veteran on active flying status. He had accumulated 12,400 military flying hours, including 2,038 in combat. “As a son of immigrants who rose to be a legend in Army aviation, his story is the American Dream,” McCurry said about Novosel. “He is very definition of an American serving his nation and from today forward, his name will be synonymous with Army aviation. It is not lost on me that I will be the last senior commander of Fort Rucker,” McCurry said. “However, this post is more than a name. It’s a community where Americans from all over the country come to become aviation soldiers, warrant officers, and aviators, and all are accepted by the welcoming people of the Wiregrass.”

“The bonds between the Army and the surrounding community are strong and the relationship we have strengthens every day. It’s a partnership of love between the people of the Wiregrass and those on this post. It’s a common love for country, the love you show our soldiers, and the love that grows in our hearts for you. Fort Novosel is where future soldiers will come to turn their dreams of becoming aviators and leaders into reality and it is fitting that we are re-designating the post after a true hero with impeccable character,” McCurry said. “The relationship between this post and this community will continue to grow and from this day forward, CW4 Novosel’s name will be the first thing our soldiers and aspiring aviators see when they drive on to this post and his name will be the last thing they see when they are handed their graduation certificate and leave to serve our nation and uphold the sacred trust with the soldier on the ground.”

(continued on next page)

Post Renamed continued from previous page) The ceremony included a ceremonial flyover of a UH-1 Medevac helicopter in Novosel's honor was provided by the Ozark-based Friends of Army Aviation, a nonprofit public education organization dedicated to presenting the Army Aviation through displays of legacy Army aircraft.

At the ceremony (*right*), the Novosel family presented their father's medal of honor to McCurry who in turn presented the medal to the U.S. Army Aviation Museum to display (*left*). "My father would be humbled and honored. My father was a patriot. The medal really belongs to the post," said John Novosel, who, along with his sisters Jeanee Vinyard and Patty Clevinger, presented the medal to McCurry. "It was an easy decision," said Clevinger. Vinyard agreed. "My father loved the military," she said. "He always told us that when he passed away, he just wanted said of him, 'I was a good soldier'."

Other military installation to be renamed include Fort Benning, Georgia, to be renamed Fort Moore after Lt. Gen. Hal and Julia Moore; Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to be renamed Fort Liberty after the value of liberty; Fort Gordon, Georgia, to be renamed Fort Eisenhower after General of the Army Dwight Eisenhower; Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, to be renamed Fort Walker after Dr. Mary Walker; Fort Hood, Texas, to be renamed Fort Cavazos after Gen. Richard Cavazos; Fort Lee, Virginia, to be renamed Fort Gregg-Adams after Lt. Gen. Arthur Gregg and Lt. Col. Charity Adams; and Fort Polk, Louisiana, to be renamed Fort Johnson after Sgt. William Henry Johnson.



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER FOUR MICHAEL J. NOVOSEL SENIOR, US ARMY RETIRED MEDAL OF HONOR CITATION



For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. CWO Novosel, 82d Medical Detachment, distinguished himself while serving as commander of a medical evacuation helicopter. He unhesitatingly maneuvered his helicopter into a heavily fortified and defended enemy training area where a group of wounded Vietnamese soldiers were pinned down by a large enemy force. Flying without gunship or other cover and exposed to intense machinegun fire, CWO Novosel was able to locate and rescue a wounded soldier. Since all

communications with the beleaguered troops had been lost, he repeatedly circled the battle area, flying at low level under continuous heavy fire, to attract the attention of the scattered friendly troops. This display of courage visibly raised their morale, as they recognized this as a signal to assemble for evacuation. On 6 occasions he and his crew were forced out of the battle area by the intense enemy fire, only to circle and return from another direction to land and extract additional troops. Near the end of the mission, a wounded soldier was spotted close to an enemy bunker. Fully realizing that he would attract a hail of enemy fire, CWO Novosel nevertheless attempted the extraction by hovering the helicopter backward. As the man was pulled on aboard, enemy automatic weapons opened fire at close range, damaged the aircraft and wounded CWO Novosel. He momentarily lost control of the aircraft, but quickly recovered and departed under the withering enemy fire. In all, 15 extremely hazardous extractions were performed in order to remove wounded personnel. As a direct result of his selfless conduct, the lives of 29 soldiers were saved. The extraordinary heroism displayed by CWO Novosel was an inspiration to his comrades in arms and reflect great credit on him, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

Do You Remember When?

How many times have you had a conversation where someone asked this question? This is the beginning of a new addition to the VLOA Newsletter. Bob Sharp has asked me to go back to our time served in Viet Nam and tell some stories. Things that remind us of the way things were some 50-plus years ago.

Let's begin with mail call. All of us remember that it took a couple of weeks to send a letter to a family or friend and another two weeks to receive a response. That's if everything went as hoped. Email didn't exist, phone calls weren't available until you went someplace on R & R, if you were lucky enough to get R & R.

Regarding phone calls, sometimes you could attempt to call home using the phone lines at Vinh Long. Frank Estes and I were roommates in 1964-65 as the section leaders for the Maverick gun platoon. One afternoon WO Jim Rousch came into our quarters and asked to use the platoon phone. We said sure and went on with what we were doing. Jim placed a call to the local operator, then to the Saigon operator, and asked to be connected to Hawaii. We heard this part of the conversation and got interested and we noted that as the distance went further Jim had to speak louder. He got the Hawaii operator and asked to be connected to the military operator at a base near Los Angeles. The operator in Los Angeles asked Jim the nature of his business and when Jim told her he wanted to speak to his family, the operator refused to allow personal business and cut the connection. Such was life in Viet Nam in the early days.

As a footnote, Jim Rousch left the Army when his tour was up and joined Air America (CIA) as an H-34 pilot in Thailand. We heard that he was killed while landing at a remote location. He was a good pilot and a good man.

Back to mail call. A lot of married folks used cassette tapes to record stories and let our wives and children know a little more about what we were doing. It also allowed them to send messages to us about what was going on at home. For us, our two children were ages one+ and two+ during that first of my three tours in Viet Nam. I loved to tell them fractured fairy tales so that they could hear my voice. Linda says they loved my stories and they caused her to laugh as well. It did tend to counter some of the evening news stories about Viet Nam. We have long regretted not keeping the cassettes that we used but unfortunately we did not as every penny was important and we reused each cassette many times.

Who among you have similar stories about your time in the Army as well as your time in Viet Nam. Lot's of us would like to hear your versions of how you lived and how you remember both the good and perhaps some of the not so good times while you served with the Outlaws and all the various platoons and support units.

Till next time, Ernie Isbell, RVN Service, Sept 64- Sept 65; July 67- July 68; Oct 71- July 72.

Email- colernie@gmail.com



That old Morning Report. By Tom Anderson



The Army always seemed to know where you were, or at least where you were supposed to be.,. Almost the first thing that happened when you went into a new unit, your name was always entered onto something we called a “Morning Report”, prepared by the Company Clerk , obviously each morning. Among other things, the Morning Report showed that you were assigned in the unit.

As a newbie in the unit, it initially seemed to be just another piece of administrative paperwork that *someone* had to do. Glad it wasn't.

Most of us didn't pay much attention to the work that the overworked Clerk already had to do each day, much of it first thing in the morning. I didn't realize it at the time, but the Morning Report turned out to be a somewhat vital report.

Somewhere along the line, I decided I would attempt to retain every single piece of official paperwork that had my name on or had an impact on me ...just in case.....

Over the years I have saved things that had absolutely no value to anyone, but with the thought that it just might, just might, someday, come under the heading of” I might need this damned thing sometime”. Sure enough, by a stroke of luck, it happened! “Several years ago, one of our Outlaw troops wrote me to and asked if I might have something that would confirm that he was indeed in Viet Nam with us with the Outlaws. I just happened to have the exact orders he needed!!! One of those old “saved” sets of orders, from several years earlier, was exactly what he needed to confirm to the VA that he was **there!**

Why it hadn't made it to, or through, the VA ... don't know... but it was indeed a stroke of luck! All that “saving” stuff paid off. Wish I could remember who he was..... He was in one of the earliest groups of Outlaws. By the way, I indeed did dig out those old sets of orders. Papers are now all yellow with age (like ME). But I was delighted that one of those old, long-forgotten pages was exactly what he needed for the VA!

Tom Anderson, (Outlaw 6), Permanent Advisor to the VLOA.

(This was Tom's last article that he wrote for the VLOA Newsletter about a week or so before he passed. He was always there to help me with material and a kind and reassuring word when I needed it. He made it easy for me to want to continue as the editor of the newsletter for these past 13 years. I will truly miss his calls and emails making sure I had enough material. I also get huge backup from Frank Estes, Ernie Isbell, and Jim Donnelly. All the people on the steering committee are a great help and we and all the members of the VLOA are going to greatly miss him! He was our “Lead” and always will be.)

Bob Sharp, Editor, VLOA Newsletter.



FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

by Frank Estes



Many of us are getting along in years, and we are experiencing the passing of many VLOA members. Ann and I have experienced this in Army and civilian friends of ours. Quite a number of years ago, a long-time Army friend of ours passed away after suffering a long-term illness. About a month later, we saw our friend's widow at the Fort Rucker Officers' Club during a retired veterans' dinner. Sometime during our conversation with her, she came up to me, and while facing me grabbed both my upper arms, got right in my face, and said: "The hardest thing I had to do when my husband passed away was write his obituary. Don't you leave that for Ann to do when you pass away!" Of course, her statement caught me by surprise.

Afterwards, I gave that a great deal of thought to her comments, and did as she asked - - - wrote my own obituary. Then, I got to thinking. There are many, many other things Ann would have to do after my passing. So, I began the arduous task of determining what those things were. After a few months, I ended up with a 13-page document that lists and discusses such things as: personal info, Living Will, property deeds, Social Security Number, Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service (filing of deceased's final income tax return), former Army serial numbers, estate attorney, tax preparer, stock broker, Veterans' Affairs Officer, Casualty Assistance Officer, Veterans' Administration Retirement Services Officer, how to report death of a veteran, Survivor Benefit Plan for Ann, key websites and phone numbers, checklist of what to do when and with whom, preferred burial site, coordination for a military burial ceremony, insurance policies and bank account numbers, phone calls to make, fraternal organizations to notify, newspapers to notify, where key papers are located, and similar items/actions. Each item contains applicable phone numbers, email address, website, and physical address, along with why they should be contacted. Later, I also prepared the funeral program and selected friends to sing specific songs and render the eulogy. I'm leaving it up to my family to pick the pictures they like best to display at my funeral.

All key documents and the 13-pager are located in a secure location known by Ann and our daughter. Once a month, Ann checks the secure location just to make sure she knows how to get to the important documents stored therein. As a backup, we selected a close friend of the family who is informed on how to get to the 13-pager and key documents kept in secure storage.

Once a month, I get the 13-pager and review it for necessary changes. Since we receive *The Army Echoes – Soldier for Life* newsletter, it is a great source of information for updating this 13-pager. You can see the latest issue of *The Army Echoes – Soldier for Life* newsletter for free by Googling it. You can also go to www.va.gov and find a checklist you can use. You can go to the American Legion's website and download a pamphlet titled *What to do Before a Veteran Dies* which might provide some ideas of things you need to include in you document.

www.rocketlayer.com has a *Survivor Checklist* that will give you a good start on developing your *Final Instructions* document. Finally, if you Google "*what to do after someone dies*," you can find many other websites that provide good starting points for your document.

My 13-pager is oriented on a retired Army veteran. But, many VLOA members may not fall in that category. However, much of the information provided above might be useful to non-military retirees. I hope this article is good food for thought about preparing for the departure of your significant other. Now, I don't have to worry that Ann and our daughter will know the intricate details of dealing administratively with my passing. Frank Estes.

Vietnam Snail mail.

By Ivan White.

When I left for Vinh Long in 1971 I left Sheila and it was the longest we had ever been apart. It was slower mail times and some challenges for sure. She wrote to me every day.. I say every day. One week I didn't receive mail for 7 days and I doggedly wrote a note to say, did you forget me? Or something like “don’t you love me anymore”? Well the next day I received 7 letters!

Communication during the Vietnam era was vastly different than it is today. Back then, communication was limited to landlines, radios, and telegrams. Soldiers serving in Vietnam relied on these forms of communication to stay in touch with their families and loved ones back home. It often took weeks or even months for letters to be delivered, and phone calls were expensive and unreliable. This lack of communication could be incredibly isolating for soldiers, who were already facing the challenges of serving in a foreign war.

Today, communication is much more instantaneous and accessible. With the advent of smartphones, social media, and video conferencing, soldiers serving overseas can stay in constant communication with their families and loved ones. Soldiers can now video chat with their families, send instant messages, and share photos and videos in real-time. This not only helps soldiers stay connected to their loved ones but also provides them with a sense of community and support during their service.

Additionally, social media has also allowed soldiers to connect with other service members and veterans, providing a platform for support and camaraderie. Soldiers can join online groups, share stories and experiences, and provide each other with emotional support.

Overall, the difference in communication between the Vietnam era and today has been revolutionary. The advancements in technology have not only made communication more accessible but have also helped soldiers feel more connected to their families, communities, and fellow service members.

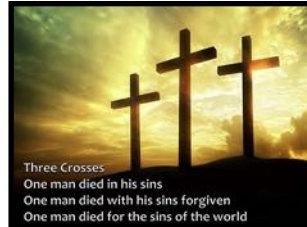
In closing, if you have military family serving or just want to catch up with some acquaintances, do it. Everyone enjoys being thought of.

Ivan and Sheila White





The Back Pew



Linda and I hope everyone has enjoyed a great Winter Season and that you are looking forward to a terrific Spring. We certainly are. It seems that the older we get the more we take advantage of opportunities to travel and see things that we somehow missed during our thirty-one years of service in the Army. Perhaps you and your loved ones are doing the same thing. By the way. Linda and I will celebrate our 64th wedding anniversary on September 5th of this year.

We plan to take a cruise up the inland waterway from Seattle to Juneau, Alaska in the first ten days of June. Ocean travel has been a favorite method of seeing things that are waiting to be visited. Being that we are in our eighties and still able to get about on our own we plan to take advantage of traveling now that the covid pandemic is under better control.

Speaking of covid. I hope that each of you takes advantage of all the vaccination opportunities that are available. I have heard many explanations about the good and bad that can happen regarding the covid vacations and that the elderly victims seem to not survive as well as younger folks. As I look over the roster of the VLOA it seems to me that we "old folks" are much better off taking advantage of being vaccinated.

On a personal note, I am one of the many victims of Agent Orange. For the last four years, I have been under treatment for bladder cancer. Everything is going well and I bring this up to offer a word of encouragement to those of you that may be undergoing treatment for any of the maladies that your military service may have caused. My experience with the Veterans Administration has been hectic, to say the least. But perseverance pays off. If any of you are not having success with your dealings with the VA, take advantage of the agencies in your residence state that offer assistance. They are there to assist you with your application.

Linda and I send our best wishes to each and every one of the VLOA Outlaws and your families. Stay active, stay busy, and stay healthy.

Ernie Isbell
Chaplain
Vinh Long Outlaws
Spring 2023

Membership Renewals

by Frank Estes

Membership renewals are due each January. However, we follow each individual member's date of renewal. In turn, you get credit for paying your dues anytime during the year. For the annual dues paying members, we would appreciate you marking your calendar to pay your dues in January of each year.

Here are the important reasons for paying your dues. The VLOA distributes a quarterly **Outlaws Newsletter** that is sent to all former Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, Roadrunners, 28th Signal Detachment, 25th ID door-gunner platoon, and attached support personnel listed on our current membership roster. Further, the VLOA operates a Vinh Long Outlaws website, www.vinhlongoutlaws.com. Additionally, the VLOA conducts a biennial Outlaws Roundup in a location as convenient as possible to all former members of the aforementioned units/ attachments. These activities require funds to keep them in operation. Your membership dues are pivotal to keeping the VLOA treasury in good shape. **Please, renew you membership if you have not done so this year.** We want to recognize and thank all of those who paid their dues during 2022 and so far in 2023.

Life Members:

George Arnold (2023)
 Gary Bradford (2022)
 William Cotham (2022-2023)
 John Diamond (2022-2023)
 John Elsea (2023)
 David Hicks (2023)
 Eddie McGuire (2023)
 John Salzer (2022-2023)
 Frederick Stetson (2022)
 John Salzer (2022-2023)
 Robert Tidd (2022-2023)

Regular (Annual) Members:

James Bloxsom
 John Gossom
 Gary Groth (Associate Life)
 Raymond Hoff
 James Martinson
 Bill Quinn
 John Scott

Patriot Life Member:

Phil Van Alst

Thanks to all of you who continue supporting the VLOA by keeping your dues payments current. A special thanks goes to all who joined as a Life and Patriot Life Members.

- Letter from the editor:

I would like to address all the members on the roster that are unpaid members receiving the VLOA newsletter. There are over 585 letters that go out in the mailing. For you that do not know what it costs for the printing and the postage each quarter is right around \$830.00 x 4 qtrs.= \$3,320.00/ year. We believe that you enjoy being part of the VLOA and reading the newsletter and we want to continue to mail you a letter. If you feel like you want to keep getting it would you please send in your annual dues of \$25.00.

I find that I have brothers and cousins and friends that are veterans of all Branches of the service and they enjoy reading and learning what we did years ago and the wonderful camaraderie that we have that none of them ever had. Do like I do and buy them an Honorary membership in the Vinh Long Outlaws and you will find that it is \$25.00 well invested.

You guys are special and they need to see and read more about you. Help us to be able to continue to put out an awesome newsletter!

Thank you! Bob Sharp.



150th OLD TIMERS 1965-66



By- Doug Wilson

When you are a "Newbie" in Viet Nam it takes a while to gradually change your ways . There were four of us 67N20 M.O.S. that came from Fort Rucker together, Martin, Kerns , Lammons and me. We had only been at Vinh Long a few weeks when a sergeant said that we were to go out to a helicopter and fly to Soc Trang about 50 miles south of Vinh Long. The old timer's in the 150th would have balked if they had to go. We were wearing our new unfaded jungle fatigue clothes .That's why we newbies were selected .We flew up maybe 5000 feet and the air was much cooler. It felt nice. We landed and were told to stand in a squared formation with the center empty. It was extremely hot. I was about four or five rows back. A lifer came by and said that General Westmoreland was arriving with some dignitaries to award the 42nd ARVN Rangers with an award and if the person in front of you dropped out of the formation then for you/me to walk forward to fill in the empty spots in the front.

People kept dropping out from the heat. Finally I was in the second row when the general passed by and shook the hands of everybody in the front row. After that some nice looking Vietnamese high school girls wearing traditional ao dai's (white blouse and white pants) placed plastic lei's around our necks. My school girl said to me " I hope I see you again "

When we returned to Vinh Long we walked into the hanger with our unfaded fatigues , plastic lei's and smiles .When we told the old timers about the cool 5000 foot air, almost shaking hands with the general and the high school girls , they were not impressed with us .

I had been in the hanger for five months waiting for a opening in the Mavericks and one day I over heard Sergeant Parrish telling the old timer from the 150th that he needed a volunteer to go to " D Model school" for 2 weeks in Saigon . They didn't want any part that so I spoke up and said I would like to go. The school was in town near the 3rd field hospital and a small USO and in an alley. It was run by Bell Helicopter instructors.

A Vietnamese man came in and said he had beds to rent in his house about 2 miles away I thought that I would be staying at Tan Son Nhut airfield. I was lucky that I had recently sold my Akai tape recorder and still had the money. Those 2 weeks vacation were great. I liked to walk to the school in the morning. It was all in Saigon city with the merchant shops and industrial all mixed up together. The different smells, 2 cycle motorbike smoke, beeping horns, it was like being in some kind of a old Indo-China movie. Like some thing from "China Smith" or "Terry and the Pirates" . The instructors were upbeat and lively, sometimes telling us about their Vietnamese girl friends. I took this as useful information. There was a "540" rotor head outside the class room. We hadn't ever seen one of them before.

Right close in the alley was a small USO . I would get a donut and coke in the morning and maybe a hamburger and chocolate shake at noon, then I would visit the 3rd Field Hospital. We had a few Outlaws in there and a few from the 114th also. In the evenings I would put on my civies and explore the bars and other notable sights. I really wish I knew more about a few old mansions that I would walk by. I remember one mansion and property that took up the whole city block.

(Cont. on pg. 16)

(Contd. From pg.15) Of the bars I visited there is one that I especially liked although I was only there once and could never find it again. All the hostesses working there were wearing white uniform dresses. They looked like little dental assistants with bee hive hairdo's. Apparently previously Madame Nhu didn't approve of short skirts and required all bar hostesses to wear these white uniform dresses. I believe this was the last bar after the ban was uplifted to still wear the white uniforms. It was a great gimmick .

When I returned from Saigon I told the old Timers from the 150th about my experiences, The fun class instructors, the USO everyday, the beautiful Saigon girls, seeing a 540 rotor head, and getting a fancy diploma from Bell Helicopter, they were not impressed, especially from a "newbie" from California !





NEW CREW-CHIEF

By- Doug Wilson.



I hated working in the hanger. It was like working in a furnace. I had been working in there for a few months in late 1965. One afternoon Sergeant Homer Bickle or Sergeant Parker came up to us "newbies" and said to meet at the hanger after evening chow. We met there and were assigned in pairs to report to the Outlaw slicks. I went to Outlaw 21. My friends John Belloccio crew chief, David Amason door gunner and the A/C was Captain Doug Eady.

We flew to a LZ in some high grass and upon approach we were told to sit in the doorway with our feet hanging outside. So we did that and then were told to get back in the seat and the helicopter pulled pitch and left. We did this a few more times and then flew back to Vinh Long. For the first time I was able to see how a helicopter war worked. This fake troop insertion was called a "Diversion" or something like that. I liked the gunship part best.

The next day our maintenance crew was working on a second platoon helicopter and I said to myself "what would John Wayne do in my circumstances". Hmm it popped into my head become a Maverick crew chief.

I had noticed that there was this hooch where they played loud country music. I was "closet country" up to that point but these Maverick E/M played that stuff loud and weren't embarrassed about it. "FRAULINE, FRAULINE, Come down to the River" and I'm a HONKEY TONK MAN". I knew then that I wanted to join them .

One of my first missions was flying on a operation near Muc Hoa as crew chief on Maverick 35. Two pilots and my door gunner Charlie "Ricepaddy" Phillips. The heat off the ground was almost unbearable . We were flying in right circles, up on one side and down on the other side. My torso was aching and eventually I briefly fell asleep from the heat. A loud "SWISSH" startled me awake. My pilot had just punched off a rocket. That woke me up right away. My pilot then turned around and said "If I ever catch you sleeping again I will kick you off this helicopter" . I knew I didn't want that. Then I could read my door gunners lips saying you stupid something or other! So we kept flying this boring circle with me at least being wide awake and eventually as we made that downward portion of the circle the helicopter sort of quivered and flew straight. The Co-pilot said what was that flight maneuver you just did. The aircraft commander replied "I thought you were flying it".

So we flew back to Vinh Long and I didn't get a second ass chewing. We were all happy. Anyway I was.

SP4 Doug Wilson CE-MAV-35, 1966.

Post Viet Nam Career Selection Experience.—by Phil Van Alst.

After 5 years and one tour in Vietnam under my belt it was time to leave the Military and go for the elusive airline career. It was 1975 and the GI bill for flight training was excellent. I finished the ratings that I didn't have and took a job as a flight instructor. I was also able to pick up my A&P certificate based on Military experience.

Unfortunately the future of the Airlines had been altered by the fuel embargo of 1973 /1974. My desire to fly for Hawaiian or Aloha Airlines were dashed for the time being. As an Island boy I wasn't in a hurry to beg for work in the continental 48. Thanks to my A&P I was able to get employment at Hawaiian Airlines as a mechanic. My hope was by getting my foot into the door that a Pilot's position might be obtained. Fortune was not on my side as I was not in the next Pilots class. (The class of the captain's sons with minimum qualifications) When I pursued the issue, I was told that they had me as a mechanic, why would they want to hire me as a Pilot since that would require also hiring a mechanic to replace me. In short, pure BS. It was time to move on.

A good friend from Guam had been encouraging me to join him in a floatplane business (Caroline Air Service) in Truk (now known as Chuuk) Micronesia. Truk was made up of Islands spread over a larger area, each with lagoons making landing a float plane possible. We were to have a Government contract guaranteeing an annual income and they would provide us with a seaplane ramp and other assistance. It sounded pretty good so we picked up a Cessna 180 in Saipan and had the local repair station in Guam install the floats. My partner was to ferry it to Truk where I would meet him.

It was 1979 when I arrived in Truk. I was surprised to find the Cessna anchored in the lagoon and badly tilted to the left. It was a WTF moment. My partner had arrived the week before to find that the Truk Government had reneged on the agreement. No guaranteed income, no seaplane ramp, and minimum support. They would pay us hourly when they used us. As for the tilt to the left? My partner had found a reef with the left float on taxi in.

The good news is that floats are designed with multiple compartments as a safety measure. The bad news was my partner had managed to puncture three of them. Being the good A&P I was, I had come prepared for all emergencies. In addition to my normal tools I had brought a dozen tubes of a special sealer that we mechanics referred to as "elephant snot". With Truk being close to the equator tidal changes were small. As such I could only partially beach the aircraft to make the float repairs. While not completely successful I was able to reduce the float flooding to a slow leak that could be managed by pumping the compartment prior to take off.

Without the contract, we were bleeding money and the future looked very bleak. At this time my partner and I began to differ on the future. While he was hell bent on staying in Truk I saw a profitable future doing sea plane tours in Saipan, NMI. The Island was doing great. Japanese tourists were flocking in with \$ to spend.

Living conditions in Truk was rather primitive compared to Hawaii and a phone was a luxury we could not justify. No phone was OK until the night I had a knock on the door at 3 AM advising me to go to the weather station for a call from Guam. That call was from the Air Force Search and Rescue center requesting a mission from me. (Cont. on pg. 19)

(Cont. from pg.18) **The Mission:** The Air Force had parachuted 2 weathermen onto Woleai in the Yap district. Their job was to set up a remote weather station. (Note: this was a training mission for the Airmen) After a few days one of the Airmen became ill enough to require medical attention. The Air Force parachuted a medic in who determined the Airman needed evacuation ASAP. Woleai had a runway that sadly was overgrown and unusable. The closest chance for evacuation was several days away when a ship would be close enough to launch a helicopter. The question to me was can I get the Airman and Medic and fly them to Guam. Chuuk to Woleai is 544 miles (473 Kn). Based on day old weather I was looking at 5 hrs. min to Woleai. Thanks to long range tanks I was good for around 6.5 hrs. / 900 miles. Woleai to Guam would be 423 miles (368 Kn). That would be another 4 hrs. of flight time. I was looking at least 9 hours in the air. I had a real concern whether I could make it to Apra Harbor in Guam before nightfall.

Planning: It was critical that I be airborne at sunrise if there was any chance of making Apra Harbor before nightfall. Refueling in Woleai was a requirement. The rescue center was dispatching a Coast Guard C-130 to meet me in route (I was navigating from the Truk NDB, not very accurate for the range I was flying. They would then drop 55 gal drums of avgas into the lagoon. Since I had to fuel from 55 gal drums normally, I had a good hand pump to take along. That plus survival gear, life vests and a raft, 2 loaves of bread, a jar of peanut butter, and 2 gallons of water. My HF radio had died just days before so I would be on my own until the Coast Guard got into VHF range.

The flight to Woleai: Take off was right at sunrise. Airborne climb to 6,500 ft. and track due west on the Truk NDB. All was well until I leveled off. My elevator trim was frozen meaning I would have to hold control pressure all the way to Guam. (Due to no ramp, I was unable to crawl into the tail to service the trim jack screws. Salt spray had finally done its job.) After 2 hours flying, I started reaching out to the Coast Guard on VHF Guard. A couple of airliners added their two cents worth reminding me that I was on Guard, to which I asked what part of "Lifeguard 32K" don't you understand. I finally reached the Coast Guard about an hour out of Woleai. They were able to locate me around 10 miles north of course. Not bad for a 544-mile trip on a weak NDB. Landing in Woleai was uneventful. A native in his boat guided me to an anchor buoy and tied me up. I passed him the pump and he went on with a couple of other boats to retrieve the fuel drums that the Coast Guard was dropping.

Entertainment for the locals: The lagoon water was crystal clear. From the plane it looked like about 3 feet deep. Looking on shore I saw the grass huts, Canoe hut, and every woman without tops. Being a normal male in his late 20's I wanted to get to shore right away. Ah, 3 feet deep, I can walk it. I figured I would do my "macho pilot" walk to shore. I stepped off the float and immediately was above my head in the water. (It was more like 20 feet deep) As I surfaced and swam to shore all I heard was the laughter of the locals. I had made their day much to my embarrassment.

Flight to Guam: The locals helped me refuel while the medic was loading his patient and equipment. Just looking I estimated that we were several hundred pounds over gross. I was right as it took me 3 attempts to get airborne. Thanks to mechanical flaps I was able "milk" the plane off the water on the last attempt.

(Cont. on pg. 20)

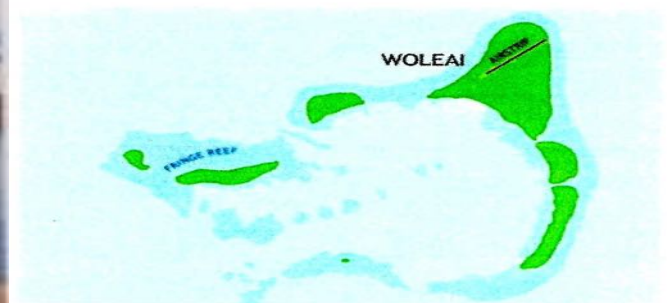
(Cont. from pg. 19) It took slightly over an hour to get to 2,000 feet. After cruising for a while, the Coast Guard said goodbye. They were operating on 2 engines, I gather no air con, plus constant maneuvering due to my slow speed. Off they went after giving me a final heading and making the mistake of asking if I needed anything. My reply was “beer”. The sun was just starting to go down as I approached Apra Harbor. I had been talking to Guam approach control when they decided to give me vectors as I approached the harbor. They let me go when I threatened to land on one of their runways if I’m not on the water before dark. FYI, no moon that night. My partner was there with a radio and talked me to a location for beaching the plane.

After landing: The patient was transported to the hospital and made a full recovery. On the shore all I saw was these flight suits and a large cooler. The Coast Guard had come thru with the beer. I needed help getting out of the plane as my body was shot from all the hours with no elevator trim. The hangover the next day was well worth it. Not sure if the Coast Guard guys would agree. To this date the Coast Guard holds a special place in my heart. Over the years I’ve been known to have a drink or 3 or 4 at their club located at the old Barbers Point Naval Air Station.

Post mission: My partner and I couldn’t agree on the future of the business. We finally agreed that he would buy me out after I did a complete service on the aircraft. New trim jack-screws and six new cylinders. (The engine took a beating on the flight) and a full annual inspection. I was lucky to be hired by Continental Air Micronesia thus starting a new way forward and saying goodbye to Truk and Caroline Air Service. “Aloha” Phil Van Alst.

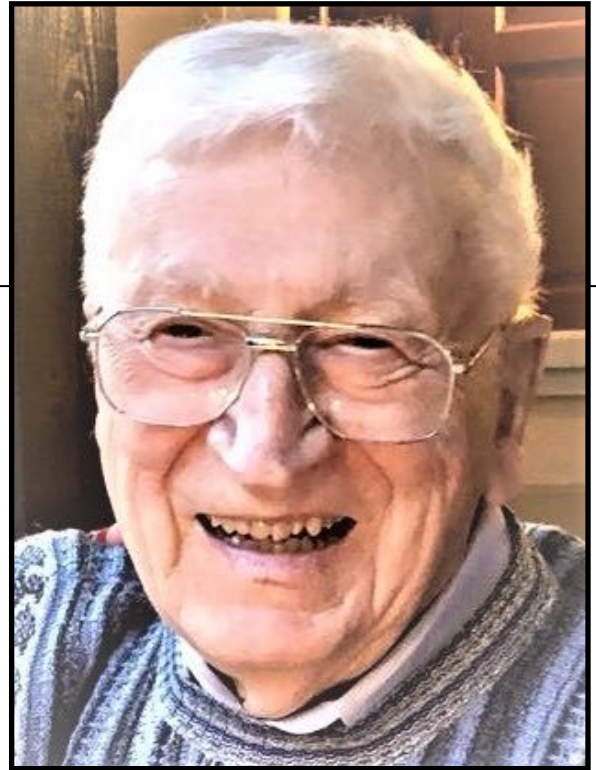


Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) Division of Civil Aviation | Woleai Civil Airfield, Woleai



Thomas Eugene Anderson

10/19/1930—04/07/2023



Col. Thomas E. Anderson, U.S. Army, Ret., Passed Away on Friday, April 7, 2023 at INOVA Fairfax Hospital. He was 92 years old.

Tom Anderson was born October 19, 1930, to Luverne and Violette Anderson in Carrington, North Dakota. The family moved to Chinook, MT in 1936 where he attended elementary school. In 1940, the family moved to Havre, MT where he attended middle and high schools, graduating from Havre High School in 1948. He attained the rank of Eagle Scout and was President of his High School Student Council his senior year.

In 1947, after attending the Montana Boys State, He was selected as one of two young Montana men to represent his home state at the American Legion National Boys Nation in Washington, DC. The highlight of the two-week program was personally meeting and shaking hands with President Harry S. Truman in the White House Rose Garden.

He was also privileged to meet General George C. Marshall, Founder of the Marshall Plan for Europe. Those notable events dramatically altered his view of his future and provided the impetus for a life-altering future career path for the young boy from the prairies of Montana.

Because of his family's financial situation, he had never considered attending college. However, the Washington D.C. experience prompted him to apply to attend Montana State University. Fortuitously, that decision also led to meeting his future wife, Pat Riley. He graduated in 1952 with both a degree in Journalism as well as a commission as an Army Infantry 2nd Lieutenant. He and Pat were married in February 1953.

After attending Infantry Officer Training at Fort Benning, GA, he volunteered for airborne training and then served as an infantry platoon leader in the 11th Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, KY. He and Pat established their first of their 33 different homes over the next two decades. While at Fort Campbell, he was drawn to the excitement of flying, rather than jumping out of airplanes.

He volunteered for flight training, winning his Army Aviator wings in early 1954, pinned on by his wife, Pat. His initial aviation tour sent him to Korea, followed by a transfer to Japan, where Pat joined him in 1955. Son Gregory was born in Tokyo in 1957. After the Japan tour, he completed Army helicopter Flight Training at Fort Rucker, AL, and was assigned to Long Beach, CA, where son Mark was born in 1958. In 1960, while serving as an infantry CO. Cmdr. in Fort Sill, OK, he was selected to serve as an Aide de Camp to a senior staff officer at the U.S. Army Pacific command in Hawaii in 1960 where, (Cont. On Pg. 22)

(Contd. From pg.21) where, along with the family he served a challenging, but rewarding, three-year tour.

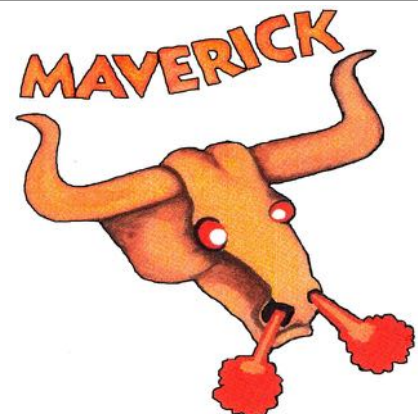
Returning to the U.S. in 1964, he was assigned to the 11th Air Assault Division at Fort Benning, GA. There, while serving as commanding officer for a helicopter company in the division, he was selected by the Division Commanding General to activate and command another helicopter company and deploy it to Vietnam within 35 days. At the time of his deployment, he was not aware that his helicopter unit would prove to have been the lead element of the massive U.S. force buildup in the Republic of Vietnam over the next few years. He commanded that helicopter unit in the Mekong Delta region of South Vietnam for the next year.

Returning to the states in 1965, Tom attended the army's Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS followed by an assignment in Washington, D.C. in the Army's Officer Personnel Directorate. After Promotion to Lt. Colonel, he moved to a staff officer position in the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army. In 1970, while serving in the Pentagon, he was requested by his former Vietnam Battalion commander to return to Vietnam to take command of an Aviation battalion in the Mekong Delta. After his combat command, he returned to the states in 1965, again assigned to the Pentagon with an assignment to the staff of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, He then pursued a year of advanced military schooling at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, PA. He was promoted to full Colonel in 1973.

In 1976, after 24 years of military service, Tom retired from the U.S. Army. His military decorations included three Legion of Merit medals, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Bronze Stars, 27 awards of the Air Medal (one with 'V' device), the Joint Service Commendation medal; two awards of the Army Commendation Medal and four awards of the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He was also awarded the Army General Staff ID Badge, the Master Army Aviator Badge and the Parachutist Badge.

After a short stint in real estate sales, Tom was hired as a District Manager by PRC Realty Systems in McLean, VA. For the next 13 years he held various management positions within the company until retiring once more in 1999. In 2005, Tom and Pat moved to a 55+ community in Springfield, VA where he served 15 years on the Board of Directors.

He was proceeded in death by his wife, Pat. Survivors include his son Gregory and wife Doreen and their children Michael Riley and Katherine Marie; and his son Mark and wife Caretta and their son Riley Thomas. God Rest his soul.



Sad News, Outlaw doorgunner 1968 Larry Mennenga passed away 1 May 2022 .

Larry Louis Mennenga 1947 - 2022

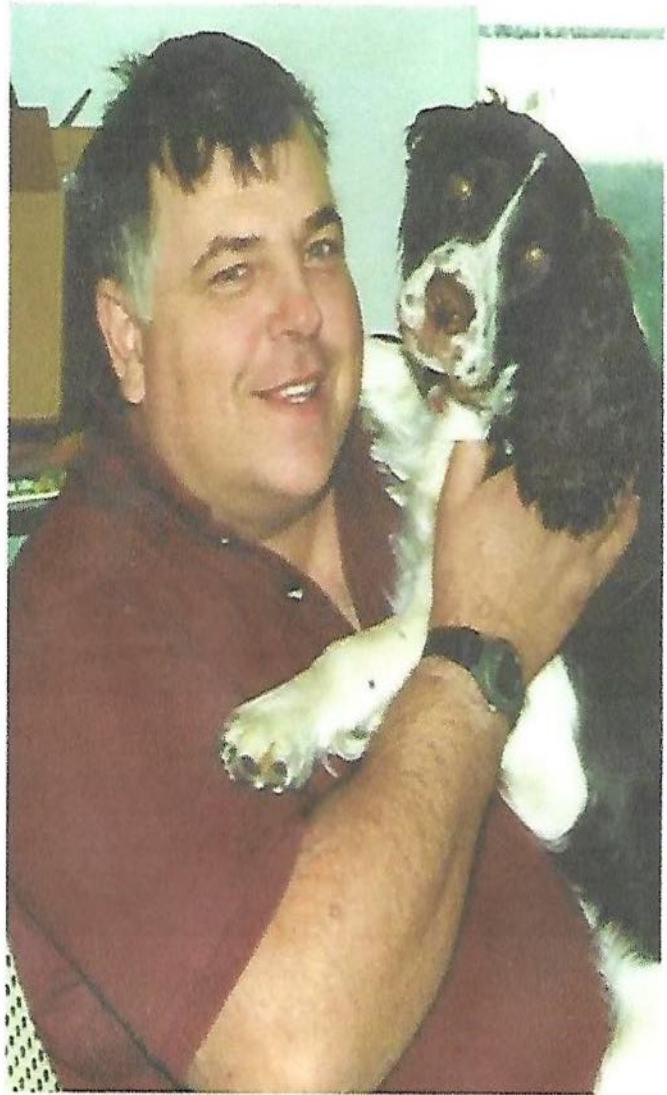
Larry Louis Mennenga was born March 21, 1947, in Freeport, Illinois, to parents Louis and Dorothy Mennenga. In 1960, the family moved to Monroe, Oregon. Larry graduated from Corvallis High School. He served in the Army in Vietnam as a door gunner with the 175th Company AHC "Outlaws." Surviving the Tet Offensive, Larry came home from Vietnam and soon married Gail in 1971. They had a son, Lonnie, and a daughter, Julie. Larry and his family moved in 1971 to Carlton, Oregon, where he lived his remaining days.

Larry worked as an appliance repairman with Rice Furniture in McMinnville, Oregon, and with Montgomery Ward out of Portland. He spent the last 20 years of his working career as a maintenance electrician at George Fox University.

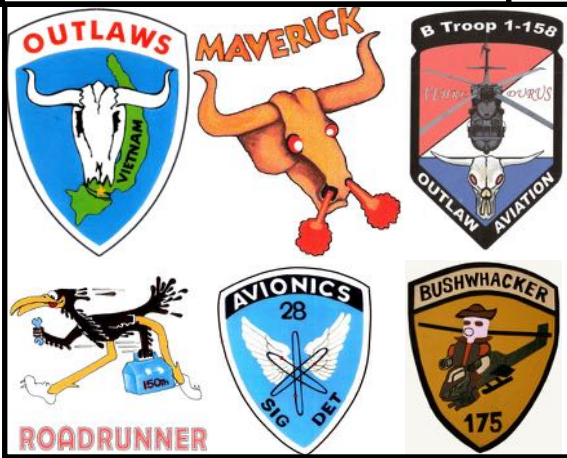
Larry died May 1, 2022, from complications of Parkinson's disease.

He is survived by his wife, Gail; son, Lonnie; daughter, Julie; his half-sisters, Paula, LuCinda and Sharon (Bill); and his beloved grand-dogs, Tessa, Daisy, Nightengale, Gunner, Annie, Oakley and Capone.

Larry will be interred at 10 a.m. May 19, 2022, in Willamette National Cemetery. There will be a Celebration of Life held at 1 p.m. the same day at Valley Baptist Church in McMinnville. In lieu of flowers, please donate to any veterans' organization of your choice. To leave online condolences, please visit www.macyandson.com



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



Spring/Summer—2023

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 annually, payable each January. A Lifetime Membership (with vote) is \$100 one-time dues. A Lifetime Associate Membership (without vote) for spouses and relatives is available for a \$100 one-time donation. A Patriot Lifetime Membership (with vote) is available for a one-time \$500 or more dues. Current Lifetime Members may upgrade to a Patriot Lifetime Membership for a one-time \$400 or more dues.

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) _____

Unit/platoon/section/position _____ Radio Call sign _____

- Please initiate ___ or renew ___ my Active ___ Associate ___ VLOA membership. **Make \$25 check payable to VLOA**
- Please initiate my Lifetime ___ Lifetime Associate ___ VLOA membership. **Make \$100 check payable to VLOA.**
- Please initiate my Patriot Lifetime ___ membership. **Make \$500 or more check payable to VLOA. Current Lifetime Members make \$400 or more 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/Bushwhacker/Roadrunner or other affiliated unit member and have indicated his/her name, address, and phone number on this form.

Comments: _____