

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

"www.vinhlongoutlaws.com"

Vinh Long Outlaws Fall 2020 Newsletter

July-September

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

3rd. Quarter 2020

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Sept. 23-27, 2021!!	
VLOA Reunion !!	
San Antonio, TX.!!	

National Director's Corner

By- Bert Rice



Hello All!

First, I hope this newsletter finds everyone doing well and continuing to stay safe by following the suggested guidelines to deal with COVID 19. Like many of you, I am really looking forward to when we can assemble and socialize again. I have found that you have to use some imagination to find ways to stay engaged and active. In any case, I hope you are coping well during this difficult time.

I have been in contact with Armed Forces Reunion, Inc (AFR). regarding our reunion in September 2021 which will be held in San Antonio, TX. As of my last communication with AFR, they are continuing to develop a program that will be similar to the one that was planned for this year. As I mentioned in my last article, I am planning to use the same venue; that is the Holiday Inn on the River Walk. I visited with the Holiday Inn staff last November and was quite impressed with their eagerness to support our reunion. So, please begin planning now to join us for a fun time. We will try to make it as memorable as all previous reunions!

Since I think what I have provided sufficient reunion information for now, I thought I would share some travel experiences since COVID 19, months before my wife, Deanna, passed in October, 2018 became center stage. In January and February of this year, I was visiting my new found friend and companion in Yuma, AZ where she has wintered for many years. She was born and raised in Bozeman, MT. We were freshmen together at Montana State College (now Montana State University), located in Bozeman, MT. Pat, having been raised on a farm/ranch near Bozeman, and I being a farm kid myself, we found that we share many common interests and mutual friends.

Contd. On pg. 2

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Huntsville, AL
- Joe Clelan, -Ex Officio (2006-08)
Mechanicsburg, PA. (deceased)
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Ozark, AL.
- Bob Koonce, -Ex Officio (2010-12)
Tacoma, WA.
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- Larry Jackson, -Ex Officio (2014-2016)
Hilton Head Island, SC.
- James Donnelly, -Ex Officio (2016-2018)
Virginia Beach, VA..

Cont. from pg.1

I flew back to Maryland from Yuma in late February on a routine flight. I then flew back to Yuma in late April to help drive Pat back to Bozeman. The flight to Yuma was less than half full, the Baltimore and Dallas terminals were nearly empty and service on the airplane was excellent. Actually, it was one of the best flight experiences I have had in years. While driving to Montana, we found traveling was easy with few travelers on the road, hotels were nearly empty and food was not difficult to find.

After completing our drive to Montana, I flew back to Maryland in early May where again the airplane was less than a third full and service was excellent. Pat flew to Maryland in early June with again a similar flight experience. We then drove back to Montana in late June where we have spent the summer. During our travels we were able to visit many family members and friends. I was able to meet Pat's family and she mine. So, for us, it has been a memorable adventure!

We will leave Montana in late September. Our travels will take us back to Maryland where we will stay for about three weeks after which we will fly back to Bozeman, Montana for a return trip to Yuma for the winter! Hmmm, warm weather during winter sounds pretty good to me!

As we continue living through the pandemic, I wish for all a safe and Happy Holiday Season beginning with Veterans Day through Christmas and New Year's Day! Take care and Stay safe!

God Bless each and every one.

Bert Rice

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

Balance effective 01/01/2020

\$35,307.74

REVENUES:

Dues - Annual

\$300.00

Dues - Lifetime

\$1,700.00

Dues - Patriot Lifetime

\$500.00

Donations

\$200.00

Sales - reunion shirts

\$1,532.00

SUBTOTAL:

\$4,232.00

EXPENDITURES:

Newsletters, bank statements, purchase reunion shirts

\$2,879.32

SUBTOTAL:

\$2,879.32

INCOME (LOSS) - 9 months period ending 9/15/2020

\$1,352.68

CASH BALANCE - as of 9/15/2020

TOTAL:

\$36,660.42



Comments by Colonel Tom Anderson-----

Sixteen years ago, on May 16, 2004, a Memorial was dedicated at Fort Rucker, AL to remember the crewmen of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion who were lost in Vietnam, while in service to their country. The Vinh Long Outlaws were one of three Aviation Companies assigned to the Battalion.

The dedication talk on that day was delivered by Father Jerome Daly. In earlier days, the then-CW-3 Jerome Daly, served three tours in the Mekong Delta as a gunship pilot with the Vikings, the gunship platoon of the 121st Soc Trang Tigers. Among his many other decorations, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his participation in the rescue of three downed UH-1 crews. Daly later received an officer promotion and retired as Lt. Col. Daly. Following his retirement, Jerome Daly entered the priesthood and became, and still is, Father Daly.

I recently came across the text of the dedication talk by now-Father Daly. In reading the words, although the ceremony was 16 years ago, I thought they are remarkably timely, even today. I think you will appreciate reading these timeless words, words which we, as Vietnam Veterans, can all relate with. I hope they will be as meaningful to you as they were to me.

“As St. Peter said atop Mount Tabor, ‘It is good for us to be here.’ True, we’ve all grown older, a bit larger (around the waist) with hair either gone or gray, but all, I think, more appreciative of the Vietnam experience which shape our lives. And, although our memories grow a little less reliable with the passing years, we possess the remarkable ability to recall the good and meaningful time of our Vietnam experience. Certainly that is God’s gift.

“Nothing of our time, no matter how long or how short our tours at Vinh Long, Can Tho or Soc Trang....nothing is more memorable, nothing more meaningful than the bond of battle, the camaraderie of combat, the utter dependence of one upon the other.... The literal trusting of our lives to each other! To crew chiefs and gunners, to pilots and copilots, to leads and wingmen, to maintenance folks and technical inspectors and to commanders.

“And so, it is good for us to be here today to pay tribute and to dedicate this handsome and fitting memorial to all who served with us in the Delta Battalion in those years of our youth. Years not forgotten but rather, fondly remembered. We, the remaining, pay special honor to those of our brothers who never came home, never DEROS’d to the Land of the Big PX, but who fell in battle halfway around the world some three and four decades ago. And to those who have since DEROS’d permanently to a better place. May God grant them eternal rest.

“We who were once young and bold have grown old and, surely, a little less bold! And so, as we look forward to the short flight ahead, may we never forget the long flight behind and those who flew and fought with us in the greatest gathering of Army Aviation, the 13 Combat Aviation Battalion.

“As we turn the controls over to another generation, may the great and glorious heritage of the 13th Aviation Battalion be a guide and an inspiration for those who still fly ‘Above the Best.’”

CHRISTMAS DAY 1970

BY KEN BRADLEY, OUTLAW 66

The latest rumor was that there would be a cease fire truce tomorrow, Christmas day 1970. News like this is too good to be true. Some pilots checked flight operations for mission assignments others headed to the club early. During the evening the mission board stayed blank. Maybe the rumor was true after all.

It was time to head to the showers to cleanup then head to the club to join the celebration. With only cold water available the shower would be quick. The only time anyone took a long shower was the night a pilot persuaded a stripper from a traveling show that she could use the shower. I did say the water was cold. Anyway that is another story.

The celebration at the club had started early and no one was feeling any pain. The beer can castles towered higher and higher. About 1:30 a.m. I crashed on my cot knowing there would be an entire day to recover. The bed started shaking around 3:30 a.m. Christmas morning. Out of the semi-conscious haze a voice was saying get up, get up, get up. You have to fly. Trying to decline because of drunkenness and hangover didn't work. The voice just replied they couldn't wake up any other aircraft commanders except the XO. They didn't know what the mission would be but they needed two slicks and we were to take off immediately for Ca Mau.

Ca Mau is located towards to bottom end of the Vietnamese delta between the U Minh and Nam Can jungles. The U Minh jungle is to the west and the Nam Can is located to the south. The local VC used the airfield as their practice firing range. Local kids would occasional-

ly deposit an armed grenade under a helicopter first aid kit. If it was not found before takeoff the vibration of the helicopter would shake the grenade loose so that it and the helicopter would explode.

Some how they had found a new'by for the co pilot, so with the gunner and chief resuming their sleep in the back, we pulled pitch and headed south. The XO took the lead and we followed at a safe distance. This was a very loose formation. As we turned away from the lights of Vinh Long visual contact with the ground became non-existent. There were no lights on the ground, no stars in the sky and no moon. Only the instrument lights and the navigation lights of lead were visible.

The window in my door was wide open so the fresh air would help suppress the drunken urge to redecorate the cockpit. Feeling the need to hold my head out the window I told the co pilot "you've got it". The quick reply "no I can't" brought my head back in real fast and any urges would just have to be suppressed. I'm sure he thought he was about to die and I was sort of wishing I would.

The lights of Can Tho were a welcome sight. There was ground below us after all. As we got closer to the city the lights seemed to move from the right of lead to the left and back again. "Lead am I weaving or are we weaving?" Lead answered that he was weaving meant we both were weaving and that somehow that made me feel

a little better. Passing Can Tho put us back into total darkness. Having made it this far gave us a little hope that we would actually make it to Ca Mau. Fortunately the rest to the flight was uneventful and the fresh air was not needed quite so much.

After dawn with the aircraft refueled and inspected we waited for our mission. Eventually an officer arrived and the XO was given the mission to take the Christmas

where. We landed so many places and handed money out to so many Vietnamese troops that I am sure that we were also paying the VC. That day they were friendly VC.

By late morning the paymaster mission was complete and instead of sending us home we were then assigned to haul supplies for a US support base on the eastern edge of the U Minh. Early that afternoon the XO arrived with the chow at the

same time we returned. None of the crew had eaten since yesterday so they got in the chow line. The chief had his plate full and the gunner was not far behind when a Lt Col came over and ordered me to get the crew out of the line. He said the crew got hot chow and slept in nice beds every night and they could not eat in his chow line. The chief and gunner sat their plate's right where they were and returned to the aircraft with



Still up to his old tricks – Johnny Grant, the "Unofficial Mayor of Hollywood" poses with the Pussycat Dolls in May of 2003. Mr. Grant passed away on January 9, 2008, the USO has quite a tribute to him on their web site: USO.org

meal to the remote U.S. troops in the Delta. Taking holiday chow to the troops is a real feel good mission. Our mission was to take a Vietnamese paymaster to give Christmas bonuses to the Vietnamese troops in the U Minh. Bummer, they woke us up for this?

We flew into clearing after clearing with some landing areas only a few hundred yards apart. In some places we could hover down only part way in the trees and the paymaster would drop the cash. I kept expecting the traditional greeting of ground fire. The truce held. There was not a single shot any-

the co-pilot.

Still hung-over I was in no mood for this bullshit. My crew would normally see more combat in one week than this ass would see in most of his tour. My crew was going to get fed even if we had to fly all the way across Vietnam. As I stormed into the command bunker to tell them we were leaving and would not return until the crew was fed, a message arrived to divert us to another mission. We were to report to Rach Gia.

Once airborne I called Paddy control and told them I would report for this new mission as soon as the crew

Page 11 The VHPA Aviator

Contd. From pg.4

was fed. After a short delay, Paddy control told us to go direct and that food would be provided. As we sat down at Rach Gia an officer came up and asked for my call sign to verify if we were the right aircraft. With only two helicopters flying in the entire delta, it shouldn't have been hard to figure out we were it. After giving my call sign, Outlaw 66, the officer waived to a vehicle and Mr. Johnny Grant and some Hollywood starlets brought us sandwiches and sodas. The day had definitely changed and the entire crew was wide awake.

Mr. Grant had brought these starlets to Vietnam to boost troop morale. They were spending their Christmas for the soldiers and our job was to get them out to as many of the remote locations as possible.

The first stop was a small base at the North end of the U Minh and the girls sang and danced while we were fed even more food. These

guys at this base knew that as long as the crew was eating the girls were there. Eventually we figured out the same thing and cranked up for our next stop.

The plan for the rest of the day was to fly to the advisors furthest south in Vietnam and work our way North towards Cambodia. At each location there would be 2 to 4 U.S. advisors to a Vietnamese unit. These were the guys that spent day after day with the mud up to their butts, their lives depending on each other and a small force of Vietnamese that in some cases included VC. When the girls got out you could almost see these guys start floating in air. For the next 5 minutes the guys would talk to the girls and then we were off to the next location or to hot refuel. Often the girls would outnumber the advisors.

The sun got lower as we headed further north. By dusk we still had a couple of stops to make and no one

knew how long the Christmas truce would last. Under normal times we would have received fire at many of these areas. By the next stop it was getting dark but everything went OK. The last planned stop was a particularly bad area. The VC had the landing areas zeroed in and normally if you were on the ground more that a few seconds a mortar round would be headed your way. The game was that you would land, count to nine or ten and then hover to a new spot, then watch the mortar round explode at the first location. By this time you would have unloaded the supplies and would be pulling pitch.

As we approached this location the U.S. advisors reported signs of VC activity and they felt that it would be unsafe to land. The rest of the crew handed their helmets to the girls and the chief and gunner set them up so that they could talk to the guys on the ground while

we flew overhead.

After returning to Rach Gia, Mr. Grant leaned forward and asks if the crew would like to join them for supper. A quick glance at the crew showed the only possible answer was yes. It was a short ride into town and a Christmas supper the entire crew would remember. Then back to the Huey and reality.

The night flight back to Vinh Long some how did not seem as dark as the flight out that morning. Paddy Control told us that our unit, the 175 AHC was inquiring about us. We told them we were ok and on our way back to Vinh Long. The co pilot even tried his hand at night flight of the last aircraft flying in the delta on that Christmas day.

The crew and the soldiers on the ground owe a special thanks to Mr. Grant and the starlets that risked their lives to do so much for others on that Christmas day. Thank You.



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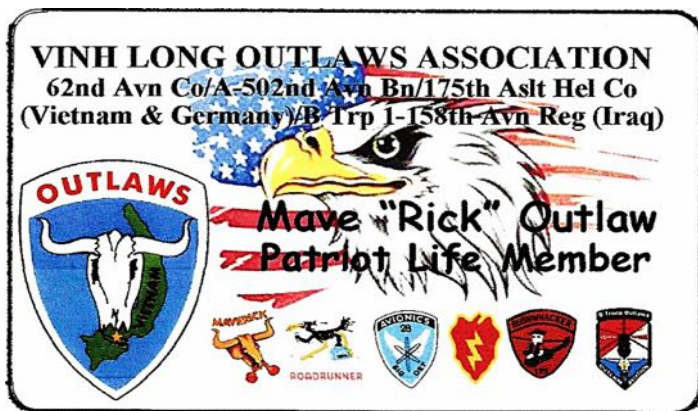
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VLOA Patriot Life Membership

by Frank Estes

Your National Steering Committee has tentatively approved implementation of a Patriot Life Membership for those former members of our parent organization and all attachments for a one-time payment of \$500 dues or more. Individuals joining as a Patriot Life Member will receive a specially designed membership card, with waving flag and National American Eagle's head in the background, along with listing of all Outlaws unit designations, Outlaws logo, and miniature logos of all subordinate elements, as shown below.



Current Life Members may become a Patriot Life Member by a one-time dues payment of \$400 or more, and will receive this specially designed membership card.

Patriot Life Members will have all the benefits and perks available to the Life Members, and will be reflected as a Patriot Life Member on the Outlaws' website. Please visit the Outlaws website, History Page, Constitution and By Laws Subpage to find the benefits for VLOA Life Members. The updated Membership Application Form will be available in this issue of the *Outlaws Newsletter* and on our website, www.vinhlongoutlaws.com.

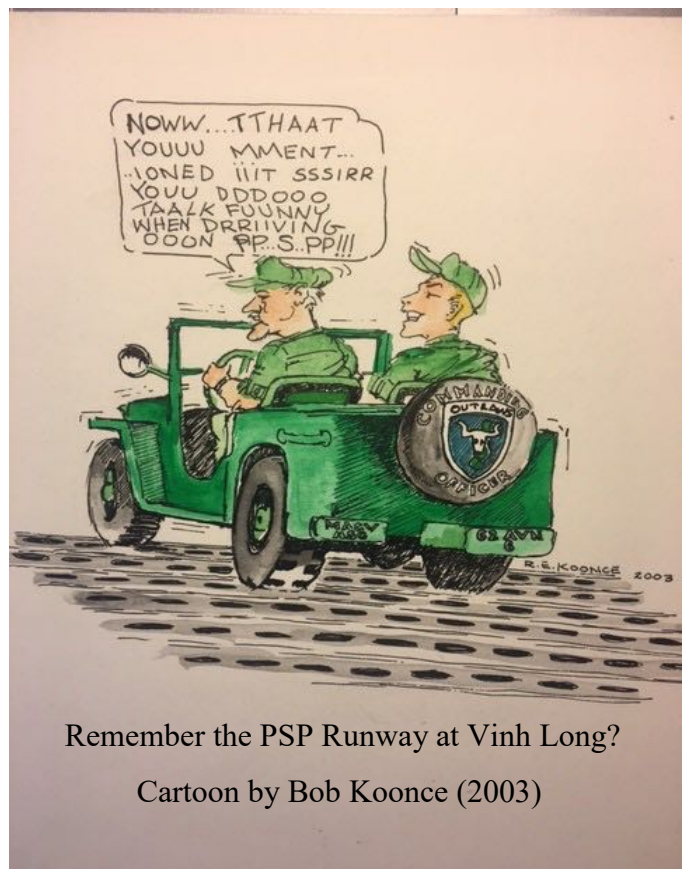
Necessary changes will be made to the VLOA Constitution and By-Laws for final approval at the VLOA Business Meeting during the Outlaws Roundup scheduled for San Antonio, TX during mid-September 2021.

New Army Aviators Incur 10-year Service Obligation

The BRIEFINGS section of the August/Sept 2020 issue of the Army Aviation magazine had a small note that would be of interest to the Army Aviators of VLOA. The note stated:

“Commissioned and warrant officers who enter flight training, starting in October, will incur a 10-year service obligation once they become rated Army Aviators, according to guidance published Aug. 12. The service requirement is four years longer than the previous commitment. Soldiers currently in training are exempt from the new policy. The new policy will apply to the Army Reserve and National Guard, though the obligated service remains part-time.”

No further information was included in the note.



Remember the PSP Runway at Vinh Long?

Cartoon by Bob Koonce (2003)

Can Any of You Remember Pinks and Greens?

We've all heard that old expression "Everything Old is New Again". Well, the Army has decided it's time to change uniforms again and . . . guess what? The old service uniform, earlier known as the "pinks and greens", is making a comeback and will now be known as the AGSU, Army Green Service Uniform. Most, is not all, Outlaws are too young to remember the Pinks and Greens uniform which was worn by officers between the early 1930's and until 1954. It is now being phased back in.

This time, however, both officer and enlisted uniforms will look almost identical. The primary difference is the addition of shoulder loops on officer shirts and no braid on the sleeves of the Enlisted AGSU coat. Over a several month period, User Evaluators have been wearing the new AGSU.

The Army Memorandum pointed out that the current Army Service uniform (blue) was never intended to be the daily service uniform and the Army is the only service that does not have a uniform for everyday business environments. The current Army Blues uniform will return to being the formal dress uniform while the new Army "greens" will become the everyday business-wear uniform for all soldiers. The new uniform will be phased in over a period of 10 years.

The Army news release indicated that the newly updated Army Greens has already begun being issued to soldiers who report to their first units by late this summer, 2020. Mandatory wear date for all Army personnel will be 2028.

The good thing is that NONE of us will have to resort to going back to that old uniform. All old Outlaws of us are well "over 50 and +" and the Army, thankfully, doesn't want us any more.

ATTENTION! This is a plea from the VLOA Newsletter Editor!

I need to remind you all that this is your newsletter. Without your contributions of articles and stories to print there will be nothing to print except pages of obituaries and that makes me sad. I know that you all have a life and many interests that are interesting to others to hear about. Please share with us all and do not be afraid to send something in as I will make sure that it looks good on paper. I am proud to do this job as it is one of my first loves and I want it to be appealing to all who see it. It doesn't take long to jot something down and send some pictures and share your life. I know this has been a terrible year to get out and do some things but, I am sure that a lot of you have hobbies and can share those with us.

We, Gloria and I, have been able to travel to the Black Hills in So. Dakota three times this year and in May it was awesome as we took our motorcycle out and rode through Custer State Park everyday that week and there was NO ONE there! What a beautiful ride through Needles Highway and the Wildlife Loop with the Bison. Another week we stayed with friends at their home in the Hills and rode 4-whlr-side by sides up to 7,000ft. Was Beautiful. Third week out we went to see the Governor's Bison Roundup and she rode with the cowboy's herding 1,400 head to the corals! Was something to see! Maybe I will write an article w/ pics.





When Did Aviation Really Begin?



History's first record of the existence of aviation-minded people comes to us from Greek mythology. You may recall the story of Daedalus and his son Icarus. Daedalus was a noted inventor who had constructed, for King Minos of Crete, an elaborate labyrinth. However, the wicked King did not want the existence of the labyrinth known to the public, so he had Daedalus and his son Icarus imprisoned to ensure their silence.

Now, being a very resourceful inventor, Daedalus began planning their escape. He set to work to fabricate wings for himself and his son Icarus. (Possibly the first airframe designers and builders?) He tied feathers together, from smallest to largest so as to form an increasing outside surface. He secured the feathers, at their mid-points, with string, and at their bases with wax, giving the "frame" a gentle curvature like the wings of a bird.

In his first test flight, Daedalus, waving his wings, found himself buoyed upward and able to suspend himself poised on the beaten air. HUZDAH! Thereupon he next equipped his son in the same manner and taught him how to fly! (Aviation's first IP!) The escape plan was hatched! (No Ops Order or flight plan - - - Just GO!) When both were prepared for takeoff, Daedalus provided preflight instructions and warned Icarus NOT to fly too high, because the heat of the sun could melt the wax, nor fly too low because the sea foam could soak the feathers.

Well, as many young fliers are wont to do, Icarus' youthful exuberance over-rode his father's exhortations and he began to soar upward toward the sun. And, as his father had warned, sure enough the blazing sun melted and softened the wax that held the feathers together and they came off! As the feathers fell one by one, looking like falling snowflakes, Icarus quickly fell into the sea and drowned. (History's FIRST air fatality!)

How do all those early aviation trials apply to today's Army Aviation and the Vinh Long Outlaws???? Well, first we know that Icarus, during an overwater flight, for which he was neither trained nor equipped, went plunging into the sea in a fatal crash after putting too much stress on his air-frame for the heat conditions of his operating environment. And it is recorded that he applied these stresses in direct violation from his Instructor Pilot.

It has been said that the Greek Aviation Board for Accident Research subsequently filed a confidential report with the Deputy Director of Personnel for Extra-Terrestrial Navigators and what followed were the first positive steps in history to establish safety guidance and to manage aviation personnel.

Contd. From pg. 8.

Moreover, following the fatality, DEPDIXTERNAV directed the scribe to publish a parchment charging Daedalus with supervisory error, suspending him from flight, removing him from the program and revoking his right to wear any flier's badge.!(Another first!) Unfortunately, it is said that this action delayed the birth of Army Aviation by several thousand years!

Leap forward to the Civil War. Thaddeus Lowe, often considered to be the first Army Aviator, along with his cluster of would-be aeronauts, hovered over the smoke and roar of Virginia battlefields in balloons, and aided ground commanders with their contribution to the civil war. However, not unlike Daedalus' support base, Lowes maintenance organization was formed from soldiers with varied skills such as teamsters, animal handlers, military telegraphers and others of dubious relationship to aeronautics. Ultimately, they received OJT as airframe varnishers, gas manufacture assistants, machinists, messengers and map-makers,.

Throughout the war, however, with no firm foundation for a career path, Lowe had difficulty in getting enough trained men to support his balloon efforts. This, coupled with controversies about their usefulness, brought a quick end to the balloon corps, with Lowe leaving the Union Army with a dour attitude and the maintenance men returning to their regiments. (What would Daedalus, the inventor, have done????)

Now, move to half a century later, Orville Wright's new-fangled contraption again required aviation support people to be developed. And, as throughout history, no aviation skills had yet been developed. An Engineer officer and a Cavalry officer, on detail to the Signal Corps, were the first to rotate to flying jobs and become "Aviators". This first tottering step of the century to develop an Army Aviation program, with two pilots and one airplane, came to a halt when the two crashed the plane and were promptly rotated back to their basic branches.

Fast forward to 1971, toward the end of Vietnam hostilities. We were there! At that time there were approximately 70,000 officers, warrant officers and enlisted men who comprised the structure of Army Aviation. Army Aviation had grown to such a proportion that the Army was forced to look seriously at career paths for every segment of Army Aviation. Today, those skills are available, in depth, for every facet of Army Aviation.

As you have seen, Aviators, with varying degrees of support, go back for thousands of years. But, one facet clearly stands out..... The first time something new is tried, it has a good chance of failure. Fortunately for Army Aviation in our days, and even more so today, first time major failures are a thing of the past.

Submitted by Tom Anderson.



2021 reunion Shirts Order Now!



When we first put out the request for 2020 Reunion shirt orders, we could not have anticipated that the reunion would soon have to be pushed back a year. Nevertheless, within a few weeks, we did receive quite a number of orders for the good-looking Reunion shirt. That initial order consisted of 29 shirts. Some individuals indicated that they would not be able to attend the reunion but would still like to have the shirt. We asked that those who ordered shirts to be mailed to them, also include \$5 for postage. (Most did – some did not).

The remainder of those first orders were from those who indicated at that time that they would be willing to wait for the Reunion and would pick up their shirts at that time. When we realized that the Reunion would be a YEAR later, we decided to go ahead and have the shirts made up and mail the shirts to the requestors, even though we had not asked to have postage included in the orders. (Your VLOA treasury ate this cost.)

Based on the shirt-order article in the last Newsletter, we assumed that we could still solicit shirt orders, but the push-back of the Reunion date changed that. However, by that time we had already received orders for 17 more shirts. Some of these orders are now a few months old. Your checks have been deposited, but the shirts still had not been ordered. However, good news is here!

Originally, our supplier indicated that they would require a minimum of 24 shirts in order to set up their embroidery line. But, with a little pleading of our case, the company relented and has indicated they will go ahead and make up these 17 shirts. When they are received, they will be mailed out to everyone who is still waiting for their “pre-paid” shirt.

However, because we are still a YEAR away from the ~~2020~~ – 2021 Reunion, it's doubtful that we could accumulate enough orders in the near future to make it feasible to again ask the supplier to set up a line for the few orders we would receive this far ahead of the Reunion. Therefore, we will wait until the April or May 2021 Newsletter to solicit more orders for shirts. I feel certain that those of you who have received the earlier order of shirts are very pleased with them.

However, the Shirt Order Form is again included with this Newsletter. Copy it or clip it out. If you are so inclined to order a shirt now, be forewarned.... We will deposit your check into the VLOA treasury (with postage please) and hold your order in abeyance until sometime next year.

A picture of the Reunion shirt is on the VLOA website (www.vinhloutlaws.com) under REUNION.



2021 SAN ANTONIO - OUTLAW ROUNDUP

SHIRT ORDER FORM

The official **2021 Outlaw Roundup** shirt is likely to be the most appealing reunion shirt we have ever had. The colors were selected to match the authorized Army Aviation branch colors, ultramarine blue and golden orange. The polo shirt is a polyester micropique sport-wick t. To accentuate the vivid shirt colors, the Outlaw patch will also be trimmed in gold.

Cost for each shirt again starts at \$30. (NOTE: Additional cost * for sizes 2XL = \$32 3XL = \$34 4XL = \$36 men's or women's.) Please pre-order your shirt(s) on the form below. Shirts ordered by Reunion attendees will be in each welcome bag at the VLOA registration desk. If you cannot attend the reunion, but would like a shirt, see info below **. **Please Indicate Quantity Desired by Size**

MENS' SHIRT SIZES:

	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL*	3XL*	4XL*		
	32-34	35-37	38-40	41-43	44-46	47-49	50-53	54-67	TOTAL#	COST
Qty	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

LADIES' SHIRT SIZES

	XS	S	M	L	XL	2XL*		
	0-2	4/6	8/10	12/14	16/18	20/22	TOTAL#	COST
Qty	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

* Note: Cost for sizes **2XL - \$32** **3XL - \$34** **4XL - \$36** Men's or Women's

For Reunion attendees, please indicate name(s) and sizes needed, below:

Name: _____ Size: _____

Name: _____ Size: _____

Name: _____ Size: _____

Name: _____ Size: _____

(Use the reverse side of this form for any additional information or comments)

** **Note:** If you cannot attend the Reunion and would like to order an Outlaw shirt, please fill in the information above, add \$5.00 for postage and packaging costs and provide the following information:

Your name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

(Phone #) _____

ALL ORDERS ARE PRE-PAID AND MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 31st, 2021!

Send this shirt Order Form, with payment – made payable to VLOA, to :

Tom Anderson

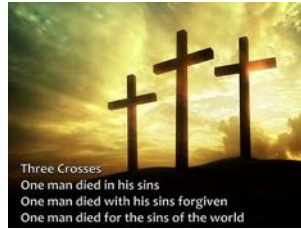
7880 Rolling Woods Ct #308

Springfield, VA 22152

Make checks or money orders payable to: VLOA not to Tom !

The Back Pew

By: Ernest Isbell



Linda and I hope that everyone is doing well in this period of uncertainty known as the Covid 19 Virus pandemic.

(FYI) Linda and I just celebrated our 61st Anniversary and this event prompts me to ask: Who else in the Vinh Long Outlaws and assorted subunits have achieved being married (to the same person) for longer than 50 years? Please reply to me at colernie@gmail.com and provide some details so that we can share this information in the next newsletter.)

The following is a reprint of a story that Chaplain John Doyle put in the October-December 2003 issue of the VLOA Newsletter. I think you will enjoy this feature of “The Back Pew” —

“Wanting to encourage her young son’s progress on the piano, a mother took him to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy quietly got up and eventually explored his way through a door marked “NO Admittance”.

When the house lights dimmed, the mother returned to her seat and discovered the child missing. Suddenly the curtains opened and the spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway piano on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently pecking out “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”. At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano and whispered in the boy’s ear, “Don’t quit. Keep on playing.” Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and begin filling in with the base part. Soon his right arm reached around the other side of the child and he added a running obligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.”

That’s the way it is with God. What we can accomplish on our own may not be noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren’t always graceful flowing music. Remember, God doesn’t call the equipped. He equips the called. And he will always be there to love and guide you. The key is to seek His Guidance in all things. Amen

---Author unknown---

I hope that all who read this story will appreciate the point being made and seek the strength of God as we as a Nation struggle with great social issues and the Covid 19 pandemic. Through God all things can be accomplished. Ernie Isbell, Chaplain, September 2020

(An article I wrote for the American Legion Newsletter. 10/20/2020)

Fellow Veteran's and friends:

Here it is the year 2020 and the end of September. It was 55 years ago the end of September, 1965 when I came back from Viet Nam and stepped off the plane and it was 31 degrees and I thought I would freeze to death! The colors were beautiful and I was reminded of this yesterday when I rode my mule down through a place called "Hell's Canyon". How could some place with a name like that be so beautiful? Well, that would be a place called the United States of America!

Most of us are immigrants, or first/second generation offspring of whom came here looking for a better way of life. It was a rocky road for most but a dream of good intentions by many.

This is the most beautiful place on earth that can be witnessed to by all of our personal experience. There are those out there that want to destroy what we American's stand for and you need to be aware and ready to defend this great country again as we took an oath to do a long time ago and to remember that oath never expires!

In the very near future there is a turning point coming and you need to see that you, your family and your friends exercise your RIGHT to vote! It is more important than ever before!! Law and order needs to be maintained or we are lost! We need to take control of the lawlessness and bad decisions made by our elected officials. Make a statement that we are NOT going to stand for any of this! Vote and make it count!

God bless you all and God Bless America!

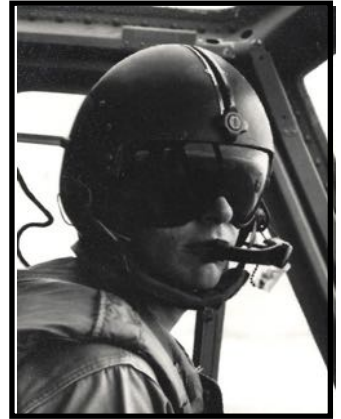
Robert Sharp, Cmdr.

VFW Post 447.



Robert Edward "Bob" Weathersby, Jr.

U.S. Army, Ret. 12/20/1937-5/14/2020



Robert Edward "Bob" Weathersby, Jr., U.S. Army, Ret., departed this life on Thursday, May 14, 2020 after failing health for over a year. He was 82. He was born on December 20, 1937 in New Hebron, Lawrence Co., MS into a committed military family. His father, Robert "Ned" Weathersby, was a World War I Veteran, his brother, a WW II veteran, Korean War and Vietnam Veteran, and his only sister, a U.S. Army WAC in World War II. His Mother, also a strong supporter of the military, was Dudley Banks Weathersby.

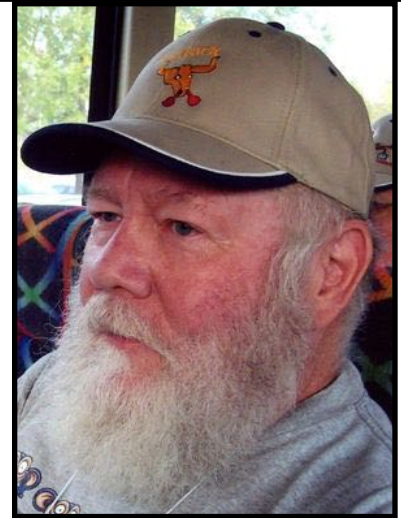
Bob graduated from New Hebron High School in 1955, received his B.S. in Industrial Engineering from Mississippi State University in 1959 as a ROTC student and immediately upon graduation entered active service in the U. S. Army. His distinguished military career included three tours of duty in the Vietnam War, where he was a helicopter pilot. Along the way, he married his sweetheart, Stella Swords, on Jan. 1, 1963, who reverently and loyally supported her husband's patriotism and civic duty. Major Weathersby retired in 1980 after 23 years active service. Along the way, Major Weathersby was honored for his bravery and courage with multiple medals including the Army Aviator Badge, Senior Army Aviator Badge, Master Army Aviators Badge, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal (1st-30th Award), Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Meritorious Unit Citation, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm and 1st Oak Leaf Cluster, Expert Badge Pistol 38 & 45, the Vietnam Staff Service Medal, First Class, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Mississippi Magnolia Medal from the Mississippi National Guard, the 1st non-Guard member to receive such an award. Major Weathersby, while not on tours of duty, spent much of his military career as a Pilot Training Instructor at Fort Rucker, AL, and spent several years with the 155th as a helicopter pilot trainer.

His family chose the Tupelo area as their permanent home in 1976 and raised their sons here. Not the retiring type, Bob had a 15-year career with Billy Hughes at Rosehill Furniture before again retiring. He spent his last working years as an employee of Walmart in Tupelo. Bob and Stella were members of the Furrs Baptist Church where he enjoyed the music and preaching. Bob's penchant for conversation was legendary. He thoroughly enjoyed visiting select friends and never met a stranger. Papaw loved his grandchildren and great-granddaughter and doted over them every chance he could. A grateful family and a grateful Nation expresses appreciation for his distinguished service in the U. S. Army. Farewell, good and faithful Soldier! A service, with military honors, was held at 1 PM Monday, May 18, 2020 at the Pavilion at the North Mississippi Veterans Cemetery (104 S. Depot Avenue) in Kilmichael, MS with his former pastor, Bro. Steve Cohea, officiating. Burial followed in the Veterans Cemetery there. Holland Funeral Directors - Tupelo Chapel was honored to be serving their friends. There was no public visitation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Those who may wish to contact the family to express condolences may do so at hollandfuneraldirectors@comcast.net.

Bob is survived by his wife, Stella of Belden; his two sons, Robert E. "Bobby" Weathersby and his wife, Cindy of Poplarville, MS, and Michael Weathersby and his wife, Amy of Tupelo; his beloved grandchildren, Haley Wood (Mason) of Laurel, Hayes Weathersby (Payton) of Hattiesburg, Jay Linley, Kealy Weathersby, and Keagen Weathersby, all of Tupelo; 1 great-granddaughter, Anne Parker Wood of Laurel; 2 sisters-in-law; Nancy Hopkins (Al) of Spotsylvania, VA, and Mary Swords of Peach City, GA; a very special next door neighbor, Leah Schrock and daughters of Belden; and several nieces and nephews and their families. Bob was preceded in death by his parents, 1 sister, Joy W. Polk, and 1 brother, Banks Weathersby.



Byron John Miksch, Jr.
4/29/1940 –1/20/2020



Byron John Miksch, Jr.

Three Rivers resident Byron John Miksch, Jr. was born Visalia, CA on April 29, 1940. He passed away in Visalia on January 20, 2020 at the age of 79 after a brief illness.

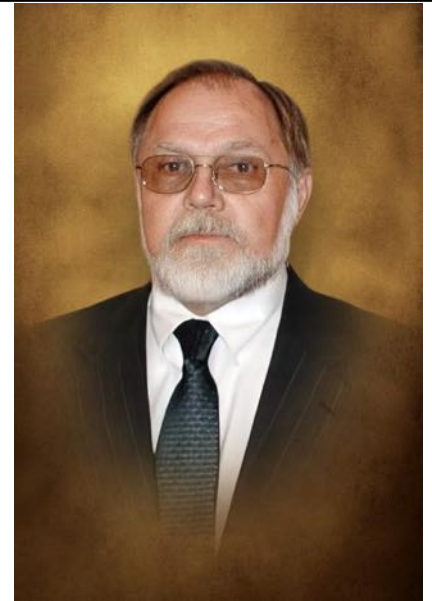
Byron graduated from Three Rivers Elementary School in 1954 then graduated from Woodlake High in 1958 where he played football. During his youth he was very active in Boy Scouts of America, reaching the honor of Eagle Scout. Byron also served with the United States Army in Viet Nam, 1964-65 where he received a Purple Heart after being wounded serving as a Helicopter Crew Chief. After being discharged from the Army, he worked for the Edison Company, retiring after thirty years. He worked in a variety of places from Big Creek down to Boulder Dam, and areas in between. While working in the San Bernardino area he was a volunteer on the San Bernardino Search and Rescue team. Byron was also a member of the Vinh Long Outlaws, a group of Helicopter Pilots and crew who all served together in Viet Nam. He loved attending the Reunions every couple of years and catching up with old friends.

Byron is survived by his wife Karen Dresser Briggs of Visalia, his daughter Shelby Miksch of Spokane, WA, his step-daughters, Charlene Briggs and her children Jessica and Caitlyn Sanchez of Visalia, and Mary Onstott, her husband Matthew, and their children Dylan Marie and Joshua of Visalia. He is also survived by his sister Mary Andrade of Three Rivers. He was preceded in death by his parents Byron and Laura Belle Miksch of Three Rivers, his sister Janet Gilman of Rosamond, CA, and his son Justin John Miksch of the U.S. Navy.

We would like the Nurses and staff on Station 2 at Redwood Springs for the tender, loving care they gave to Byron in his final days to know he loved you all. At Byron's request there will be no services. Remember him the way you last saw him and smile. Tributes and condolences may be made at www.millerchapel.com



**Leon August Osterland
Age-82-passed-Sunday
October-11-2020**



Evans Funeral Home announces the death of Mr. Leon August Osterland, age 82, of Jefferson, Georgia who entered into rest on Sunday, October 11, 2020. Mr. Osterland was born in Monroe, Louisiana to the late James Simon Osterland and Juanita Killian Osterland. Mr. Osterland was a member of Hoschton United Methodist Church, retired from Northwest Airlines as a mechanic, and served in the U.S. Air force, U.S. Army and was a Vietnam Veteran.

Mr. Osterland is survived by his Wife of 51 years, Virginia Gray Osterland. Children, James Dan Osterland, and his wife Angie of Jacksonville. Sherry Davis of Jefferson, John Walker Osterland, and his wife Julie of Kennesaw, Justin Byron Osterland, and his Girlfriend Pam of Marietta. Grandchildren, Noah, Eli, Jacob, Dahlia, Emma, Taylor and Stephanie. Great granddaughter Ansleigh also survive.

A Funeral Service was held 11:00 AM Wednesday, October 14, 2020, From the Chapel of Evans Funeral Home with Pastor Marvin Mason officiating with burial at Evans Memory Gardens. The Family received family and friends on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at Evans Funeral Home From 6:00 to 8:00 PM.

Evans Funeral Home, 1350 Winder Highway Jefferson, GA 30549. 706-367-5467

Online condolences at www.evansfuneralhomeinc.com

Note: Leon was a member of the Vinh Long Outlaws from the first reunion in Branson and he and his family were able to attend for many years until his health did not permit him to attend. He will be missed by many. God bless.

Randall Pryale Smith JR.

8-13-1943—6-30-2020



Randall Pryale Smith, Jr. passed away on Tuesday, June 30th. Born in Fort Worth, Texas on August 13, 1943, he was the only child of Randall P. Smith, Sr. and Ruth Gwaltney. Randy was a proud graduate of Texas A&M earning his degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1965. He was passionate about his love for A&M. He was a Ross Volunteer, remained close friends with many of his college buddies, and even served on the Board of the College of Engineering.

A US Army Captain, Randy was a proud Vietnam Veteran, having served as a helicopter pilot from 1967-1970 where he received a Bronze Star, 17 Air Medals and an Army Commendation Medal. He remained close friends with his army buddies and was a lifelong member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

Randy had a long and successful career beginning in 1970 at Houston Lighting and Power Company and Texas Power and Light Company. After moving the family to Baton Rouge, Randy owned and operated several successful Engineering firms from 1979 through 1987. In 1987 Randy went to work for Formosa Plastics Corporation in what would be his proudest career accomplishment. In 1989, Randy transferred to the NJ headquarters as Director of EH&S. In 1990 he was reassigned to the Pt. Comfort plant where he served as Director of Maintenance until 1995 when he was promoted to Asst VP of Maintenance. In 1998 he was promoted to VP/GM of the Texas plant until his retirement in 2016. Randy loved Formosa and was dedicated to the employees and surrounding community, serving in many volunteer roles and supporting important community organizations.

In 1965 Randy married the love of his life, Patricia “Patsy” Smith after meeting her on a blind date for an Aggie football game. They were married for 53 years and upon his retirement, Randy dedicated himself to taking care of her, never leaving her side before she passed away after a long battle with Leukemia in 2018. Randy was a loving son, husband, father to two sons and a daughter, Pops to his 5 adoring grandchildren, cousin, brother in law, and a good friend to so many. His laugh was contagious and his love of life was immense. He and Patsy enjoyed trips around the world, horse racing, cruising and casinos. Randy is preceded in death by his parents and his wife. He is survived by his children, Randy Smith of Baton Rouge, Greg Smith of Denham Springs and his wife Angel and their three children, Olivia, Ethan and Owen, and his daughter, Cindy Nami of San Marcos and her husband Buddy and their two children, Cooper and Wyatt. He is also survived by his Mother in Law, Audrey Halfen of Dallas and his brother in law, Charlie Halfen and his wife Amanda and their daughter, Elizabeth, along with many cousins and extended family. In an effort to accommodate the many family and friends whom would want to share in a celebration of his life, we will be pushing any event to a later date. Additional information will be provided as soon as things are finalized.

Lloyd Laverne Dyal Jr.

4-9-1942—10-8-2020



On Thursday, October 8th, 2020, Lloyd Laverne Dyal, Jr. passed from this life peacefully at his home in Brooker, FL with his wife and children at his bedside. He was born April 9th, 1942 in Brooker, FL. on the Dyal Farm to the late Theo Kelley Dyal and Lloyd L. Dyal Sr. He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Margaret Ann Douglas Dyal, and children, Suzanne Dyal McRee (Tracy) and Kelley Lavern Dyal (Stacy) along with 7 grandchildren; Garrett McRee (Tara), Hailey McRee, Kyn-dall Dyal, Kaleigh Dyal, Kaleb Dyal, Kamryn Dyal, Kyleigh Dyal and 2 great grandchildren, Johanna McRee and Hattie McRee as well as numerous extended family and friends. He is pre-deceased by his sister, Jacqueline Dyal Tschacher.

He was a faithful and loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather, deeply committed to all that he loved. He was a true patriot, honorably serving his country in the Vietnam War, then proudly protecting this country thru the care of his own land, as a farmer and provider. He enjoyed hunting with family and friends and especially enjoyed the Bible studies with faithful friends at Empire Hunting Club.

He was employed by Florida Gas Transmission/Enron Corporation as a heavy equipment operator for 32 years. He was part of a special group of dedicated visionary men to form the "Special Projects Team" who have remained forever friends and a brotherhood. The last days of his life is 2 Timothy 4:17, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

A funeral service to honor Mr. Dyal was held on Tuesday, October 13th at 12:00pm at Northside Baptist Church, Starke, FL. Family received friends for a visitation beginning at 11:00am. Interment will be at Dedan Cemetery, Brooker, FL.

Richard W. Leister

September 19, 1929 - July 9, 2020. San Diego, California.

On July 9, 2020, Richard W. Leister, loving husband, father and grandfather passed away at age 90 surrounded by family at his home.

Richard William "Dick" Leister was born to William E. and Gwendolyn Leister in Kittanning, PA. During his sophomore year at Kittanning High School, he was accepted on a full music scholarship to Valley Forge Military Academy in Wayne, PA. The next four years were transformative for Dick as he embraced the Academy's values of discipline, honor, integrity, and responsibility. Dick was promoted to the rank of Band Captain, and upon graduation he was awarded the Order of Anthony Wayne, the highest award that Valley Forge could bestow upon a student.

Dick transferred to Michigan State College (now University) where he played clarinet in the Michigan State Symphony and met his wife, Jean. He graduated in 1954 with a commission as Second Lieutenant to the United States Army, Infantry Branch.

Dick's military career began at the Infantry Basic Officers Course in Fort Benning, GA and was immediately followed by admission to the first flight class held at the newly opened Army Aviation Center at Fort Rucker, AL. When he concluded his fixed-wing training he was admitted into helicopter training at Gary A.F.B. in San Marcos TX.

In 1955 Dick arrived at Wonju, Korea and was assigned to flying the small Bell Medivac helicopters in the Korean Military Advisory Group. During his 18 month service in Korea he was called upon many times to rescue several Korean soldiers from the deep snow on the demarcation line between North and South Korea. His next overseas assignment was in 1959 to Bogota, Colombia flying for the Geodetic Survey. The terrain there was so severe, the Army required 1,000 hours of helicopter time to participate. During the three-year assignment he rescued 14 persons from downed PBV aircraft in a stress situation where he lowered his copilot, two soldiers and a doctor into the crash site. After four days of cutting a landing site in the 300 foot jungle trees, he assisted the rescue in a small Colombian Air Force helicopter. For this action, he received a commission as a captain and received wings from the Colombian Air Force as well as a decoration from the American Ambassador.

Dick served two tours-of-duty in Vietnam at which time he commanded the 302nd Airlift Wing Helicopter Assault Company comprised of 900 troops and 32 helicopters known as the Outlaws. During this time, he logged 500 combat hours and earned 14 Air Medals, one for Valor along with a Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

In 1964 Dick participated in the flood rescue effort in Eureka, CA flying a Canadian Otter as well as an Army Huey UH-1. He also participated in rescue efforts during the floods near Ft. Carson in Colorado Springs, CO.

In 1969, Dick was assigned to his alma mater, Valley Forge Military Academy as the Professor of Military Science where he was a member of the Superintendent's Advisory Group. During this four-year period he also assisted with the selection of cadets to attend Service Academies and was advisor to the Cadet Honor Council.

During his 24-year career, Dick logged over 5,000 hours in fixed- and rotary-wing Army aircraft. Upon his retirement from the Army, he was employed for 15 years by General Dynamics Electronics Division in San Diego, CA from which he retired in 1989.

Dick strongly believed in giving back to his community. During his retirement, he volunteered for 17 years with the Retired Senior Volunteer Patrol (RSVP) of the San Diego Police Department and was a volunteer docent for 15 years at Mount Soledad Veterans Memorial, for which he was awarded Veteran of the Year in 2013.

Dick is preceded in death by his wife of 66 years, Jean. He is survived by his children, R. Scott (Anna-Lisa), Jay (Lora), and Lyn. Throughout his life he was especially proud of these children. Next to Jean, he stated that the apex of his life were his children. In addition, he is survived by two grandchildren, Amy and Eric, and step-grandchild, Ryan.

Dick will be interred at Miramar National Cemetery in San Diego. As was Dick's wish, in lieu of flowers, take someone that you love out for a nice lunch.

"We who have passed from cloud to cloud and looked down at those who are earth-bound have belonged to a fraternity that few have experienced."



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



Fall - 2020

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 Frank Estes, 407 Country Club Drive, Ozark, AL 36360.

First Name _____ MI ____--____ Nickname _____ Last Name _____

Telephone # (home) _____ (work) _____ Spouse’s Name _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Rank (while assigned to unit) _____ E-Mail address _____

Dates assigned in Outlaws/attachments (Mo/Yr to Mo/Yr) _____

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

• Please initiate _____ or renew _____ my Active _____ Associate _____ VLOA membership. **Make \$25 check payable to VLOA.**

• Please initiate my Lifetime _____ Lifetime Associate _____ VLOA membership. **Make \$100 check payable to VLOA.**

• • Please initiate my Patriot Lifetime _____ membership. **Make \$500 or more check payable to VLOA. Current Lifetime Members make \$400 or more check payable to VLOA.**

_____ Please do not renew my VLOA membership, but keep my name on the VLOA roster. I understand I may not receive any future issues of the VLOA Newsletter unless I am a current dues paying VLOA member.

_____ I know a former Outlaw/Maverick/Bushwhacker/Roadrunner or other affiliated unit member and have indicated his/her name, address, and phone number on this form.

Comments: _____