

April - June
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VINH LONG OUTLAWS NEWS

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION
(VLOA)

R2K6 Sign-up Extended !

Registration for Roundup R2K6 in Pigeon Forge is right on track ! However, because we have heard there are a few old Outlaws out there who have not yet committed to come because the registration deadline has passed, **GOOD NEWS !**

The deadline for registrations has been extended until no later than 15 August. Get on the phone to Chuck Wren, right now, (732-222-5579) and let him know you'll be sending your Registration form in as soon as you finish talking to him. You won't regret it !

A "Few Words" About R2K6

For a final coordination meeting, in mid-July, Pat and I made a two-day trip to the reunion site in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. I sat down with the manager of the MainStay Suites hotel where we'll be staying (Dan Sandlin) and with our reunion coordinator, Bill Oliver. After our meeting I came away with a renewed conviction that we will have an outstanding Roundup R2K6 in the heart of the Smokies in late September. The hotel is bending over backwards to ensure we have a fantastic stay and our coordinator has gone the extra mile for us in every respect.

Your reunion will begin as soon as you view the large VLOA outdoor and indoor banners the hotel will put in place for us. Then continue to the registration table where you'll pick up your room key, a fabulous bag of gifts and more reunion information, courtesy of the VLOA. Then, after dropping your bags in your suite, you'll want to make your first visit to the VLOA hospitality suite. (Bring along any photo albums, memorabilia or other such items you would like to display in the hospitality suite!)

Here's where I have a real problem. Because it would take up SO much room in this column, I can't even attempt to outline all the great activities lined up for VLOA members and guests. And I won't try to tell you about the big rooms in the hotel. And there's only limited space here to say you'll have to come Roundup R2K6 to get the feel for the outdoor pavilion first-night barbeque dinner.

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I can only hint that the trip into the Smokey Mountains has to be experienced to be appreciated! Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede show is a "must" for most visitors to the area, but I can't begin to tell you more about it here! A visit to Dollywood itself is as different as anything you'll ever do, but you'll have to be there to believe it for yourself!
(Reduced price tickets are available).

I won't go into detail regarding the great hospitality suite or the soft drinks, wine, beer and snacks that will be available all through our stay.

I won't dwell on the great Silent Auction being put together by Ole and Mary Thornton because you wouldn't believe the innovative ideas and artistic quality of all the hand-crafted items to be offered for purchase!

I shouldn't take too much time talking about the Sunday morning, outdoor chapel service to be headed by Chaplain John Doyle with assistance from a volunteer from the local area. You'll just have to be there to appreciate the fact that the service will be set in a country atmosphere, under a pavilion roof, next to a babbling creek. (What a fantastic setting for nondenominational reflections on why we should be so very grateful for being able to assemble every two years).

There's also no space available to remind you that our VLOA membership meeting is about as much fun, and as informative, as anything you'll ever attend. (If you've been to a VLOA reunion before, you already know the camaraderie that literally bubbles over at THAT event).

I also can't tell you here about the several Factory Outlet Malls within 3-5 miles of our hotel. (Ladies. . . bring your credit cards. . . Pat tells me she saves LOTS of money by spending all that money in the Malls !)

And, there's no room to go on and on here about the fantastic food at the Apple Barn Farmhouse Grille. . . you'll just have to be there! And the golf course where several members have signed up to play. . . it's merely gorgeous!

And I won't even try to tell you about the lineup of events planned for the big closing banquet on Sunday evening. (Ernie Isbell will again be at the mike)

What I CAN relate to you, however, is that Chuck Wren has already spent literally hundreds of hours coordinating the dozens of reservation requests he has already received and is waiting for those few of you who have not yet signed up. And Al Iller has spent an equal amount of time on the phone and in person coordinating the ordering and delivery of the VLOA gifts, VLOA shirts and VLOA information for attendees.

And finally, I must relate a very telling comment made by both the hotel manager and the event planner as I was meeting with them last week in Pigeon Forge. We were discussing the fact that a great group of Vietnam veterans will be assembling in Pigeon Forge in September. Both Bill Oliver and Dan Sandlin looked at me and said, "Do you know what we do for people like that???" I asked, "What?" Their joint response was, "Everything we can!" What more can I say that would assure you we'll have a great time.

If you haven't signed up yet, DO IT NOW ! You'll never be able to make up what you miss at one of the great VLOA reunions !

Tom Anderson

Dwight D. Eisenhower: Famous Military Quotes

"Neither a wise nor a brave man lies down on the tracks of history to wait for the train of the future to run over him."

MESSAGE FROM VIRGINIA & LEON OSTERLAND:

Greetings Outlaws, Et Al,

After the glowing review of East Tennessee by Tom, there isn't much left to say. But... Virginia and Leon O. would like to add our "two cents worth". In addition to shopping in Pigeon Forge, just down the road is more shopping in Gatlinburg. Across the mountains (30 miles) is Cherokee, N.C. with gambling for those so inclined. On I-40 at Exit 407 is a new Bass Pro Shop with lots of "stuff" for everyone.

Another place of interest is "Smokey Mountain Knife Works" where they advertise a 50,000 square foot show room of knives and related items. Mr. Kevin Pipes, (owner of SMKW) has a program called "Knife for a Soldier" which may be of interest also.

WELCOME ALL and we will be looking forward to seeing you all in Pigeon Forge!

Virginia and Leon Osterland

REDNECK WIENER ROASTING!!

Now admit it...unless you are a RED-
NECK,

You never thought of such a BRIL-
LIANT plan!



VLOA NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR:

This is Mitzi and my seventh summer at our farm in Wisconsin. Notice many changes in farming practices since my early years on a dairy farm. Our modern renter doesn't need or use a fork or shovel while harvesting. He only uses a big tractor pulling complex large scale equipment to increase capacity and save time. Farmers work hard during long hours at risk of weather and markets. On a personal note, not complaining but I haven't noticed any changes in the routine of picking raspberries or tending a garden. Love fall seasons here but it will be a special treat this year viewing the Smoky Mountains in September from Pigeon Forge.

It is/was my honor to serve as VLOA Director. Support and assistance when needed was ably and immediately provided. In particular, Al and Nell Moist, Bud Allie, John Doyle, Bob Koonce, Emmadel and Chester Voisin, Pat and Patty Theriot, Chuck Wren, Al Iller and Tom Anderson came through for our VLOA. Special kudos go to our Communication Directors Al and Nell Moist for their excellent preparation and timely distribution of our Newsletter. We look forward to receiving and reading it for its interesting articles and important information. Also deserving is Bud Allie for stepping forward to serve as our "interim" Web Master at our R2K+4 business meeting in October, 2004 at Ozark, AL. Within six weeks our web page was back on line. VLOA is fortunate to have both the Newsletter and web page for communication. Despite Bud's recent illness and current recuperation efforts, he continues to work processing our input and correcting system problems, i.e., posting a simple email process for sending entries to the Guest Book preventing it from being a target for spammers and smut peddlers. Great job Bud! Get better soon. See you at Pigeon Forge.

My best wishes to our VLOA members, their families, and VLOA Associates.

Respectfully,

Tim Bisch

IN MEMORIAM:

LTC(R) John (Jack) O. Northridge, Boydtown, VA passed away April 13, 2006. Jack fought a good fight against the ravages of Agent Orange related cancer.

Jack was a dual rated aviator. He served as a Bird Dog pilot for the 74th Aviation Company. He flew out of Vinh Long while his unit was attached to A Co, 502nd Aviation Bn during 1965.

Learned Jack met with his brother, LTC(R) Henry Richard Northridge, also an Army aviator, during one of their tours in Viet Nam. Was sad that brother Henry died during September, 2005, also as a result of Agent Orange related diseases. Two of four brothers lost due to that poison!

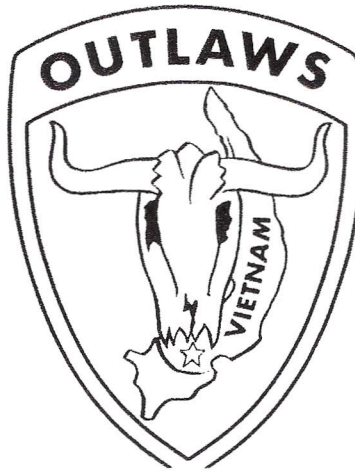
Jack is survived by his wife of 47 years, Judy, three sons and daughters-in-law, one daughter, two brothers and seven grandchildren. Judy said his burial ceremony included taps played (live) and flag folding/presentation that was so meaningful to the family.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society, 801 Broad Street, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702.

Our VLOA extends their sincere and deepest condolences to Judy and her family.

(contributed by Tim Bisch)

OUTLAWS SKULL STORY



Having returned from a post WWII assignment in Europe, Captain Albert "Al" E. Kinder, Jr. U.S. Army Air Corps (later designated U.S. Air Force) was assigned to Davis Monthan Air Base, Tucson, Arizona in 1947. A seasoned combat veteran who served in both the Pacific and European theaters as bombardier/navigator flying in B-26 Marauders and B-17 Flying Fortresses. He was awarded the DFC, Air Medal with 7 Oak Leaf clusters and his unit the Presidential Unit Citation. Little had he realized as a graduate from the University of Texas in 1942 how world events would change his life and his new assignment would eventually link him to the Vinh Long Outlaws.

By 1948, while still assigned at Davis Monthan Air Base, he met Mary Ann Adams and they married. Soon after their marriage, Al separated from the service in 1949 and went to work for Mary Ann's aunt in the warehouse and transfer business. Al remained with the business while he and Mary Ann established themselves in Tucson and raised their family; a daughter by Mary Ann's previous marriage and two sons of their own.

Along came 1951 and through some remaining connections with Davis Monthan Air Base, Al was asked to help an Air Force widow and her family house hunt in Tucson. The woman was Gertrude "Babs" Bergquist, the widow of Colonel Ehrling Bergquist, MD killed in a tragic airplane crash on February 12, 1948 at Offutt AFB, Nebraska. Babs has just returned with her two children, Barbara, fourteen years and Robert, ten years to settle down and make Tucson their home. A house was found for the Bergquists in a neighborhood not far from the Kinders. Not long after, the Kinder's relocated and moved into a house just across the street from the Bergquists. The two families established a bonding relationship which remains to this day.

As the Bergquist children grew and their close family relationships continued, Al became somewhat of a surrogate father to them. He saw them grow up, graduate from college. Bob entered the U. S. Army, completed OCS and Army Aviator training at Ft Rucker as a helicopter pilot, assigned to the 11th Air Assault Division (Test) at Ft Benning, GA. and ultimately to the 62d Aviation Company bound for Viet Nam.

As most know, 1LT Bob Bergquist accompanied the advance party to Viet Nam arriving at Vinh Long Army Airfield. Soon after his arrival Bob designed the Outlaws patch and the Maverick logo, both of which were adopted as unofficial emblems of the unit. Not satisfied with just the patch design, Bob wanted a real southwestern steer skull for the unit. In one of his many frequent letters and tapes to his mother about his adventures in Viet Nam he asked her to obtain a real steer skull and have it sent to him. Babs frequently included the Kinders in reading and playing Bob's tapes because of their friendship and interest in the family. Bob, in his always optimistic thinking thought his mother could simply comb the Arizona desert and easily find the desired skull. It was soon apparent the task of finding a skull somewhere out on the desert was not to be. So Babs turned to the Kinders for help.

(continued on page 7)



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

"The Back Pew"

From our VLOA Chaplain: John Doyle

The church I retired from several years ago was located in a small farming community in North Carolina. Most of the men farmed land that had been in their family for years. Many of the women were professionals: school teachers, nurses, etc. The church building was a beautiful white wood frame building. Of course, the windows were stained glass, the floors carpeted, and the pews padded. The pulpit was elevated about a foot, and right behind the pulpit was a stained glass window, about 8 X 6 feet, that rolled back on a garage door track to reveal the baptistry. The people of the congregation loved their church and tended to it with loving care.

Many people think that what preachers really like to hear from the congregation is an "Amen!" during his or her sermon. While that is always nice to hear, the sweetest words to a preacher's ears are when someone says, "Thank you for stopping by.", or, "What you said really helped me today."

As a pastor, I probably have few at that church that have much of a memory of me as a person. Over the years pastors come and go. The average tenure for a pastor in a Protestant Church is about five years, although some pastors spend their entire ministry in a single church. However, many believe that change is good for the pastor and the church.

I take comfort in the knowledge that there are some folks who will remember me as someone that was not only a pastor, but a friend.

No matter what denominational handle you go by, or how large or small your congregation may be, next Sunday after the service, take the time to tell your pastor, priest, or whatever his or her title is, "Thank you!", or, "I appreciate you." I guarantee that not only will he or she appreciate it, but you will feel better for having said it.

God Bless.

John

LOOKING IN THE REAR-VIEW MIRROR:

1. Swimming hole with Rotor Blade for a diving board.
2. Short-timer tans
3. Dead bugs in the bread at the "Snack Bar" and Fried Bologna Sandwiches
4. First beer at An Khe
5. Real bacon and eggs at An Khe
6. The "New Guy" being sent to Supply for a spool of "Flight Line" or a broom to "Sweep the Blades".
7. MPC
8. PX Ration Cards
9. Beer served over ice
10. Freedom Birds

How many of us remember all these things or have we chosen to "forget" them?

Outlaws Skull Story

(continued from page 5)

Al, being a practical man, immediately went to a local slaughter house and purchased a newly severed head from a steer. He took on the project of reducing the head to a skull. The task was by no means simple. Al fashioned a cauldron to contain the head, built a large log fire in his back yard and began boiling the head in order to remove the flesh. Naturally, the odor coming from Al's backyard did not endear him to some of his closest neighbors. After several days of boiling and the head cooled, Al had to remove the cooked flesh. He carefully scraped the head and sun dried the skull for several weeks before it was fit to send to Bob.

When the skull was ready for shipment, the next hurdle was sending it to Vinh Long. Al turned to some of his remaining connections at Davis Monthan AFB for help. Once the story of the skull and the unit at Vinh Long was told the Air Force made transportation arrangements for the skull to be sent to Travis AFB, then to Than Son Nhut AFB and finally on to Vinh Long by C123 aircraft. Soon after the skull arrived, a large painted sign of the Outlaws patch was fashioned with the skull permanently affixed and was emplaced immediately outside the 62d Aviation Company's orderly room.

A mystery remains to this day as to the whereabouts of the Outlaws original steer skull that had such an interesting tale and journey to Vinh Long. It has been noted that through the years after the departure of the original Outlaws in late 1965 that somehow the original patch designed by Bob was "bastardized" and a water buffalo skull appeared on later renditions of the patch. Who did this deed? And where is the original Outlaws steer skull today?

EDITORS NOTE: This story was provided by courtesy of Mrs. Albert Kinder of Tucson, Arizona and Mrs. Rebecca Bergquist Quinn, Huntsville, Alabama through telephone interviews. The Kinders have been married 57 years; Al is 89 years old and is cared for in an assisted living facility, he is visited by his wife daily.

EPILOG: In the research for this article, many former Outlaws, Mavericks and Roadrunners were contacted in an effort to find a photo of the company orderly room Outlaws sign with the skull attached. Unfortunately, none were located. Should anyone have a copy of such photo or information regarding someone who may have one, notify Tom Anderson (Outlaws historian) at: tean-der@cox.net; or Al Iller at: alair@cswnet.com.

Submitted by Al Iller

JUST FOR FUN

The following are excerpts from a book authored by H. Jackson Brown, Jr. entitled "Wit and Wisdom From The Peanut Butter Gang":

Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them. - James Baldwin

If you want something expensive, you should ask your grandparents. - Matthew , Age 12

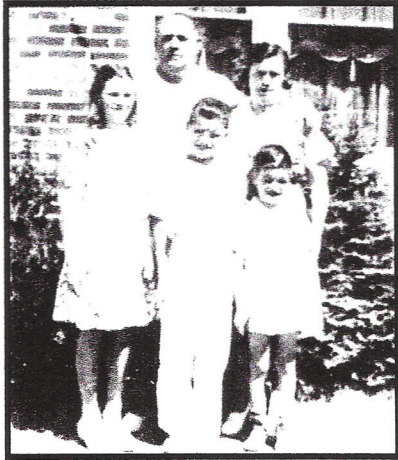
You shouldn't stand in a bucket of water and touch an electric fence just because your brother tells you to. - Melissa, Age 13

You only have one mom, and you should take care of her. - Sean, Age 12

If you put your brother's hand in warm water, he *will* wet the bed. - Christopher, Age 9

You should never tell your friends your parent's nickname for you or you'll never hear the end of it. - Jennifer, Age 12

(continued on page 8)



Can you identify this Individual????

This is the second of a series that we had a suggestion for (thanks to John Doyle).

If anyone would like to submit a picture please send it to us.

Al & Nell

(answer bottom Page 9)

We are looking for the identity of the smallest person in the picture (on the right). The only "hint" we will give is it is a family photo and was made in about 1941 and the location is Rhode Island. Come on and guess before you go to page 9 for the answer. We know there are lots of you out there who have pictures so send them in.

Who is this mystery person??????

Just For Fun

(continued from page 7)

Children in a family are like flowers; there's always one determined to face in an opposite direction from the way the arranger desires. - Anonymous

The trouble with being a parent is that by the time you are experienced, you are unemployed. - Unknown

I have found the best way to give advice to you children is to find out what they want and then advise them to do it.
- Harry S. Truman

No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats. - Laura, Age 13

Insanity is hereditary - you get it from your children. - Sam Levenson

NOTE FROM AL & NELL

Sorry the newsletter is a little late this time. It has been a busy month for us. We would really like to have more participation with the newsletter. We know there are lots of you out there with pictures and/or "happenings" in your lives that others would enjoy hearing about!

Al went deep sea fishing a couple of weeks ago and had great luck...should have included pictures! They had a great time!

Looking forward to seeing everyone at Pigeon Forge!

ARMY RESEARCHES FUTURISTIC COPTERS

WILLIAMSBURG (AP) ? On one side of an oversized helicopter hangar at Fort Eustis sat what Adam Sawicki, a Boeing Co. engineer, called the perfect example of old Army aviation ? a Chinook cargo helicopter made almost entirely of metal.

On the other side, Mr. Sawicki said, sat the service's future ? a handful of researchers and soldiers gathered around a table and a small sheet of a black composite material.

The material, made of resin and fibers, will one day replace the metal used in making helicopters. It's odorless, feels like a thin sheet of rigid cardboard and is lighter than metal, even the aluminum used in making most helicopters.

Its development is part of the Army's \$74 million Survivable, Affordable, Repairable Airframe Program. The Army Aviation Applied Technology Directorate at Fort Eustis is managing the effort.

"What we are doing in this program is so significant because of its impact on Army aviation," said Marc Portanova, the program's Fort Eustis-based project engineer.

The directorate is working with Boeing, Bell Helicopters and Sikorsky Aircraft to help pay for the program and to share new technology.

"Building lighter helicopters is a big priority for the Army," Mr. Portanova said. "A lower weight gives helicopters the ability to fly farther, fly faster, fly at a higher altitude and/or carry more stuff."

Troops in Afghanistan have been having trouble flying Black Hawk utility helicopters in the high altitudes of the mountainous country, Mr. Portanova said. Anything that makes them lighter will help with high-altitude missions.

The program also is one way Army aviation is benefiting from the recently canceled Comanche helicopter program. The Comanche program was a 20-year, multibillion-dollar project to build a new helicopter for armed reconnaissance missions.

The program was plagued with rising costs and canceled after \$6.9 billion already had been spent on its development. The Pentagon had budgeted \$14 billion through 2011 to build 121 Comanches. Since the Comanche's death, the Army has vowed to use as much of that money as possible on other aviation projects.

Mr. Sawicki said the Comanche was to be made mostly of composite material. But new technology requires new repair methods, and that's what soldiers and researchers were testing this month at Fort Eustis.

"One of the goals we wanted to accomplish was to have the soldiers who would be doing the repair work in the field practice patching holes here in the hangar to see if it's possible for the repairs to be done on a battlefield," Mr. Portanova said. "Everything breaks, and we need to know that this technology can be repaired quickly."

Sgt. 1st Class Chris Broussard, an instructor at the fort's U.S. Army Aviation Logistics School, where soldiers are taught to maintain helicopters, said the goal was to pretend a helicopter had been shot at and left with holes in its body. His job was to take the black, sticky composite material and precisely layer tiny sheets into what looked like a thick patch.

Then he had to attach the patch to the hole and test the strength of the repair. Sgt. Broussard said the only challenge of the new material is making sure every deployed aviation unit has the tools needed for repair work.

"This new material makes the repair process a lot easier and a lot faster," he said. "And anything to make a helicopter perform better, I'm all for."

AND THE MYSTERY PERSON IS:

None other than our very own Chaplain, John Doyle

NOTE FROM NELL:

The above article is from the Washington Times. I am not sure of the date but think it was in 2004. Maybe it will interest some of you. I had trouble finding enough articles for this newsletter. I **KNOW** there are some of you that could send me an article once in awhile so come on and join in. Let us know what is going on in your lives.