



Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

"www.vinhlongoutlaws.com"

Vinh Long Outlaws Summer/Fall 2026 Newsletter

Summer/Fall

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

2nd./3rd. Quarter 2026

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National Director's Corner

By—Jim Donnelly



I don't have much to say but I would like to thank everyone who has made the VLOA an outstanding association of Vietnam Vets and their Families. A special shout out to Frank Estes who held the Association together over the years filling a great many important and necessary offices, and many times more than one concurrently.

I am grateful for the many years that Bob Sharp has produced an outstanding Newsletter and getting it distributed to those who comprise our VLOA mailing list.

I am very grateful to my Outlaw brother Phillip Wright Van Alst for bringing the VLOA website into this decade. Phil monitors the site and guest book daily to ensure that there is no content that does not reflect the values we as members of the Association share.

Finally, a big thank you to Bob Allen for his past dedication and his volunteering to be the Next National Director and his future attempt to keep the VLOA alive for many more years. Creating a future for the VLOA will be a difficult and noble task. I say difficult because there is a lack of volunteering for the critical offices required to keep the VLOA moving forward.

The Association's membership is aging and traveling has become more difficult for many of us. This is apparent as one of the factors in the low reunion registration numbers so far. Just nineteen members have signed up at the time of this writing. This number is way below the past year's attendees. The VLOA had reserved a block of rooms more than twice the number of current registries.

Don't let this opportunity to join in our fellowship pass you by. The registration cut off date is August 17, 2026 so it is only about three weeks away.

I hope to see you all in September. Jim Donnelly.

OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

Jim Donnelly- National Director,
Virginia Beach, VA.

Ivan White- Deputy Director
French Village, MO.

James Donnelly, -Sec./Treas.
Virginia Beach, Virginia

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

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

Ernest Isbell, -Chaplain
Denton, TX..

Doug Wilson, -Historian
Cosa Mesa, CA.

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.

Pos.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.

Frank Estes. Permanent Advisor
Ozark, Al.

Tom Anderson, -Perm.Adv. 1998-
2023) (Deceased)

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

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

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

Joe Clelan, -Ex Officio (2006-2008)
Mechanicsburg, P.A. (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.

Bob Allen-Ex-Officio (2022-2024)
Columbus, Ohio.

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION

01/2026 thru 06/30/2026

Balance effective 01/01/2026

\$25,911.44

REVENUES:

Dues - Annual, Life and Patriot Life

\$275.00

Bank Intrest

\$1.24

TOTAL REVENUES

\$276.24

EXPENDITURES:

Newsletter,printing and mailing ck#1036

\$973.00

3 Outstanding Award Statues ck#1937

\$629.56

TOTAL EXPENDITURES YEAR TO DATE

\$1,602.56

CASH BALANCE - as of 06/30/2026

\$24,585.12

Dues: - 2026

Annual Memberships (AM): - 2026

\$275.00

Sub-Total

\$275.00

Lifetime Memberships (LM): - 2026

Sub-Total

\$0.00

Patriot Lifetime Membership (PLM) - 2026

Sub-Total

\$0.00

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP REVENUES

\$275.00





VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION REUNION

SEPTEMBER 17 - 21, 2026

STERLING, VA



Schedule of Events (Note-BOLD –is a ticketed event)

Thursday, September 17

Time	Event	Room Name
1:00pm – 6:00pm	Arrivals/Hotel Check-in (based on availability)	
1:00pm – 6:00pm	Hospitality Room Open	
1:00pm – 6:30pm	Reunion Registration Open	
7:00pm – 9:00pm	Welcome Dinner Buffet	
9:00pm – 10:00pm	Hospitality Room Open and Auction Bidding	
9:30pm – 10:00pm	Silent Auction Set-up	

Friday, September 18

	Breakfast on your own at hotel (included with guestroom)	
8:30am – 4:00pm	National Museum of the United States Army (Please note below !) (Lunch is now included on this tour at the ARMY Museum)	
5:00pm – 10:00pm	Hospitality Room Open and Auction Bidding	
	Free Time – Dinner on Your Own	

Saturday, September 19

	Breakfast on your own at hotel (included with guestroom)	
8:00am – 9:00am	Steering Committee Meeting	
9:00am – 11:00am	VLOA General Membership Meeting	
12:00pm – 5:00pm	National Air and Space Museum	
6:00pm – 10:00pm	Hospitality Room Open and Auction Bidding	
	Free Time – Dinner on Your Own	

Sunday, September 20

	Breakfast on your own at hotel (included with guestroom)	
9:00am – 10:00am	VLOA non-denominational chapel service	
11:00am – 4:00pm	Hospitality Room Open	
6:00pm – 9:00pm	Farewell Banquet with Cash Bar	
9:30pm – 11:00pm	Hospitality Rooms Re-Opens – Silent Auction Pick-up, 50/50 Drawing and Final hours for laughs and memories	

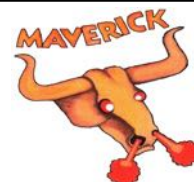
Monday, September 21

	Breakfast on your own at hotel (included with guestroom)	
	Farewells and Departures	

Buses will load at the front of the hotel. Please plan to meet in the lobby at least 10-15 minutes prior to the departure time.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

For attendees cancelling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, **8/17/26**, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a partial refund less the non-refundable **AFR** registration fee (**\$20 per person**). Attendees cancelling reunion activities after the cut-off date, **8/17/26**, will be refunded to the extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow minus the non-refundable **AFR** registration fee (**\$20 per person**). Online registrations have a non-refundable convenience fee of 4%. Calculation errors by the registrant, over the intended total and require a refund, will be responsible for additional credit card fees. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9am until 5pm Eastern Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities. Refunds will be processed 4-6 weeks after the reunion. Cancelling your hotel reservations does not cancel your reunion activities.



TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour price and are at the discretion of the individual.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY

The National Museum of the United States Army, located in Fort Belvoir, is the official museum for the history of the United States Army. Opened to the public in 2020, the state-of-the-art museum proudly tells the comprehensive story of America's oldest military service, the United States Army. Tours through the various galleries, featuring an array of artifacts, exhibits and programmatic elements will help you discover new stories and explore the ways our nation has benefited from the innovation and advancement of its Army. Enjoy lunch on your own at the Museum Café and a visit to the Museum Store.

8:30am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel. Lunch on your own.
Included with registration fee

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM

The National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution is dedicated to human flight and space exploration. Almost all its spacecraft and aircraft on display are original primary or backup aircraft. Immerse yourself in in-depth exhibits filled with iconic historic objects such as the Apollo 11 Command Module Columbia, the Friendship 7 capsule, flown by John Glenn, Charles Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis and more. More exhibits are planned while the Museum undergoes transformation. Additional activities available include the Lockheed IMAX Theater and the Northrop Grumman Planetarium. Grab a snack or drink at Mars Café and of course, don't forget to stop at the gift shop for those souvenirs before departing. If you want a late lunch, additional lunch options include the Mitsitam Café, located right next door at the National Museum of the American Indian. Also, just 2-3 blocks away is the L'Enfant Plaza Food Court featuring crowd favorites such as Five Guys, Potbelly Sandwich Shop, Subway, Starbucks and more!

12:00pm board bus, 5:00pm back at the hotel
Included with registration fee

***Tickets for the Theater or Planetarium are NOT included and must be purchased on-site the day of your visit.**

***Buses will load at the front of the hotel. Please gather in the hotel lobby at least fifteen minutes prior to noted departure time.**

There is a limit of one hydraulically lifted scooter or wheelchair per handicap accessible bus. Please note the combined weight of the passenger and motorized wheelchair or scooter may not exceed 500lb due to lift limitations.

If you use a scooter or motorized wheelchair but can climb the steps to board the bus, either you and/or a person travelling with you must be able to put the scooter or wheelchair in the bus's luggage compartment. Due to liability issues, drivers, and tour guides cannot assist with scooters or motorized wheelchairs.

HOLIDAY INN DULLES AIRPORT

Location

45425 Holiday Drive

Sterling, VA 20166

Reservation Information

To make reservations by phone:

Dial 703-471-7411 and reference the **VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION**

OR

You may click on the link below to make your reservations online:

https://www.ihg.com/redirect?path=rates&brandCode=HI&localeCode=en&regionCode=1&hotelCode=wasda&checkInDate=15&checkInMonthYear=082026&checkOutDate=22&checkOutMonthYear=082026&_PMID=99801505&GPC=VLO&cn=no&adjustMonth=false&showApp=true&monthIndex=00

Group Name: Vinh Long Outlaws Association

Reunion Rates Available: September 17 - 21, 2026. Reunion rates available to group attendees 3 days pre and post reunion (based on availability).

Room Rate: \$149.00 plus applicable taxes (Currently 14%) per night

Breakfast: Complimentary Hot Breakfast for Two Included in the Room Rate. Served in the hotel restaurant 6:00am – 9:30am Monday through Friday and 6:30am – 10:00am Saturday and Sunday.

Cut-Off Date: 8/15/26. After the group cut-off date, Hotel will accept additional group reservations at the contracted rate or at market rates based on room availability.

Cancellation Policy: Cancellation must be received 48 hours prior to arrival date or there will be a charge of one night's room plus tax.

Parking & Shuttle Information: Self-Parking is Complimentary. **Shuttle service is available for Washington Dulles International Airport only.** The shuttle departs Dulles from the lower level at Curbs 2B and 2G at quarter past and quarter to the hour. The shuttle departs from the hotel to the airport at top and half past the hour. For questions or directions to the airport pick-up location, please dial 703-471-4711.

Wheelchair Accessible Rooms: If you need a handicapped accessible guestroom, please call the hotel directly for assistance.

Wheelchair Rental: Scoot Around rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week.

Please call (888) 441-7575 or visit www.scootaround.com for details and to make reservations.

Reunion Registration: To register for the reunion online please visit:

<https://www.events.afr-reg.com/e/VinhLong26>

Vinh Long Outlaws Association Reunion Registration Form

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter a quantity for each event you and your guests wish to participate in. Then total your costs and send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of a check or money order. You may also register online and pay by credit card at <https://www.events.afr-reg.com/e/VinhLong26> (online registrations have a convenience fee of 4%). Registration form and payment must be received on or before **8/17/26**. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of your complete form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form. (Returned checks will incur a \$20 fee).

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.

322 Madison Mews

Norfolk, VA 23510

ATTN: Vinh Long Outlaws Association

OFFICE USE ONLY Check # _____

Received _____ Inputted _____

Don't forget CUT-OFF date is 8/17/26

	Price	# of Ppl	Total
MANDATORY PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE – INCLUDES WELCOME DINNER BUFFET, TWO TOURS, FAREWELL BANQUET, HOSPITALITY ROOM AND OTHER REUNION ITEMS			
Members, Spouses and Guests	\$350	# 2	\$ 700.00
Non-Members, Spouses and Guests	\$375	#	\$
Total number in your party (including members, spouse, and guests)	-----	# 2	-----
TOURS – INCLUDED WITH REGISTRATION			
Please indicate total number attending each tour:			
Friday, 9/18: National Museum of the United States Army	Included	# 2	Included
Saturday, 9/19: National Air and Space Museum	Included	# 2	Included
MEALS– INCLUDED WITH REGISTRATION			
Please indicate total number attending each event			
Thursday, 9/17: Welcome Dinner Buffet Featuring Sliced Flank Steak and Chicken Francaise	Included	# 2	Included
Sunday, 9/20: Banquet (Please select entrée for each attendee)			
Beef Tenderloin Marinated and Cooked Medium Rare	Included	# 2	Included
Roasted Rosemary Pork Loin	Included	#	Included
Chicken – Pan Seared Smothered in a Sweet Corn Relish	Included	#	Included
Three Cheese Lasagna (Vegetarian)	Included	#	Included
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$700.00

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND SPOUSE/GUEST NAMES AS YOU WISH THEM TO APPEAR ON THE NAMETAG:

FIRST (for badge) __Robert____LAST __ Sharp_____

 1ST TIME ATTENDEE? ☐ YES ☒ NO

YEAR OR YEARS SERVED AT VINH LONG: 1964_ - 1965____

SPOUSE FIRST NAME Gloria _____LAST __ Sharp_____

GUEST NAMES _N/A_____

EMAIL __handybobsharp@gmail.com____CELL # 507-828-3062_____

 *DO YOU CONSENT TO RECEIVING EMAILS AND TEXT MESSAGES ABOUT THIS EVENT ONLY? YES ☒ NO ☐

STREET ADDRESS 17489 US HWY65_____

CITY, ST, ZIP Albert Lea, MN. 56007_____

DISABILITY / DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _Not able to walk long distances. _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME _Gloria E. Sharp (Wife).____CELL #_ 507-318-9120_____

 DO YOU NEED TO BE HYDRAULICALLY LIFTED ONTO THE BUS IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN TOURS? ☐ YES ☐ NO

(PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

(Special hotel room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly to the hotel staff upon reservation)

REGISTER ONLINE AT: <https://www.events.afr-reg.com/e/VinhLong26>



The Anderson Silent Auction is a GO!

Jim Donnelly

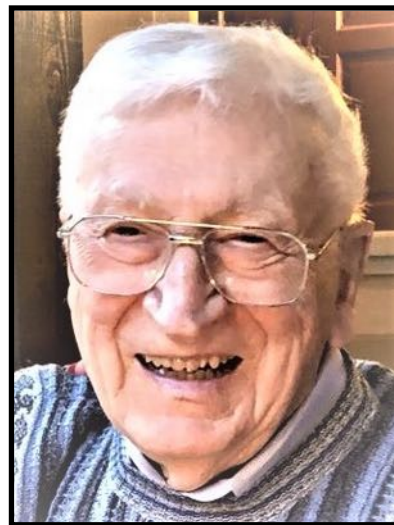
The Silent Auction is back on thanks to Ken Bemowski's sons. Ken was there during my time and I look forward to seeing him again.

A very big thank you to Dan and Gerald Bemowski for taking the reins of this major fund raiser. Since I will be driving up from Virginia Beach the items you would like to donate to the auction should be mailed to me if you cannot bring them with you. If you have decided on an object to donate, please email me a brief description and your requested opening bid amount. A picture of the donation is not necessary but would be greatly appreciated.

Thank You all in advance for your donations and I can't wait to meet new friends and reunite with old ones.

Jim Donnelly

2413 General Longstreet Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-2611





Directors' and Outstanding Outlaw's Award Nominations



Introduction to the VLOA Awards Program

The VLOA has established an awards program designed to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the organization. Each award recognizes different levels of involvement and achievement, with specific criteria that must be met for nomination and selection.

Directors' Award

This is the highest honor the VLOA bestows during any reunion year. The award is not required to be presented at every biennial reunion. Only one Directors' Award may be given at a time, with the intent to clearly recognize the single individual or couple who has had the greatest impact on the VLOA over an extended period.

Recipients of the Directors' Award are members or couples who have offered substantial, measurable, and long-term support to the VLOA. This includes contributions of time, energy, and achievements that have significantly advanced the goals and mission of the VLOA as a war veterans' not-for-profit organization.

Outstanding Outlaw Award

This honor is intended for nominees whose contributions, while noteworthy, do not reach the level required for the Directors' Award. The Outstanding Outlaw Award may be given to those who have served the VLOA in significant ways, such as holding an officer or director position, and who have provided important service toward furthering the organization's goals, objectives, history documentation, member outreach, and the preservation of the VLOA. .

(Cont. on Pg.9)

(Contd. From pg.8)

Nomination Submission Process

Anyone interested in submitting a nomination for either the Directors' Award or the Outstanding Outlaw Award, to be presented at this year's Outlaws Roundup in Washington, D.C., should send an email nomination to Phil Van Alst, Awards Committee Chair, at 175th_AHC@proton.me, or submit a letter of nomination to:

Phil Van Alst
2147 Tantalus Drive
Honolulu, HI 96813

Cell: (808) 372-6728 (please pay attention to time zones if calling. Hawaii is 5 hours behind the East Coast, 6 during DST.)

Nomination Deadline and Required Information

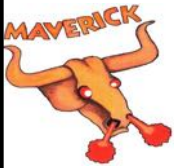
All nominations must be received by the Awards Committee Chair no later than August 1, either by email or letter as outlined above. Nominations should include the following information about the nominee's:

Name
Address
Phone number

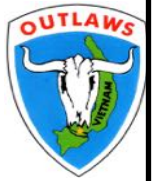
- Specifics regarding service in the Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, Road Runners, Signal Detachment, or associated support organizations.

Clear reasons why the nominee deserves the award, such as service to the VLOA, contributions to veterans' or civic organizations, and any leadership roles or support activities relevant to the nomination. Thank you.





VLOA 2026 Reunion Sterling Virginia, September 17-20. Jim Donnelly



Well, it is getting close. The Sterling Reunion will be a little different than those in the past. There are only two excursions/tours during the Reunion which allows for more time to enjoy catching up with your fellow Vinh Long Veterans.

My wife Vickie and I spent two nights at Holiday Inn Dulles Airport. We scouted out the hotel and the available amenities. I think everyone will be quite comfortable during their stay.

We also toured the surrounding area for alternative dining locations. I will attempt to include a list and rough location for those who wish to venture out. I have already found a nice Mexican Restaurant with great frozen margaritas in several flavors that will definitely be on the list.

We will have the usual Welcome Dinner and closing Banquet. Also, lunch is provided at the National Museum of the United States Army. This is provided out of the VLOA treasury as a small thank you for all the support over the years.

A list of the dining possibilities near the National Air and Space Museum will also be included in the Welcome Bags.

Of course, the Hospitality Room will be stocked with cold canned soft drinks, water, canned beer, light beer, wine and an assortment of snacks.

One other addition to the Welcome Bags will be a flash/thumb drive containing all the pictures and files the Outlaw History contains for the years you served with or in support of the Outlaws. Attached to your thumb drive will be a metal numbered tag. This number will be your number for the Anderson Silent Auction bidding.

So, Welcome!! And good luck with the bidding!!



Outlaws' Future?

by Frank Estes

There has been a lot of discussion recently that the Vinh Long Outlaws Association has finally run its course. This will more than likely be a topic of discussion during our Outlaws Roundup this coming September. I'd like to offer a few observations in that regard.

First of all, the VLOA is an IRS sanctioned 501(c)(19) war veterans' organization, with tax exempt status for all contributions made to and for the use of the VLOA (according to the IRS letter of April 30, 2010). When we filed the application for tax exempt status, we also had to notify the State of Alabama (because we were operating from that State when we filed with the IRS) that we were a Domestic Non-Profit Corporation operating in the State of Alabama. Therefore, we will have to dispose of our assets in accordance with the State of Alabama and the IRS. The following extracts, in sequence, describe the steps we must take if/when we disestablish the VLOA.

E X T R A C T

"State of Alabama

Domestic Non-Profit Corporation

Articles of Incorporation

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

"Article VIII Corporate Earnings, Activities, and Dissolution: ...Upon the dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c) 19 of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes."

E X T R A C T

"VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION

CONSTITUTION

(Approved as of October 5, 2002)

(Revised September 13, 2008)

(Revised September 8, 2012)

(Revised September 20, 2014)

(Revised September 17, 2016)

(Revised 03-16-2019)

(Revised 03-19-2020)

(Revised 9-24-2022)

Cont. on pg. 12.

Cont. from pg.11

Article III – Operation

“D. In the event of dissolution of this Association, all assets shall be liquidated and all financial obligations of the Association shall be paid. Memorabilia, historical records, photos and other such documents belonging to the Association shall be donated to the U.S. Army Aviation Museum at Fort Rucker, Alabama, with a copy provided to the Vietnam War Project, Texas Tech University. Any remaining assets shall be donated to a recognized charity as determined by the Steering Committee, but under no circumstances shall any member of the Association receive any benefit from said assets.

“E. No elected or appointed officer of the VLOA will receive a salary or compensation of any kind from the VLOA. All labor and/or personal effort contributions to the VLOA will be voluntary.”

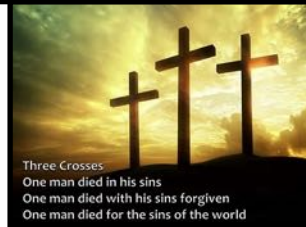
The foregoing provides plenty of guidance for the VLOA to dispose of its assets, should the VLOA membership represented at our September Outlaws Round business meeting decide by majority vote to “close shop” and dispose of our assets. In reality, the only assets the VLOA owns is its bank account and the historical files. The funds in our bank account should be distributed to organizations supporting the military retiree community organizations, such as: the Wounded Warrior Project, Tunnels-2-Towers, Disabled American Veterans, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, one of the many VA Retirement Homes in numerous states, American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Disabled American Veterans, American Veterans Inc., or similar organizations. Concerning the historical records, we have already provided the Army’s Aviation Branch historical a copy of all our historical records, but must also provide a copy each to the Vietnam War Project, Texas Tech University and the U. S. Army’s Aviation Museum Curator.

I believe the first decision we have to make is whether to continue the VLOA, and for how many more years. If the decision is to continue, then there is no need to discuss the closing process. However, if the decision is to close the VLOA, then the decisions will be where to donate the bank account funds and that will cause the greatest amount of discussion (in my opinion). So, we attendees at the September 2026 Outlaws’ Roundup should be prepared to state our preferences for whether to continue the VLOA or dissolve it and make distribution of the VLOA bank account funds.

Ann and I are looking forward to seeing you at our September Outlaws’ Roundup in Washington D.C.



The Back Pew



Hello and welcome. I hope this finds you all well and happy. My name is Bob Sharp, the editor of this Vinh Long Newsletter and I am writing this article on behalf of our Chaplain Mr. Ernie Isbell. I spoke with him the other day and he said he had computer problems that he could not remedy any time soon and besides that he was or is having more medical problems. I asked him if it would bother him if I volunteered to write something for the Back Pew and he was relieved that I would do that for him.

That brings me to the topic that I am going to speak about. It has been 62 years ago in September that we as a Company headed out for that place called Viet Nam and ended up in Vinh Long. Upon arrival and a few days later a lot of us were spilt up and farmed out to different Companies around the country and I ended up with the 121st. ASLT. Hel. Co. out of Soc Trang. I think there were 4 of us that went there and I didn't see any of the 62nd. again until the first reunion in Branson, MO. in the year 2000. That was 26 years ago and 13 reunions also. In those 26 years we have lost a great many of our comrades, dear friends, and our partners.

It is very easy to put off today what we maybe can do tomorrow. But the thing is, how many tomorrows are we really going to get? We, Gloria and I have gone to two funerals just this week. One older friend and one a lot younger. Every day is a gift and no one knows how many tomorrows we are going to get. You need to live every day to its fullest and love your friends and family as there is no more days to come. We, at our age are so very blessed and I know you and I forget and take it for granted that we are going to wake up again in the morning. I lost my wife at 64 years of age and we were married when we went to Viet Nam in 64 and she had our first son while I was there. My family suffered the effects of that war and I always said that she was a Viet Nam Veteran as much as I was because she had to live with me as when I came home I was not the young man she had married. God Bless all of our families and friends we have lost and God Bless all of you and hold you safe in his arms. Be safe and hope to see you in DC. for one more time together!!!!

**ROADRUNNER**

A Synopsis of the 150th Transportation Detachment (CHFM) 1964-1965

by Therman Farley a.k.a. "Shorty"
Published in the July 2000 issue of the Outlaws Newsletter



On August 8, 1964, there was a rebirth of the 150th. Transportation Detachment CHFM) at Fort Eustis, Virginia. During August and September 1964, seventy-seven (77) men were assembled for a "Tour" to the Republic of Vietnam. Captain Frederick R. "Tim" Bisch was assigned as Commanding Officer. CWO John C. "Jack" Moodt, was assigned as Maintenance Officer. Seventy-five (75) enlisted personnel, with various job skills, represented the balance authorized. The intended destination was classified but was assumed to be consistent with the apparent knowledge of the local civilian population.

CWO Moodt was the advance man. Departing Fort Eustis, Virginia, on September 26, 1964, by first class air transportation requiring ear plugs, with stops in scenic places, such as Guam and Wake Island, without side tours, the remaining seventy-six (76) arrived in Vinh Long on September 30, 1964, to a "Welcome Vinh Long, 150th Trans. Det." The compound was located just 60 miles southwest of Saigon, in the heart of the Mekong Delta, only two scenic miles from the sprawling town of Vinh Long, where you could enjoy an EM club, NCO Club, Officers Club, a Post Exchange, a Theater/Chapel, with free movies shown nightly, (many movies having no beginning while others had no end, but a vivid imagination could and did fill in what the broken tapes left out) tennis court, volleyball court, basketball court, tape recording van, and in the rainy season a natural swimming area.

The multifaceted industries of Vinh Long were rice farming and wood carving and sustained a population for 40,000. The airfield, where most of your time will be spent, was situated on the banks of the beautiful Mekong River. The five star Hutch accommodations were well-suited to the climate of Hot and Hotter with a year-round humidity of some 85%. They were of open bay construction, cement floors, and screened sidewalls and of course, wired for electricity. Gourmet food, of the variety style, to which we had become accustomed, except for Milk, would be served seven days a week. Vinh Long, no cows, no dairies, no milk.

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(Cont. From Pg. 14)

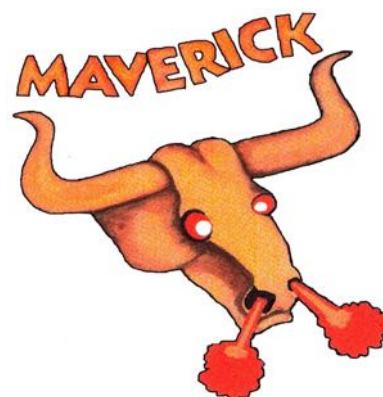
After arriving at our destination, Vinh long, Republic of Vietnam, scenic tours of rice fields and jungle were available by UH-1 B Helicopters as well as Fixed Wing planes. Jack Moodt has described his unexpected aerobatics maneuvers as "showing people a good time."

We remember it as Mr. Moodt scaring the Hell out of us. In the spirit of the Guidon, the very soul of a military unit is symbolized by the colors under which it fights, for it records the glories of the past, stands guardian over its present destiny, and ensures inspiration for its future. If a commander falls, someone should rally to the colors and assume the position of leadership.

On June 16, 1965, Captain Frederick R. "Tim" Bisch sustained sufficient injury to require medical evacuation. This was a day full of sadness as we said farewell to our gallant leader. Captain Arthur I. Pool led the rally for the colors, consequently, they did not fall and the outstanding record of the past continued as an inspiration for the future.

During the search to locate former members, most if not all, have commented the "the 150th Trans Det, is the best experience of their Army career." That is a testament to the professional leadership qualities of the 150th Transportation Detachment in the people of Frederick R. "Tim" Bisch and John C. "Jack" Moodt. An opportunity to relax, enjoy and be in the company of those who helped make your experience in the 150th the best of your Army career awaits you in Branson, MO. Should your work schedule, or other personal obligations, preclude your attendance, please keep in touch. Remember, you contributed to our memories, and you will be missed.

Frank Estes adds: This bit of history hopefully will get you excited enough to register for our September 2026 Outlaws Roundup in Washington D.C.





A LIFETIME AGO!!

by Frank Estes



Has it REALLY been 62 to 54 years since our group of then-young men came together in a country that most Americans couldn't even locate on a map? At a little airstrip, carved out of Mekong Delta rice paddies, known as Vinh Long? Yes, friends, six-plus decades have passed since we went to war and served our country in the same way thousands of other young men and women are doing today.

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

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

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

A key event at our reunion at the Home of Army Aviation the fall of 2004, was the unveiling, and presentation to the Army Aviation Center's Veterans' Park, of a monument dedicated to the memory of all those who served, in any capacity, in any of the units that comprised the "Vinh Long Outlaws" organization. We also presented a memorial plaque to the Army Aviation Museum recognizing the service of all of you who were members of that organization. Funding for these memorials was raised entirely from within our Vinh Long Outlaws Association.

We were unique! History has shown that we were the spearhead unit for the entire massive buildup of US forces in Vietnam. Many years ago, Fort Rucker recognized our unit by naming a major street "Outlaw Street." Additionally, a key classroom building at Fort Rucker located on Outlaw Street was named "Sanford Hall" after one of our own, Jack Sanford, the first Maverick Lead. And our VLOA group was initially a uniquely small organization, but over the years grew to more than 500 members.

Cont. on pg. 17.

Cont. from pg. 16.

At our Outlaws Roundups and to initially ensure that we would be among those people who meant so much to each other during that year 62 years ago, we limited our VLOA membership to those who served at any time between August 1964 and September 1965. But, during the 2004 Rucker Roundup, numerous Outlaws voiced the opinion that we should open the VLOA to all year-groups. The majority of Outlaws Roundup attendees voted to open the VLOA to all year-groups, and continue Outlaw Roundups every two years. That decision has shown to be a wise one, because the growth in membership in the VLOA took a drastic upward trend. Follow-on Roundups began to grow, AND the raffle and Silent Auction began putting much needed funds into the VLOA treasury.

Today, we must realistically face the fact that some of us may not be able to attend the reunion this year or even two years from now. Further, that friend that you have wanted to see again, for so many years, may not be able to attend the next time. Clearly, we have decisions to make on whether enough attendees warrant continuing our Outlaws Roundups. But, Jim Donnelly has gone to great lengths to prepare a memorable Outlaws Roundup in Washington D.C.

SO, sign up, come to Washington D.C. for a few days, and recapture the spirit and mood of all those "young" men who served together in Vinh Long 62 through 54 YEARS AGO! Don't put it off! Don't allow yourself to regret that you didn't attend. This time together, this unique event from September 17 thru 21, 2026, is truly one-of-a-kind. Don't miss it!

This article by Tom Anderson was published in the Outlaws News in 2004, encouraging members to attend the Fort Rucker Outlaws Roundup. I have updated it to reflect the current VLOA situation, and encourage members to attend the September 2026 Outlaws Roundup



How Building an Outlaw Virtual Memorial Uncovered a 33-Year Vietnam Mystery

By Lori Gaff Hausenfluke — Outlaw 13

(Warrant Officer who served with B Troop 1-158th Avn. Reg't)

For those less familiar with me, I proudly served as a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF II) with the B Troop Outlaws (2003–2008). I am a lifelong genealogist, and I started researching my family tree with my parents in the mid-1970s. I went on to become a Forensic Genetic Genealogist, which is how I wound up on “Dateline NBC.” (But that’s a story for a different day.)

Around Memorial Day, I had an idea to build a virtual memorial on FindAGrave.com for the KIA Outlaws. My goal was straightforward: identify our fallen Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners, and Bushwhackers and ensure that those who flew before us received proper recognition.

We owe an immense debt to the crews who pioneered the TTP (Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures) that guided our own combat operations decades later. Though generations separated us, a shared aviation heritage honors the timeless connection we all share as Outlaws.

However, digging into mission logs and accident reports inevitably pulls one deeper into the story. The project expanded significantly as the massive assemblage of records regarding our KIAs came to light. I had worked my way through the entries of Huey crews from 1966–1971.

While compiling the 1967 casualties, questions arose regarding non-unit personnel who perished aboard Outlaw aircraft, such as civilians and service members assigned to outside commands as well as Outlaw veterans who passed away in the years following the war. Ultimately, the correct path forward was clear: anyone who served as an Outlaw or died aboard an Outlaw flight belonged in this record.

But while reviewing the loss summary for UH-1D Tail Number 66-01099, I stumbled upon something that left me completely stunned.

What began as a routine web search for biographical details spiraled into an astonishing, decades-long mystery obscured by the shroud of the Vietnam War.

The Tragedy over Tan Son Nhut

1967 was a pivotal transition year for Army Aviation. The intense op-tempo and relentless airmobile combat missions improved helicopter warfare by integrating next-gen attack rotorcraft and mobilizing major standalone aviation commands. AH-1 Cobras suddenly became the enemy’s worst nightmare.

IV Corps and Vinh Long were strategically positioned in the heart of the Mekong Delta; Vinh Long was nestled between the Tien and Hau rivers (the two primary branches of the Mekong River). Here the venerable 175th Assault Helicopter Company carved out their operational footprint, launching daily above the surrounding labyrinth of rice paddies and waterways.

From this delta outpost, the crews of the venerable 175th Assault Helicopter Company prepared daily for missions that would echo far beyond the flight line.

9 August 1967 began like any other day for one crew flying combat missions in the sweltering Mekong Delta region of Southern Vietnam. Their call sign was “Outlaw 22.”

Cont. from pg.18.

The Crew:

- MAJ Charles R. Latta — Aircraft Commander (AC)
- 1LT George F. Sodaitis — Pilot (P)
- SP4 Gary R. Kooman — Crew Chief (CE)
- SP4 Gerald L. Hopper — Gunner (G)

The aircraft they would travel on that day was a nearly new UH-1D (#66-01099) that the Army had purchased in January of 1967, and this trusty steed had logged only 303 hours as of that fateful day.

The crew departed Vinh Long Air Field at 0942 hours and headed to Can Tho Air Field, Bear Cat Air Field, and Long Binh, with a planned return to Vinh Long.

While at Long Binh Post — the military's sprawling command and logistics headquarters (15 to 20 miles northeast of Saigon in Dong Nai Province) — the Outlaw crew landed at the 24th Evacuation Hospital. The facility featured a helipad that served as a central transit hub for aircraft shuttling personnel throughout the region. As one of the premier U.S. Army medical facilities in Vietnam, this vital outpost treated high volumes of wounded.

That is where the Outlaw crew picked up two pax: PVT William J. McRae (listed as a Petroleum Storage Specialist with the Quartermaster Corps, 175th AHC). He had only been in the Army since 12 March 1966.

Also onboard that day was a civilian contractor and unlisted passenger named Jerry Lawrence Degnan. Degnan, a 28-year-old native of Canfield, Ohio, was in Saigon, working for Decca Navigator Systems, training Army pilots on advanced navigation methods.

The presence of these two additional passengers aboard the Outlaw aircraft remains an unanswered question, unless someone who was there at the time can enlighten us. But, according to research in Dr. Sarah Wagner's paper "The making and unmaking of an unknown soldier," PVT William J. McRae "boarded the helicopter after being released from the notorious Long Binh jail ("LBJ"), a military stockade." Because PVT McRae appeared on the passenger list, the Outlaw crew likely traveled to the airfield to retrieve him, leaving Degnan to seize the fateful opportunity too.

Outlaw 22 pulled pitch at 1554 hours to begin their journey back to Vinh Long, but they never made it. The crew began their final departure in a northwesterly direction. They maintained their climb while banking slightly to the right to carefully steer clear of populated areas and the sometimes dense air traffic surrounding Long Binh. Their climbing turn was maintained until they established a south-southwesterly heading between 1,500 and 1,800 feet MSL. Based on accounts, they may have felt that altitude would keep them out of the cloud cover that was overhead that day.

Meanwhile, an Air Force RF-101C Voodoo jet (#56-0225) piloted by Captain Jack Bond (assigned to Detachment 1, 45th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron, 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing) was returning to Tan Son Nhut Air Base after completing a mission to obtain reconnaissance photos.

The 45th's primary directive was to conduct high-speed, visual and photographic reconnaissance. These crews took vital aerial intelligence photos to track enemy troops, supply-line movements, and base

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fortifications by using a variety of large Fairchild cameras. These photos were transferred to tactical intelligence teams to plan air strikes and ground operations.

The RF-101C Voodoo typically flew as an unarmed supersonic aircraft — usually flying alone and often at low altitudes. The 45th was nicknamed “Polka Dot.” This unique moniker originated with their squadron emblem, a black cat on a bright yellow, polka-dotted background.

On the day in question, due to the skosh weather, Tan Son Nhut ATC (“Paris Control”) gave Captain Bond vectors for landing via a Ground Controlled Approach (GCA). These instructions were often anticipated and even prioritized, because the unarmed RF-101s were often badly shot up and in need of immediate assistance.

At 1557 hours, while descending, the Voodoo aircraft emerged from the cloud cover and was face to face with the Outlaw Huey. Despite Captain Bond’s evasive maneuvers, the resulting collision was unavoidable.

According to the accident investigation report, the catastrophic impact destroyed the Huey’s main rotor system and sheared off the tail. The UH-1D fell in a southwest direction, nosing down and over, losing pieces of the airframe and other material stowed in the cabin section.

The Aircraft Commander and the Gunner were reportedly either thrown or jumped clear of the aircraft before impact. The aircraft struck the ground in a nose-down, inverted attitude, completely demolishing the aircraft. A post-impact fire gutted the wreckage except the pilot’s compartment.

All personnel aboard Outlaw 22 perished.

Meet Jack Bond

The official report also noted that the RF-101C experienced a right engine flameout. Full power on the left engine failed to produce sufficient flying speed to control the aircraft. The RF-101C continued on a descending course of approximately 250 degrees. The aircraft started to nose over uncontrolled at approximately 175 knots IAS. The RF-101C impacted in a level attitude approximately three and a half miles from the assumed collision point and three miles from the UH-1D impact point.

Prior to impact, Captain Jack Bond managed to eject from his crippled jet at the last second. He became the lone survivor of this horrific accident — however, he suffered major injuries.

In a later interview he gave in 2011, Lt. Col (Ret.) Bond described the terrible day: “One incident that occurred that was real bad ... I had been on a mission taking pictures in the 101 and on the way back ... I was coming down through the weather under radar control. And just as I broke out, there was a helicopter right in front of me. I jerked back on the stick, and the bottom went right through his rotors. One engine flamed out, and the plane yawed back and forth quite a bit ... The plane was going down like a bomb. I thought about saving the plane, but I thought I gotta get out of here, so I ejected. The parachute blossomed, and it couldn’t have been but about three to five seconds, and I hit the ground.”

Ironically, an Army helicopter landed to MEDEVAC Captain Bond to a nearby Army hospital with a broken back, where he began the process of recovering.

Cont. on pg.21.

Cont. from pg. 20

But the story hardly ended there. Inexplicably, the tragic administrative fog of war set in, and the aftereffects of this soon-to-be-discovered mystery would linger for decades.

A 33-Year Mystery

When initial recovery teams searched the wreckage at the crash site, they accounted for the five crew members listed on the manifest.

However, despite dogtags, an identity card, anthropological analysis, and other very compelling evidence, they misidentified the fifth body based on general physical stature, matching the remains to a soldier from Boston, Massachusetts. Army officials sent those remains to Boston, where they were interred under the name PVT William Joseph McRae.

Four months later, search teams returned to the crash site and recovered a sixth body — found with dog tags and IDs belonging to the Boston soldier who had already been buried. Despite this obvious evidence that the sixth body was PVT McRae, somehow military authorities at the Tan Son Nhut Mortuary either overlooked or ignored the fact that there were now TWO persons identified as PVT William J. McRae.

The newly recovered remains were sent to the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI), where officials further overlooked the mixup. PVT McRae's body sat in archival limbo for years until providence arrived in the form of a directive from the Pentagon to produce a Vietnam "unknown," which ironically helped unravel this whole mess.

How an Outlaw was nearly Interred in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

This part gets a little wild, so hold on tight. I'm still unsure if I totally understand how this happened, but this is what I know.

From 1967 until 1980, military casualty tracking systems failed to purge PVT McRae's profile after "his" 1967 burial. Theoretically, when someone was identified as McRae, "his" file should have been removed from the system. But it just sat there. (Maybe because on some level they knew he really was McRae?)

Fast forward to October 1972: South Vietnamese troops recovered unidentified remains (Unknown X-32) near An Loc. The evidence pointed to Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie (a 24-year-old fighter pilot who was flying his 132nd combat mission in an A-37B Dragonfly when his aircraft was struck by intense ground fire and crashed near An Loc).

To figure out who X-32 belonged to, mortuary analysts queried the casualty database for any active, unresolved files in that general sector of Vietnam. Because PVT McRae's profile remained active in 1967, the computer system flagged him for X-32 in 1972. That generated what investigators later called the duplicate "second" PVT William McRae profile.

Then in 1980, CILHI closed the "Believed To Be (BTB)Michael Blassie" file. Rigid military identification protocols forced the lab to strip a service member's name whenever an anthropology estimate conflicted with medical records — regardless of the overwhelming evidence recovered at the crash (ID card, flight suit, and ejection seat harness). The anthropologist estimated the remains belonged to an individual between 5'11" and 6'1" tall, which was way different than Blassie's records, which listed him

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at 5' .”6Consequently, military authorities revoked Blassie’s tentative identification and reclassified the physical remains as Unknown X-26 (later designated X-32).

Only during this 1980 audit did investigators manually verify PVT McRae’s 1967 burial records, realize the duplicate profile was a clerical error, and finally purge his name from the candidate list.

Then, in 1982, during the process to select remains of an unidentified service member for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, forensic investigators re-examined the mystery body in Hawaii. Modern analysis proved a startling fact: The body sitting in Hawaii was actually PVT McRae — the soldier supposedly buried in Boston.

So, military officials exhumed the body interred in Boston (nicknamed “Boston Billy”), and the proper remains were then identified as PVT William J. McRae and laid to rest.

“Boston Billy” was transferred back to CILHI in Hawaii, and for another torturous 16 years — they remained unidentified. But that left a lingering question: Who had been buried in Boston for the past 15 years?

His Name was Finally Given Back

At long last, in February 1999 — nearly 32 years after UH-1D #66-01099 went down — Army forensic investigator Robert Maves examined emerging mitochondrial DNA testing. The lab matched bone fragments to DNA samples provided by the family of Jerry Lawrence Degnan.

In April 2001, the military officially confirmed the DNA match. In May of 2001, the remains of Jerry Degnan were finally brought home to Ohio, where he was at long last released to his brother, Ronald Degnan. Jerry’s remaining family held a private funeral to lay him to rest finally — and after 33 long years, the mystery was finally put to rest.

Postscripts

Lt. Col. Jack Bond (USAF, Ret.)

The Air Force pilot at the controls that day, Jack Bond, passed away near Dallas, TX, on 23 June 2023. Back in 1951, he joined the Air Force and eventually logged over 3,900 hours in the cockpit—mostly flying Northrop’s F-89D Scorpion and the McDonnell RF-101C Voodoo. He recovered from his injuries and returned to flight status. Bond earned a Distinguished Flying Cross and nine Air Medals, as well as numerous meritorious awards. He retired in 1975. His older brother, Maj. Gen. Charles R. Bond Jr., served in World War II with the 1st American Volunteer Group — the illustrious Flying Tigers. These forces were recruited by the President and authorized to aid China against invading Japanese forces; the squadron engaged in its first battle less than two weeks after Pearl Harbor.

The Degnan Family

Jerry Degnan’s family was finally able to bring their boy home. But decades of insensitive government handling compounded their grief. Military officials later admitted to administrative errors, yet that admission provided little comfort after years of profound mismanagement. Authorities finally notified the family of Jerry’s identification through a cold, routine letter — versus an in-person delivery. Worse, the government shipped Degnan’s remains from Hawaii to Cleveland in a crude plywood box, wrapping his bones in only a military blanket.

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The Degnan family's painful ordeal with CILHI and military officials understandably left them feeling a deep sense of betrayal, which highlighted the numerous flaws in the treatment of civilian contractors killed in combat zones. Although, civilian employers typically covered transportation costs for fallen personnel. However, because Decca Navigator Systems closed years after Degnan's death, provisional measures were lacking to protect the family. This resulted in the government passing a \$700 transport bill directly to Degnan's grieving relatives for a shoddy delivery.

I believe that Jerry's brother Ronald (and his kids) are the only ones still alive to remember Jerry now. The Degnan family has headstones all together in Canfield, OH — So at last they can be together again in death.

PVT McRae's Family

The real PVT William Joseph McRae was eventually laid to rest in Oak Grove Cemetery in Medford, MA. His hometown was listed as Somerville, MA.

While the Degnan family's decades-long search for answers became a matter of public record, I was unable to find a public media footprint or press statement from PVT McRae's family regarding the initial 1967 misidentification or the subsequent 1982 exhumation. Any communication that took place between the Department of Defense and the McRae family over those intervening years remains unknown, leaving Ronald Degnan's account as the sole public record of how the mixup was resolved.

PVT McRae's mother, Margherita Rose Bertolani, passed away in 1996. His father, William Edward McRae, Jr., died in 1969, without learning the truth about the tragic mixup with his son's remains.

Decca Navigator Systems (DNS)

Ground-based hyperbolic navigation systems played a big role in aviation because the Army installed a low-frequency radio navigation chain across the region. DNS had a long run (operating from 1944–2000) but was rendered obsolete by satellite technology, specifically GPS. Once GPS reached full capability with 24 satellites in the mid-1990s, governments stopped funding ground-based radio chains. The UK/European maritime authorities turned off the last Decca chains on 31 March 2000, bringing an end to a system that had guided everything from D-Day mine-sweepers to Vietnam-era Army aviators.

What happened to X-32?

By 1984, intense pressure from Congress and major veterans organizations forced President Reagan's administration to select a Vietnam veteran for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, even though advanced recovery and tracking technologies left the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii with virtually no unidentifiable remains. To satisfy the mandate, military officials audited regional loss records to certify Unknown X-32 as unresolvable — deliberately overruling internal lab analysts who knew crash site artifacts strongly pointed to Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie — and interred X-32 at Arlington National Cemetery on 28 May 1984. The remains rested in the Vietnam Crypt for 14 years until POW/MIA activist Ted Sampley uncovered documents linking X-32 to Blassie, prompting a bombshell January 1998 CBS News investigation and a formal petition from the Blassie family. In May 1998, Defense Secretary William Cohen ordered the exhumation of Unknown X-32, and subsequent mitochondrial DNA testing confirmed the remains belonged to Michael Blassie, finally bringing truth to the administrative cover-up.

(Note: The Vietnam Crypt at the Tomb of the Unknowns remains empty today.)

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Final Resting Places of Outlaw 22

- MAJ Charles R. Latta (Aircraft Commander / Pilot)

Burial: Memory Hill Cemetery, Dothan, AL

- 1LT George Frank Sodaitis (Co-Pilot)

Burial: Old Saint Joseph's Catholic Cemetery, Frackville, PA

- SP4 Gary Richard Kooman (Crew Chief)

Burial: Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, NY

- SP4 Gerald L. Hopper (Door Gunner)

Willamette National Cemetery, Portland, OR

These men left a host of family and friends to mourn their passing and cherish their memories. Even though we are unable to imagine the depths of your experience as Gold Star family members, their memories live on through their incredible legacies.

Remembering All Outlaws

As an Outlaw who served years later in Iraq, reading through these reports was a sobering reminder of the chaos of war — and the sacred duty we have to bring everyone home. Although government missteps and egregious errors raised questions for the Degnan family, the ultimate truth prevailed: Jerry Degnan was a passenger on a flight with “Outlaw Aviation” who gave his life alongside our military crews. But I wonder if there are other mixups still buried in history.

As I reviewed each record, the broader mission became clear. Many of these fallen aviators still lacked a Find A Grave profile— a crucial anchor for family members attempting to piece together the facts of a loved one's sacrifice. In response, I began tracing family trees, writing biographical entries, and gathering photos. These heroes and their families deserve far better.

This work remains ongoing, but the investigation into the crash of Outlaw 22 and the lost records of McRae/Degnan revealed a story too important to leave untold.

The information compiled reflects the confirmed combat casualties of the 175th Assault Helicopter Company and its supporting elements verified thus far. Beyond our wartime losses, I did make a special point to add the first non-KIA Outlaw of whom I knew well — our B Troop crew chief — SPC Matthew Thomas Myers (11 June 1984 – 16 April 2006) aka Outlaw 84.

Preserving this history requires a collective effort. If you served with the 175th, or if you can help verify, correct, or expand these records, please get in touch with me directly at cwolorigaff@gmail.com (use OUTLAWS in the subject line). Complete primary sources for this research will be available on lorigaff.com following newsletter publication.

I undertook this project with a grateful heart, hoping to create an enduring tribute that transcends time and space, while documenting the service and sacrifices, and honoring the legacy of those who have gone on before us and, hopefully, ensuring their stories and courage continue to inspire future generations.

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Cont. from pg. 24.

Most of all, we ensure that MAJ Latta, 1LT Sodaitis, SP4 Kooman, SP4 Hopper, PVT McRae, CIV Jerry Degnan, as well as the rest of our 175th heroes, are gathered together once more and remembered today and always.

Outlaws Ride Hard. Outlaws Remember.

Outlaw Virtual Cemetery

<https://www.findagrave.com/virtual-cemetery/2124480>



Ft. Riley Major Dies in Vietnam

JUNCTION CITY, Kas.—Maj. Charles R. Latta, 36, Junction City, a 9th Infantry division helicopter pilot, was killed in a midair collision in Vietnam, the Department of Defense announced Friday.

Mrs. Latta and her three children reside here.

Latta, a native of Savannah, Ga., served 15 years with the Air Force and the Army. He was assigned to the 9th Infantry Division at Ft. Riley, Kas., last September and went to Vietnam with the 13th Aviation battalion in January.

MAJ Latta — Outlaw 22

(Photo Credit unknown — I found this in the Outlaw group)

Somerville G.I. Missing

A Somerville Army private is missing in action the Defense Department announced Monday.

Pvt. William J. McRae, son of Mrs. Margherita B. McRae of 47 Porter st., Somerville, was reported missing.

Cont. on pg. 26.

Cont. from pg. 25.



(OVER) DUPLICATE **V** VIETNAM

Name	McRAE, William J. #1				
Age	23	Years	2	Months	18
Died	9th	Day	August	Month	1967
Cause	Killed in action - Vietnam				
Place of Death	Vietnam				
Placed in Tomb		Day		Month	Year
Interred	17 th	Day	August	Month	1967
Lot		Grave	D-1b (Also owns D-1a)		
Location	Pine Lawn	Proprietor	Marion O. Gnerre		
Removed	29 th	Day	October	Month	1982
To	Fort Devens by Gaffey				
Remarks	Res.: 47 A Porter St., Somerville				
Undertaker	Wilwerth, Somerville				

8:30 A.M.



MAJ Charles R. Latta
1LT George F. Sodaitis
SP4 Gary R. Kooman and
SP4 Gerald L. Hopper.

Outlaw 22 also carried two passengers:
PVT William J. McRae (Quartermaster Corps 175th) and
a civilian contractor named Jerry Lawrence Degnan.



Junction City Major Killed

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Department Monday changed from missing to dead-non hostile its listing of Maj. Charles R. Latta, Junction City, Kan., among Army Vietnam casualties.

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Cont. from pg. 26.



Dallas Tx - U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Jack Bond, takes part in the Air Force Veteran's in Blue project July 24, 2014, in Dallas, TX. (US Air Force Photo by Senior Airman Daniel Hughes)



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Cont. from pg. 27.



Greetings to all my 175th Assault Helicopter Company Brothers and Families

I hope that everyone has had a Great Beginning to this New Year in Good Spirits and in Great Health. With our next reunion in our Nation's Capital, Washington DC. looming in the horizon of September 2026 and the reality that it may or may not be our last. It is my belief that it would be a befitting reason for us to leave Our Legacy behind for all our future generations to see and know that we, the 175th Assault Helicopter Company existed in Vinh Long, and made a difference in the era of a very unpopular war, Vietnam. As I reflect on my visit to The National Museum of the United States Army, on Veterans Day, to see my Army Heritage Foundation Commemorative Brick, that was installed for Veterans Day.

I thought of what a Distinct Honor it would be to have the 175th Assault Helicopter Company Outlaws/ Mavericks, immortalized forever in the museum as one of the units in the Helicopter War in Vietnam, for all who visit now and, in the future, to see, and to Honor Us with a Unit Tribute Plaque. It is a pricey deal of course, but worth it to all who were proud to serve, and members of the Vinh Long Outlaws Association. There is a funding program in place at the museum where a unit plaque can be installed with funding from unit members, supporters and or sponsors. All donations going directly to the museum, no funds going to any one individual. This will be a great way to preserve our Outlaws History in the annals of war in The Heritage of United States Army. I have established a fund-raising campaign page for all to see, and anyone interested in making a contribution.

Cont. from pg. 29.

As members of the VLOA and the Outlaws & Mavericks/175th AHC Facebook page, if you think this is a good and positive idea, Please, consider making a donation and join this venture. For more information see/read the attached, and at the museum's website thenmusa.org or email:

customerservice@armyhistory.org

There is one concern though, the timing, maybe it's too late, or maybe not, that's the nature of the Beast! well that's to be seen. Plaques are installed twice a year, the 1st is for Memorial Day and funded by February 15th, and the 2nd is for Veterans Day and funded by August 15th. It's a 7-8-week process for logos design, proofread the narrative and edit before fabrication and installation.

With that said, it gives us two options, 1st, for the Tribute Plaque to be ready and installed by our VLOA reunion in September 2026, it has to be funded by February 15th 2026, 2nd, whenever the funding goal is attained and installed at a future date.

All interested in making a contribution, go to the Army Historical Foundation's website.

armyhistory.causevox.com/outlaws

It will bring you directly to 175th AHC Outlaws and Mavericks page.

Please, read the informational attachment.

Everyone Stay Well and Stay Safe with God's Blessings
See ya in September.

Thank You.

Emilio Alvarado

67/ 68



Charles "Charlie" Milton Dobbins

July 22, 1940—May 6, 2026.

May he rest in peace—
God Bless His Soul.



Charles "Charlie" Milton Dobbins passed away at home with his family around him on May 6, 2026, after a short battle with kidney disease.

Charlie was born to Charles Alvin Dobbins and Frances Lowe Dobbins in Gladewater, TX. He lived with his siblings Francine, Larry, and Kay in Pleasanton, TX until high school graduation. He attended North Texas University until he joined the Army. He became a helicopter pilot and served in Vietnam. He later served as a flying instructor.

Charlie spent most of his professional career in the power business, testing, constructing, maintaining, and supplying services to power plants. Before the family moved to North Carolina, he married Priscilla Brown. His work next brought the family back to Bay City, TX, then to Monroe, MI, Kenner, LA and then back to Wharton, TX where they lived for 20 years. Swimming, plinking, fishing, traveling, sightseeing, and the kids kept him busy in his spare time. During those 20 years Charlie traveled extensively servicing co-generation plants in India, California, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Tired of traveling, the family settled in Kerrville, TX where he taught high school math to underserved children. He often said that "this is the hardest job I have ever had making the least amount of money!"

Retirement called. When his health began to fail, Charlie and Prissy moved to the Woodlands to be close to family.

Charlie was honest, loyal, humble, and loving. He served as a deacon in Presbyterian churches in Michigan and Wharton and sang in the choir when he wasn't traveling.

Charlie is survived by his supportive wife Priscilla (Prissy) and three adult children, David Dobbins (Melissa), Laura Ann Beal, and Raymond Dobbins (Cheryl). Charlie was previously married to Gail Grimsley. They had two children, Blaine and LeeAnne (both deceased). He was extremely proud of his seven grandchildren: Devon Wilson (Mark), Kelsie Dobbins, Pierce Segler (Annie), Ella Dobbins, Rachael Beal, Michael Beal, Benjamin Dobbins. He is also survived by his brother Larry Dobbins (LaRue), and his sister Elizabeth "Kay" Bradham.

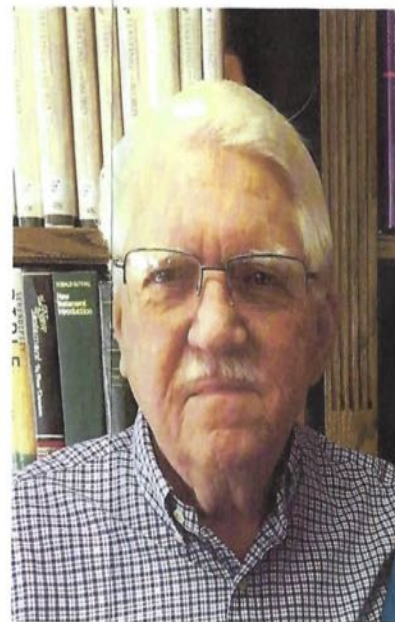
The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church
4881 West Panther Creek Dr., The Woodlands, Texas 77381
Pastor: Rev. Dr. David F. Jones; Associate Pastor: Rev. Laura R. Grice

The Woodlands Community Presbyterian Church

"An Inclusive Church Family: Loving, Sharing, and Serving Christ."

Service of Worship

Witness to our Faith in the Resurrection



Given in Thanksgiving and Love for the life
of

Charles "Charlie" Milton Dobbins

July 22, 1940— May 6, 2026

'od every time I remember you.

Philippians 1:3

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Summer/Fall- 2026

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 “doorgunners.”

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 Jim Donnelly, 2413 General Longstreet Drive, Virginia Beach, VA 23454

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/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: _____