

(0:00:03) Basically, when I turned over to Doug, we had 17,000 pictures, approximately 1,000 pages of documents, which include orders and just general stuff, stories and that kind of thing. I think about 74 audios, audio tapes, and about seven or eight videos. And that was our, and we have a plan in the bylaws and the

(0:00:33) to send that to the University of Texas, A&N. They've got a Vietnam Memorial Depository, whatever you want to call it there, and to the Fort Rucker. And we've already given Fort Rucker a copy, Frank did, of it already. So they shall leave on for after we do. Any questions or comments from the historians?

(0:01:00) Yes. Just as a reminder, we have a monument in Port Noma Sales Veterans Park. We have a plaque in the museum from the outlaws. We have a nose cover. We have a print from Joe Klein, an oil painting that hangs in there. And there's one other thing. I can't remember what it is right now. Oh.

(0:01:28) We have a building named after Jack Sanford, and we have an outlaw street. So we are well represented at the Nova Cell installation. In fact, we are one of the primaries units that are represented there at Nova Cell. Former Ford Rucker, right? Yeah. Yes. Named after Mike Nova Cell, the Medal of Honor winner.

(0:01:52) Somebody told me they had a cue that has the outlaw badge on the front of it. The iteration of the 175th all the way from the 62nd forward is what we're presented at our aviation museum there at Fort Novosel.

(0:02:22) known to all of us as Mother Rucker. And so that's a great testimony to all who have gone before and those who are currently here. We have a newsletter editor. He's a fantastic guy. He'll tell you that himself. And Bob Chuck's going to give you that update.

(0:02:55) I don't know how wonderful I am, but anyway, I have volunteered to continue on with the newsletter unless somebody has some objections. More and more years. But it's not Bob's newsletter.

(0:03:18) You all need to understand this is your newsletter. And for it to continue on and have information in it, you need to send me some articles. And I don't care how messed up it is grammatically or punctuation or whatever. It can be fixed. Everybody has important things that go on in their lives. You might not think it's very important. But we sat here last night at 1230 laughing and lying and having a hell of a good time.

(0:03:48) of all the stories just a few of these guys have, and I've got more than any of them, but all you have to do is just be more than happy. And if you do not, that's another thing, if you do not see your article in the newsletter, please contact me and correct me because shit gets lost. I got severely hacked to the point that I'm ashamed of myself

(0:04:17) But I got it all straightened out, and I'm sure some of the stuff got lost. I truly appreciate every article that you send in that, and I'll try to get it in there. Some guys are a little more long-winded than I am, but that's okay. I keep it to 24 pages if I can. I don't know what your thoughts are. It comes in four-page increments.

(0:04:48) Because it's done on 11 by 17. Two on each side. So I don't believe in inserts because that shit gets lost in the mail. So it'd either be 16, 20, 24 is about what I try to keep it. And this last one got knocked down to 20. But with the obituaries and, oh, that's another thing. If you know of someone that passes, please get them.

(0:05:17) obituary forwarded to me and or Phil Van Alst to get on the website because I believe that is very important that's the last thing everybody's ever going to see about you

(0:05:30) I ain't ready to go. All right. He was pointing at you, but it's not. I don't smoke cervix, but I smoke a lot of reefer, so I live. You know, I'm supposed to live healthy, too. But you know what really pissed me off? If I didn't eat, drink, carry on, whatever that, and died from absolutely nothing. So that wasn't really good. Anyway, please.

(0:06:00) Oh, point of interest in that, I don't know who all knew Al Hiller. He was the executive officer with the 62nd, the first unit that went over. I talked to him the other day and decided to find out his wife had passed away in June. Just a point of interest. So I'm going to stop and see him before he's gone. He's 94 years old, and I'm going to swing that way on the way home and see him.

(0:06:33) I think it's important. So please, all you bullshitters. And let me tell you. Tell you what. It is important what you send in. Because it makes the newsletter. I enjoy putting it together if you send me the stuff. If you don't send it to me, I am definitely going to put a story in there about me. Thank you, Bob. So that's, and if you've got any

(0:07:03) Input, let me know, please. Hey, Bob. What percentage of the guys are receiving it by email versus mail out? Oh, boy. Does it help you or does it help us? It doesn't make a difference to me, but we went through this years ago. Everybody that wants it by email, sign up on that. Out of 585 that get mailed out, there's

(0:07:33) I believe there's 13 people that get it by email. You know why that is? Because we all come from the same generation. Yeah. But we want to hold it in your hand and read the damn thing. They don't want to be scrolling down on the majority of the people that way. And I guess if we can afford it, I think we should keep on with the hard copies. I'd love to send them out in color, but that is atrocious, so it's going to stay black and white. Yeah.

(0:08:00) for anybody's information you can see how much they send me and all i charge is for what the newsletter cost and the postage you know we started out when i 12 years ago i took it over for your information and it cost a little over 600 we had 250 some mailings it cost 600 and some dollars right now 12 years later i've got it 24 pages

(0:08:29) 585 mailings, and it's \$863, so we're within less than \$300. We're right around \$300 within the last 12 years. I'm pretty proud of that. And a friend of mine helped me with that. He owned a printing company. So I'll just pass the savings on to you guys. Thank you. But we're proud of you too, Bob. Thank you so much. Yeah, I appreciate that.

(0:08:58) Thank you. And I've been waiting for a story from you for four years. Is it four? It's been six. I'll give it to that. All right, I'm done. All right, thank you. You get a lot of returns. Do I get a lot of returns? Never. Well, I said I got one, and then I followed through, and Gary was deceased. If you hear of anybody with an obituary, I don't know if I said that before, but it

(0:09:27) Please help us out with the obituaries because it's important. As long as my name's not in it. Okay, I'll quit. As long as your name's not in it, is that good, Mike? There you go. Thank you very much for that. And if you haven't, I know he doesn't necessarily need some pat on the backs, but if you haven't already done so. Adam Boy Bob. Tell Bob Sharp how much you appreciate it. Thank you, Adam Boy.

(0:09:56) Thank you.

(0:10:00) However much it means to you guys, it means a hell of a lot more to me. Thank you. We also have a website, and those of you, how many of you have recently been on the website? Would you raise your hand? Recently, but that's within two months. Yeah. Okay, for the rest of you.

(0:10:23) We have a laptop that we can work with. We want you to get on the website and check it out. But the person who handles our website, Phil Wright Van Holtz. And Phil, would you give us an update? Crickets? A lot of crickets out there. Basically, it's turned into running an honor roll site.

(0:10:50) closing obituaries and things of that nature. Bob mentioned out a good example of obituaries like that that we can easily put on the chaplain's page. So it's your website. If you've got anything you want to put on there, please let me know. I'm going to be working in the next year or so trying to kick it up a notch, trying to make it a little more interesting. And on a non-website issue,

(0:11:14) For those of you who don't know, I work part nine on the historic Ford Island at the Aviation Museum there. And I went out one day with a class of students, going to show them our Huey, which was faded after the pandemic.

(0:11:28) to find that somebody had a finger written on the tail of them, five or second, outlaws. I mean, my jaw hit the floor. So is it any of you guys? No? OK. All I'm saying is, if anybody comes to the Hawaiian Desert Museum, please look me up, OK? This was another one. I'm about to die.

(0:11:52) And he says, yeah, let me give you a little escort. He took us all around the North Shore.

(0:12:09) All sorts of places. Went back to see Arizona and Missouri. And the Pacific War Museum there at the Aviation Center.

(0:12:24) Wonderful time. Thank you again. I thank you often for that. Phil also kindly offered to, I mentioned that one of our outlaws who wasn't in Iraq with us, but she came along later, she is, I think, a colonel out there now. She was a lieutenant when she was with us, and she'll be retired soon. Her husband is also an Apache pilot, and he's flying for the airlines now. He kindly offered to meet up with her and do like a mini outlaw reunion.

(0:12:51) And it got me thinking, maybe I could make a post or something to where, like, hey, where are you guys? And if any of you guys happen to be where any of our other outlaws are, maybe there might be some interest in possibly, I mean, a pressure, but, you know, might be another way to kind of, because she would be a fantastic asset, even though she wasn't in combat. I don't know if that matters at all, but she's really smart and a really nice gal. One of the better ones, for sure, that was with us.

(0:13:20) Yeah, well, I appreciate that. And it's a good idea. We certainly have experiences and stories to be able to pass on to the newer generation. They have things that we could certainly learn from. And so we mix the two.

(0:13:52) Under new business, moving right along, I want to give you an update on the silent auction, and that is being handled by Ivan White. So, Ivan, would you give us an update on what the silent auction is all about? The silent auction is rolling right along. I was kind of apprehensive at first because the items were kind of slow coming in, but everyone's been so generous in bringing things in, and we've kind of put everything all together, over 100 items. I believe we're at 110 items.

(0:14:22) And we calculated like \$2,600 as a figure just the other day, but people are still bidding more and more and more. There are quite a few items there that haven't had any bids on them at all. So we're trying to figure out how we're going to handle those that are nice items like those flag boxes and different things. So maybe we'll figure out a way. It's up to you if we want to.

(0:14:46) discount on the minimum bids or maybe just have open option on them. We'll decide how the director wants to handle that. But it closes today at noon. So bid early, bid often, bid generously. Exactly. Thank you. Thank you, Ivan. Two years ago, San Antonio, we had the highest return we had for the Anderson option.

(0:15:13) It was over \$5,000. And so that was the current record. So we're hoping to exceed that for this year. Our raffle, the 50-50, was also set as a record at San Antonio. \$1,400 plus. And I think right now we're at \$1,288. So I think we have a good shot of beating that record for this particular one. You don't have any more? Oh, yeah.

(0:15:40) Funny you should mention that. Funny you should mention that, Hans Nathan. Nice segue. I like that. That was good. There are more. There are more available. And remember the promos.

(0:16:04) So if people want to contribute to the silent auction, contribute items, how do they do that? Do you just bring it? Like if I have something I want to contribute to the auction, to be auctioned off? Yes. There will be a person who is in charge of the Anderson auction.

(0:16:27) in the next reunion, two years from now, and that person is Ivan White, he's going to do it again. All right, Ivan. So if you have an item, yes, that's . And a short, a small segment. But you have a picture of the item that you wish to contribute, or items, and a starting bid.

(0:16:52) and you send that information to Ivan and he starts the process of putting together the bid sheets and all the rest of that on that particular item and gets you as the donor and then the time the

auction gets here, oh yeah, you bring the item if you're going to come yourself or if not, you ship the item to him if you're not going to be here but you want to contribute anyway.

(0:17:17) I did take a little video of the action, and I put it in the Outlaws, Bright Heart Facebook group. Was that a silent video? Yes. OK, good. You can kind of hear my flip-flops, though.

(0:17:33) And so I think that intrigues some of the guys in the group. One guy's like almost like they were interested in like, but I think if we told them that they can contribute and told them how, they might, who knows, you might get even more stuff. That's fine. And again, the silent auction will actually start tomorrow. The day after we get back, right? This officially ends tonight.

(0:18:04) Tomorrow morning, silent auction contributions start all over again. And it was crazy because hardly anything came in until the last month. I was sweating bullets. I was like, what are we going to do? He kept calling me up and saying, I don't know. We don't have a lot of stuff here. I said, don't worry. Don't worry. It's going to happen. They're going to get in. And I got to give a shout out to Rags there. I guess he's in maintenance. He built all kinds of stuff. You know what I mean?

(0:18:33) He gets a lot of memorabilia. You can always count on Eric. Yeah. For 30 plus items. So if you know who your people is in. Where does he shuffle them from? Have you ever been inside his house? No. He's got stuff all over the place in there. It's just amazing. And he's got, I walk through there, he goes, Bob, this is going to go to the auction here. And this one, we're going to consider making this an auction item. This one, I think.

(0:18:58) My goodness, there was all so much stuff in there, I wanted to buy half of it myself. Thank you, Bob, for all that you contribute annually as we do this. Who else would 3D print a Jesus nut? Well, it's not really Jesus. It's called a Moses nut because it's 3D printed. Is that another woe?

(0:19:26) It's a Genesis thing. Thank you for that question. Did that answer it? Yes. Okay. Moving along then, we're also doing an award ceremony tonight. We do that, of course, every closing banquet that we have. We recognize significant contributions as well as other applications of awards. And so tonight will be no exception, and Ivan is in charge of awards and nominations.

(0:19:56) And so we'll be able to have those distributed tonight.

(0:20:01) Future reunion locations, I'm gonna defer until after the slate of officers have been put together because we have some interesting combinations. But before we do the destination opportunities, I would like to present our nominations from the steering committee for the slate of officers for two years from now, from now through the next two years. For the national director position,

(0:20:30) Jim Donnelly. And Jim has served in a national director capacity before, so he is not inexperienced. He knows exactly what's going on. He's quite savvy. And in fact, I relied on his wisdom and judgment a great deal as I was going through the process of putting this reunion together with the other steering committee members. So thank you for that, Jim. Thank you, Bob. Jim, for the national director position, you're welcome.

(0:21:03) And as the Deputy National, the person that would succeed in the next two years after, that would be Phil Wright, Dan Austin. So all I need is a, all we need now is any other nominations that might come from the floor before we close the nominations themselves. Anybody want to volunteer?

(0:21:29) For those two positions? I'm sorry? For those two positions, you're saying? Yeah. Oh, no. Nobody in their right mind. That's what's wrong with me. I'm not going to volunteer. Well, you could be voluntold, but you can't volunteer, right? All right, so we have Mr. Jim Donnelly as our national director elect, and Phil Ryden also as the deputy.

(0:22:03) So now we're going to vote, and instead of voting everyone on the affirmation, I'm going to ask only for those who say nay. Please raise your hand if that is not good for you. Seeing none, that is affirmative and carried.

(0:22:27) I didn't want to count all the hands, so I didn't know. Okay, just so we can make the rest of the officers official, I move that the current at-large directors be reelected. All right, listen up. The current at-large, the motion is that the current at-large directors also be affirmed, and I will assume the at-large position that's open of 70-71

(0:22:56) just to fill that slate. So put my name in that process. So that's the current directors at large. After I roll off to emeritus status as a national director, I will still fulfill the responsibility of that year for 70-71 as a director at large.

(0:23:24) All those, sorry. They're on the newsletter. Do you want me to read it all? Please. All right. Webmaster, Ernest Isabel, chaplain. Doug Wilson, historian. Just the director. Oh, director. I'm sorry. Ernie Isabel, former at large, 64-5.

(0:23:51) Walter Schlesiak, member of the large 667. Eric Stragsdale, member of the large 68, 69. Position open, now to you, Bob Allen. Fred Rosenberg, member of the large 72 to 75. Laurie Husenbeth-Fluke, member of the large 03 to 08. Terry Cacciador, and the staff advisor, Lilburn, Georgia. Okay. Yep, that's it. That's it. Okay, everybody understand that? And the permanent advisor would be. I guess it is.

(0:24:22) All the directors at large, including our recommendation for DIST staff, which is Terry Casadorian, who is Terry's wife, and all of the ones that Bob just laid out, including my name to fill the 70-71 position. All by affirmation, say aye. Aye. Any nays? That carries. Thank you for that. Also, now at this time,

(0:24:53) I'm going to entertain the options for destinations for the next reunion two years hence. The opportunities that have been presented to us through the steering committee are Washington, DC, San Diego, California, Reno, Nevada, and Las Vegas, Nevada.

(0:25:22) Now we can take a general consensus and see what the current membership would offer. And then we can put word out to the balance of the outlaws and see if there's any distinct changes in their preference for locations according to the new administration. So just amongst us here, I'm just going to list them as they have been stating them. How many would be in favor of reunion two years from today, or two years in the future,

(0:25:50) In Washington, D.C., would you raise your hand? Hey, Bob, can I mention that Jim's already done a lot of work on Washington, D.C., and several of the excursions he's mentioned would be at no cost to us. Yeah, I'm just giving you destinations. All right, Washington, D.C., would you raise your hand? Okay, San Diego, California.

(0:26:20) How about Reno, Nevada? How about Las Vegas, Nevada? Okay, well so far it's Washington, D.C. So I can tell you at this point that

(0:26:51) Jim has done extensive work on reviewing and setting up a possible reunion in Washington, D.C. Already had an agenda put together. And all of the excursion attractions that we would be attending are gratis. So that would reduce the cost of attendance. What are they? Looks like Kimberly's...

(0:27:21) It's the Aerospace Museum Annex. Looks like... What is this? Kimberly's Sideshow and... No, that's... Read it. I'll read them out to you. I just couldn't read it. I have my glasses off right. We're going to do... The Museum of the United States Army.

(0:27:47) That would be one open. And how many hours? Quite a few hours. 8.30 to 11. And then the afternoon. And then you have lunch at 11 to 3. Yeah. Buses return to the hotel. Nothing else on that day. And incidentally, the dates have been changed. Jim has it set up for a Thursday start and a Sunday finish with a Monday return. That's back to the old days. What's that?

(0:28:17) That's back to the old dates. Yeah, that's the old dates. Yeah. So whether it's a Sunday start and a Wednesday finish, depending on whatever it is, the administration will take care of that. On the next day, it looks like the Stephen Hubbard Air and Space Museum. Yeah, that's the Air and Space Museum Annex, which is like 500,000 square feet. Yeah.

(0:28:47) And that would be available on that following day. And then you would have the membership meetings in the morning and hospitality continue to be open. On the Sunday, you've got chapel service, laying of the wreath in the morning, farewell banquet. So we've got two events. Is that it? Yeah. Basically, I'm still fleshing it out. I've just got those three. Eventually, there's two events. And it turns out that...

(0:29:18) Both of the ones that have been listed are free of charge. What's the re-thing? Is that in Collington? Vietnam Memorial. Oh, the Vietnam Memorial. That's my next question. You're going to go to Vietnam Memorial. Okay. Those are available. We'll let the new administration take care of that. I just want to let you know that as of this meeting and before the close of

(0:29:47) activities tonight, then the new administration will be Jim as a national and Phil as a deputy. Okay, let's give them a round of applause.

(0:30:01) Okay, and last thing I have on the agenda is just giving you an overview of this evening. We're going to have a number of different activities to include. Presentation of the colors. This will be in the banquet room. We'll start there at 6 o'clock for open bar, catch bar, and we'll have a happy hour from 6 to 7.

(0:30:29) And then we will start our dinner at 7 o'clock and then move forward to the festivities after that. So tonight we're going to have presidential colors, our national anthem. We're going to have the pledge again. We're also going to have a missing man ceremony, which is traditional for us.

(0:30:51) Frank and I will do that. We'll have a refreshment break. We're going to have brief remarks by Bob Sharp. We're going to have the awards ceremony. We're going to have the 50-50 raffle drawing. So you still have up until the banquet to get your shekels in. Outgoing remarks by me, incoming remarks by Jim, benediction, and we're done.

(0:31:21) Any questions or comments on what we're going to be doing? Not about tonight, but two things about the reunion. Just tuck it into that future steering space that the Baker Hotel in Mineral Wells is being renovated. It was supposed to be done by now. Now they're sitting in 2026, but it'll probably take longer. So that might be a fun place to consider for an upcoming reunion.

(0:31:51) Yeah. And then in DC, I don't know if you guys know this, but me, with the dumb look I have, I just got lucky and got into flight school and I got lucky and I got into outlaws. And right before deploying, one of the maintenance Apache pilots invited me out to the hangar and he said, oh, you've got to come see this. We've got our Hueys coming in. I'm like, OK, cool. And he knew I had already flown

(0:32:18) that In the Shadow of the Blade Huey, dumb look again. So I went out there and, no, actually it was the In the Shadow of the Blade Huey. My commander gave me an outlaw patch. He didn't even give me the new one. He gave me the kind of crappier one. So I gave it to them. So our outlaw patch

(0:32:41) is in that Huey, and that Huey's in the Museum of National. Yes, it's in the Smithsonian. So our outlaw patch is in the Smithsonian, and it's in DC. I don't know if that's, it might cost money, I don't know, but I figured I'd throw that out there. And then one last little thing, when we do our open bar, it is credit card only, and be sure to tip your bartender gal. Artista.

(0:33:10) Yes. The other thing is that one other comment on mineral wealth, just as a side, the National Vietnam War Museum is just outside mineral wealth. It's got a Weatherford address. I've been there. I was there for phase one dedication. I'm going to be there for phase two when I get it built. And I'm going to try.

(0:33:36) Because, you know, everybody knows I was in the 114th, and the 114th is trying to get that museum to house our history. Okay. Good luck. I don't know what other excursions are around there, but Mineral Wells is not quite as visible as it once was. It's happening in another resurgence of the mineral swans, and they've got their Crazy Waters, which are in ATP now, and Biome. So it's kind of picking up, and I think there are maybe like even

(0:34:06) I don't even know. We have to work. But I just wanted to toss it out there. Maybe it might be a possibility in the future. Is there anything else for the good of the order? I'm going to start out with a question. How many have the Vietnam War veteran

(0:34:36) Let me say it the other way. Who does not have it? Let me explain this for just a minute. I've given out about 800 of these. When they established the commemoration commission about 2008 or

so, they established community partners so that the materials developed by the commission could be funneled out through these

(0:35:06) My partner is an AUSA chapter, the Francis Scott Key chapter, near Fort Meade, Maryland. And so that's my source of the pen. This pen is authorized for where, for anyone that served the train, now listen up, November 55 to 15 May 75.

(0:35:34) You should have received this through another source. I have a few of these with me, and so I'd like to take a moment to present one, and then I'll make sure I get the other four out. That's all I have with me, but I've ordered another 50. So it's an impressive pen. Those of you that have it know, there's an eagle on the front, and then inside it says Vietnam War Veterans,

(0:36:04) There's a wreath. There are six stars. Those six stars represent the six nations that were allied with us in Vietnam, okay? Importantly, on the back side of that pen, it says, a grateful nation thanks and honors you. And when I present these, you know, oftentimes, it'll be in a hotel, it'll be in a restaurant, it'll be wherever I wear my Vietnam hat, and they'll come up to me and say, I was there.

(0:36:35) I'm having it explained to me so that I'm not dealing with a fraud. Because we have a lot of those who claim that they were in Vietnam or served were never there. And there's about 7 million of those people that they've identified. So for the purposes of this morning, Bob, if I could take a minute, I'll present one the way that they should be presented in a dignified manner. So who raised your hand that has not received one?

(0:37:06) Frank, if you come up please. So the way they should be presented is we shake hands. And during the passing of that pen, I look Frank in the eye and I say a grateful nation, thanks and honors you. Thank you for your service. Welcome home, brother. So that's how they should be presented. And so I'll present the other four right now if I may.

(0:37:37) And it's as far as I can go. So thank you very much. Thank you. So someone over here did not have one. You did not give one yet, Arnie? No.

(0:38:08) Well, that wasn't explained to me like that. Just a moment. Come on up, if you would.

(0:38:34) And I'll give it to my brother here. He was there before I was. Go ahead. Thank you. And I'll have them stand up if they're able. I present a lot of these to folks who are not able to stand up. A great donation. Thanks a lot. Thank you for your service. Thank you.

(0:39:18) One more. I thought I had, but I haven't. Stand up. Thank you for your service.

(0:39:41) And the other thing I want to say about this is that in your area, you know of other veterans. You ask them if they've received their Vietnam War veteran

(0:40:03) your senators or congressmen, they should have them, and many of the VFW, American Legion posts like that might have them, or other entities such as the Air Force Association and some of those.

So there are sources available, but here's the problem. The material that they were providing in support of this ended in June of this year. Yes.

(0:40:34) tens themselves that will no longer be available after 31 March of next year, 25. So in that period, you know, we need to try to get these out. And we, I submitted a, prepared a letter and shared it with friends over in Columbia Falls, Montana. We want to try to go through the senators from there to get that period of, of,

(0:41:02) recognizing the Vietnam-era veterans another three years. There are a lot of people just like here who have never heard of the pen and have not received it, so we're working it from that angle, and you can do the same thing from yours. I want to switch gears just a minute. In talking to Bob and others of you here, I learned, heard some war stories, and the war stories as my

(0:41:33) time of trying to get into the VA system, and some of the horror stories are really horror stories in a sense. I never felt I was eligible or authorized or really needed to file a claim with the VA. I had a friend, and thank God he did, he said, Bert, get your ass, pardon the expression, into the VA system.

(0:42:03) I said, how do you do that? He said, here's the number. He gave me a service officer number, Phil Munley, by the way, and his number. I said, Phil, Irwin's been on my case to try to file a claim of VA. He said, well, why haven't you? I said, I didn't think I was authorized or I needed it and this sort of thing. He says, how long did you serve? I served 30 years and 16 days active in the reserve before that. He says, you're authorized.

(0:42:32) So I got into the system, and I got my card and so forth, and he said, the first thing you do is you get with the VA doctor. You know, one signature at a clinic, and I did that. Two hours later, she had me scheduled to go to this specialist, back over here, to your doctor here, the eye people, and all that kind of stuff.

(0:43:00) I did that, and I went and I got my examinations and so forth. It all came into a pot, and I don't know how they did this, but they had 30% here, 10% there, and 20% here, and 15% and so forth. I went from 10, which I got right after, because I got a bad knee problem when I retired, to 60%. I told this Irwin,

(0:43:27) and his wife, I said, if anything comes of this, I'll buy you a steak dinner and your wife. I went back to my humble pie and I said, I owe you a steak dinner, buddy. But it took time and some persistence. And some of the stories I heard here today or just here and other places is similar to mine. So I'll just say this, be persistent.

(0:43:56) Get yourself a service officer if you haven't done this. And if you have, there may be time for you to go back through and apply for consideration. Well, I just did that, and then I was bumped 80%. You know, I never did feel like I would deserve this, but by golly, I did, and my care through VA has been good. I've heard stories about VA, and that may have been the reason I've gotten involved with it too much,

(0:44:26) But to me, they've been very supportive. So I just wanted to mention that to you. It may be something that for a future reunion, we could get somebody to come in and talk about that. I've got a question. Can I just add to that? If you Google county service office,

(0:44:51) county veteran service officer in your community, you will likely find a county executive, not part of the government, or the federal government, but a local representative that will fill out your paper work correctly.

(0:45:09) And that's the key ingredient is to make sure that you apply correctly. And if you just go to a VA facility and fill it out, likely you're not going to do it in your best interest. They're serving like a service officer for you. Correct. They're going directly to the VA because, you know, they're going to . I say that, but I probably shouldn't. Get a recommendation.

(0:45:40) Other sources like this, with the service officers in a county office within your community. And all you have to do is Google or search for that on the internet. I want to have one more question. Each of the county service officers are appointed positions. Right. They're not elected positions, they are appointed by that particular county administration.

(0:46:04) I have one little thing to add to that. But their appointed position, that doesn't make them all equal. And you need to understand that if you don't like the one that you... I have people call me, I'm the commander of the DAV and the VFW. They call me and tell me that they got a sad story and they don't feel like they belong or whatever or deserve it. But the veteran service officer

(0:46:34) You are not married to that guy. If you don't like him, you can go to this one in the other county. I prefer different ones to the county. There are conflicts. And don't give up. That's my... Understand that most of the county will have a staff. If you're not familiar, if you're not comfortable with the VSO themselves, the staff may be able to work with you better from a personality standpoint or from a detail standpoint.

(0:47:03) The VSO doesn't necessarily know everything there is to know.

(0:47:07) but the staff certainly does because that's what they do every single day. Mike? Yeah, those of you joining the VFW, the VFW has a lot of people that would do it. I have problems. They try to cut my disability. Yeah, all of the organizations do. The American Legion, the VFW. They did an excellent job. The other thing that you should know is with respect to the Vietnam Memorial Pins, the 50-year commemoratives,

(0:47:34) The VVA, how many of you have a VVH, the Vietnam Veterans Association, in your local chapter in your area? We all do. And they're the ones that have these pins. They have been given a standard allocation. Regardless of where else you will find them, the VVA organization in your local area will have a deposit of these pins. I have 40 of these pins back in my house because I work with hospice veterans.

(0:48:02) And I would give them to the hospice veterans before they passed if they didn't have one. And I have one on my lapel, which I'll wear tonight, which I will contribute to someone who doesn't have a

pin because I can always get one back at my ranch, okay? So remind me tonight if you want one and it's on my lapel, I'll make sure you get it.

(0:48:26) Is it true now that you served in Vietnam because of Agent Orange, you're automatically 10%? No. No, not automatically. It depends.

(0:48:42) cases which have been outlined under the Agent Orange directive. And if you fall into one of those presumptive categories, then you are entitled to a percentage of whatever that allocation will be. For example, if you have tinnitus, that's a 10%. Most people who have got through the process, except me, because I was denied, and I have reappealed, because you have to be persistent, right Bert? I was the only one that I know of

(0:49:11) that didn't get the 10% for tinnitus for the Agent Orange thing, right? Well, I flew helicopters. I'd send them in there and they got it. Now that's age. Okay, great. Okay. So I'm hearing loss from the turbine. No, that's age. So you have to be persistent to go back through it. But the presumptive list, it breaks it down by category and by specific. And it increases almost annually.

(0:49:38) So you have to kind of keep up with it. It's not static. It does increase based on different things that they're finding. And if you have a bad back and then suddenly your back gets better, they will take that away. Yeah, they've already done that. OK, any other issues that we just talked about? Thank you, Bert.

(0:50:00) I am remiss because I had contacted the VSO here. I wanted them to come and set up a table or a station, and the follow-up just didn't happen. But hopefully when Jim gets the next site, we'll have a VSO local there or somebody they can represent to be able to do counseling or on-site representation throughout the process. Sounds good. Fair enough? Yeah, sounds good.

(0:50:29) at one point on the VSO, he worked for you. He's not, I do personally know a guy that's a veteran service officer and the guys went in there and they told him about it. He decided that you're not, you know, you're not out doing that. That's not his job. His job is to work for you and the VA will decide. That's right. No screening. Yeah.

(0:50:56) Believe me, I don't want to belabor the VSO situation, but they are appointed people. You have to remember that. And they do work for you, and some of them are enthusiastic and some of them just have a job. As an aside, my VSO was a Vietnamese.

(0:51:20) Mine was a lady that served in Iraq. So, I mean, that gets... Yeah. Mine wore a sign that said no. The answer is no. Yeah, whatever it is, answer is no. All right, we're past our time. I appreciate your... I want to have Jacqueline Ernie give us our benediction, and then we'll be adjourned for this evening. We do appreciate...

(0:51:50) all the efforts by all of you to talk about this and uh each of us are veterans and that makes us special every one of you so dear lord we ask your blessing on this group on its its being every day please keep everyone safe as they travel back home

(0:52:10) In your name we pray, amen. Amen. Okay, the auction will be open in 50-50. We have new tickets.

(0:52:39) What's the uniform for the name? Uh, business casual. A shirt, a tie if you've got one. What is your post on? That'd be clean bibs. Clean bibs or formal, 30 bibs.