

**JUNE 2008**



**A Memorial to the American Experience  
In Vietnam**

**"All included, none excluded"**

# **REVETMENTS**

**The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association**

**TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION**

## **2008 REUNION**

**Renaissance St. Louis Grand & Suites Hotel  
July 31—August 3, 2008**

The Saturday night, August 2nd Banquet Speaker will be:

**ADRIAN CRONAUER**

Special Assistant to the Director, Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office,  
Office of the Secretary of Defense.

(Better known for, "Goooooooood Morning VIETNAM!")

***COME, GREET OLD FRIENDS AND MAKE NEW ONES***

Make your reservation today with the hotel—only \$99. per night!

ALSO: Please send in your reservation form now to TSNA .

TSNA Registration is \$130. per person.

**SEE PAGES TWO AND THREE FOR MORE INFORMATION!**

(PLEASE MAKE YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS **BEFORE** JULY 10)

## Tan Son Nhut Association 2008 Reunion Registration

OPEN TO ALL INTERESTED IN THE HISTORY AND LEGACY OF TAN SON NHUT AND THE VIET-NAM CONFLICT

**YES, SIGN ME UP FOR THE REUNION!**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ BRANCH OF SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF YOUR GUEST(S): \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY: \_\_\_\_\_

IS THIS YOUR FIRST REUNION?: \_\_\_\_\_ (IF NO, WHAT YEAR(S) DID YOU ATTEND TSNA REUNIONS? \_\_\_\_\_

### REGISTRATION FEES

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ X \$130. = \_\_\_\_\_

OPTIONAL SATURDAY BREWERY TOUR  
NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ X \$5. = \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ENCLOSED = \_\_\_\_\_

PAYMENT MUST BE **MAILED** NO LATER THAN JULY 19, 2008

PLEASE MAKE PAYMENTS PAYABLE TO THE TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION AND MAIL PAYMENTS TO:

TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION  
C/O GEORGE PLUNKETT  
587 WILLIAMS CIRCLE  
WEST COLUMBIA, SC 29172

Tan Son Nhut Association Reunion in St. Louis, MO  
July 31 – August 3, 2008

Renaissance St Louis Grand & Suites Hotel, 800 Washington Ave.

Room Rate is \$99. per night, plus tax.

TSNA Registration is \$130. per person. Costs includes the following:

Thursday, 5PM Hospitality/Registration Opens.

**Friday**, 10AM – The Battle for TSN, Tet '68. Mini-Symposium hosted by members Bob Laymon (retired USAF CMSgt) and Charles Penley (retired US Army MSgt)

**Friday**, 1 PM - Presentation: RITS Civil Action Project, the Phu My Sanctuary and Orphanage in Saigon. Presented by TSNA Member Rich Carvell, former USAF Captain and retiring Chair of the Department of Radio-TV, Arkansas State University.

**Saturday**, 1:30PM – Bus departs for brewery tour (Fee for Bus)

**Saturday**, 7-10PM - Banquet Buffet Dinner & Program

Speaker: Adrian Cronauer, Special Assistant to the Director, Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense (Better known for, "Gooooood Morning Vietnam!")

**Sunday**, 7AM-8AM, Farewell Breakfast Buffet

**Sunday**, 8AM-11AM, Business Meeting

(President Bob Gales is working on two other presentations. Details to follow)

**{Hospitality Suite to be stocked with snacks and beverages all 3 days}**

Other local activities include: Optional riverboat cruises that depart from the Arch. Cost is \$10. per person. See [www.gatewayarchriverboats.com](http://www.gatewayarchriverboats.com) for more information. Also, the President Casino, the Casino Queen, Laclede's Landing (with restaurants, bars, stores and horse drawn carriage rides); St. Louis Zoo, Science Center, Missouri Botanical Gardens; see the Cardinals at Busch Stadium; Soulard Farmers Market; and Grant's Farm.

Call the Renaissance St Louis Grand & Suites Hotel no later than **July 10** to receive the special reunion rate of \$99. per room.

Toll free 1-800-397-1282; Hotel Front Desk 1-314-621-9600; Fax 1-314-621-9601. Check in time: 4 PM

QUESTIONS?

Contact: George Plunkett  
Phone: 803-463-7555  
Email viet62@aol.com

## THE DASH

I read of a man who stood to speak  
At the funeral of a friend.  
He referred to the dates on his tombstone  
From the beginning . . . to the end.

He noted that first came his date of birth  
And spoke the following date with tears.  
But he said what mattered most of all  
Was the dash between those years.

For the dash represents all the time  
That he spent alive on earth . . .  
And now only those who loved him  
Know what that little line is worth.

For it matters not, how much we own;  
The cars . . . the house . . . the cash,  
What matters is how we live and love  
And how we live our dash.

So think about this long and hard . . .  
Are there things you'd like to change?  
For you never know how much time is left,  
That can still be rearranged.

If we could just slow down enough  
To consider what's true and real,  
And always try to understand  
The way other people feel.

And be less quick to anger,  
And show appreciation more  
And love the people in our lives  
Like we've never loved before.

If we treat each other with respect,  
And more often wear a smile,  
Remembering that this special dash  
Might only last a little while.

So when your eulogy's being read  
With your life's actions to rehash . . .  
Would you be proud of the things they say  
About how you lived your dash?

~ Author Unknown



### The Tan Son Nhut Magnetic Patch Has Arrived!

We are proud to announce the arrival of the round magnetic patch. The magnetic patch is 5 3/4 inches in diameter.

It is beautifully manufactured.

The magnetic patch may be purchased for:

1 for \$ 4.00  
2 for \$ 7.00  
3 for \$ 10.00

By placing this on your vehicle, others will see it and know of your pride in the association.

Prices includes shipping and handling. Your magnetic patch will be mailed to you within 24 hours upon the receipt of your order.

Send check or money order to:

Tan Son Nhut Association  
Attn: Johnnie Jernigan  
956 Donham Drive  
Beavercreek, OH 45434



Our sincere thanks to TSNA Life Member Craig Campen and his professional artist son, Adam, for all the work done to have this new item added to our BX/PX.

The magnetic patch and all of our other BX/PX items will be available at the St. Louis Reunion. Come and get 'em!

AND, check out the next page to see what else you can see at the Reunion!

## ITEMS OF INTEREST AT THE REUNION

There are (among other things), four items of great interest to all TSNA members, which we be at the 2008 Reunion in St. Louis.

Through the efforts of Life Member Bob Laymon, we have in our safekeeping hands some items from the late Col. Farley Peebles.

There is historical significance to each item:



The TSN tactical security map was on Col Peebles desk as he lead the defense of our former base during the battle for TSN, Tet Offensive, '68. It is the base master plan map, with red hand annotations of every security sector, security tower and guard post defense position on base. It precisely annotates the location of infamous Bunker O-51 at the approach end of the runway and the adjacent O-51 perimeter gate.



The larger yellow rug (**377th Combat Support Group, Tan Son Nhut, Vietnam**) has several data tags on the back, which state:  
"Tai Ping Rugs and Carpets, 100% Virgin Wool Pile. Hand

Made in Hong Kong" (*probably airlifted by Scatback*)

Size: 6' (diameter) Round  
Serial: H100623 FA.13225.

*When you were "Called on the carpet" @ the 377th CSG ...this was literally it.*



The second rug (**7th AF emblem**) does not have any data tags:

It is 3' in diameter.



There is also an aerial photo available for your perusal.

This is a sample. You'll have to come to the Reunion to see them better!

Have you registered yet?

<<<<<<TSNA>>>>>>

## WHO SPOOKED WHOM

By Mike Gaynor  
Det 11 1131st Special Activities Sqdn.  
TSN Aug 72—Feb 73

I was with Det 11, 1131st Special Activities Sqdn. We worked with HQ MACV & 7th AF at Tan Son Nhut and later with US Support Activities Group at NKP Thailand. I arrived Tan Son Nhut on 14 Aug 72. Worked with USAF Advisory Group in a Bldg between HQ 7AF & 600 Photo Sq, across from the Camp Alpha entrance. In December 1972, I

moved to HQ MACV and worked in the Directorate of Operations in the frag shop. This is where tactical air missions were put together & disseminated to the individual units throughout SEA. Worked on putting everything together for Operation Linebacker II. We relocated to NKP after the ceasefire. I left TSN on 10 Feb 73.

I remember those working dogs very well. Late one night, I was walking to our jeep on the other side of a passage between 2 buildings in our duty compound. As I came through between the buildings, not really paying attention to much as I remember, I met up with a dog handler & his dog. All I remember was this huge dog being inches from my face and the handler having is AR-15 pointed at me. Actually, I think I spooked them as much as they did me. After that, every time I walked through that passage, I was sure to make enough noise that someone would know I was coming.

MIKE, WHO, AFTER BEING ASKED IF WE COULD USE THIS IN REVETMENTS SAID, "Sure, no problem. I'm sure that all you dog handlers will get a kick out of it. But I still think that they were just as spooked as I was !! Haa."

<<<<<< TSNA >>>>>>

## FAVORITE SAYINGS

It's tough to convince the young that many a wise word is spoken through false teeth,

It used to be that a fool and his money were soon parted. Now it happens to everybody!

(I need some more favorite sayings for fillers. Please send them to: [lfry2@dejazzd.com](mailto:lfry2@dejazzd.com). Thanks.)

## SPECIAL AWARDS FOR OUR WEBMASTER!

Thanks to the special efforts of TSNA Life Member Bob Laymon, the TSNA found out about Charles Penley receiving some special recognition from VSPA, the Vietnam Security Police Association. What you will read below is the letter that accompanied the award sent to Charles. In the package Charles received was: A VSPA Meritorious Badge; a VSPA 2007 Washington DC Badge; a trophy of a Security Policeman wearing his beret, with an inscription plate, "The SP is very distinguished and ever diligent".

Revetments would also like to add here some comments from Steve Gattis in the email he wrote to Bob Laymon when he sent the letter copy to him. "I have attached the letter that I sent to Charles Penley with the award. If testimonials were included, you couldn't afford to publish the paper. Essentially, Charles has been one of those extraordinary people who continues to give valuable personal time to those who wore the same shield. He is a volunteer who willingly gives that time by stealing it from his family and others who need him in their lives. He is always ready to provide information and assistance to his fellow skycopts".



**VIETNAM SECURITY POLICE ASSOCIATION**  
**STEVE GATTIS, PRESIDENT**  
**LIFE MEMBER #49**  
**CAM RANH BAY 68 - 69**  
**P.O. BOX 1889**  
**GLEN ROSE, TEXAS 76043**  
**(254) 898-2647**



March 30, 2008

Charles Penley  
Vietnam Security Police Association  
708 Teasel Drive  
Kingsport, Tennessee 37660

Dear Charles,

I hope you are doing well. To say that we missed you at our reunion in Washington, D.C. is an understatement. I'm sure you have heard many reunion stories and have seen the photos. I wish that you could have experienced the sense of brotherhood, especially among your brothers from the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron. They had a great group in attendance and marched proudly down Constitution Avenue.

I have enclosed a special award from your brothers in the VSPA. We are very proud to call you our brother and to recognize your belief in our brotherhood as you have lived and demonstrated our motto: *We take care of our own.* Your hard work to maintain the website for the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron and the 377<sup>th</sup> Association has had a tremendous impact on the VSPA and the brotherhood that we all share. Your consistent effort to provide information to our members has united many Air Policemen, Security Policemen and Augmentees who served together in Vietnam. More importantly, your website has preserved our history and has healed wounds that cannot be seen. It takes courage to face those memories while revealing your deepest thoughts and feelings from so many years ago. To do that honestly and well is a wonderful accomplishment. To do that for our brotherhood of Security Policemen and Augmentees requires an even greater level of caring and understanding from the heart, something that we all sincerely appreciate.

I send the award with sincere hope to see you this year in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the current home of the 377<sup>th</sup>. Thank you for your service with us at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, for working with Rebel and Smokey in the face of constant danger, and for your service to the Vietnam Security Police Association.

My best to you and your family,

Steve

**THANKS CHARLES, FOR ALL YOU DO  
FOR EVERYONE!!**

## RIDE TO THE WALL SOUTHERN STYLE (FINAL REPORT)

By Terry Longpre

Here is a short version of what transpired during my motorcycle odyssey to the Wall and Rolling Thunder.

We left Bradenton, Florida with a total of 37 bikes, some with passengers headed for Daytona on the first leg of our journey.

Between Bradenton and Daytona we made several stops for fuel, more bikes and twelve motorcycle officers. Upon arriving in Daytona, there were fifty-eight motorcycles. We had traveled 242 miles to get to the start of the "official" ride.

At 0500 hours on May 22<sup>nd</sup> we were up eating breakfast and preparing our bikes, as well as ourselves for the first day of riding which took us through Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and into Statesville, NC with one hundred and twelve bikes and five hundred and one miles later. We cut our evening short knowing that we would be making another early start in the morning.

At 0500 hours we got up, ate, had a pre-ride meeting and prayer and we were off on the second day of our journey to the Wall. We only have three hundred and eighty-six miles to go to reach our destination of Washington DC. We left Statesville with a total of 162 bikes, along with our law enforcement escort. I have to give the LE motor units a much needed thank you for what they did. I had spent five years of my twenty-seven years as a Deputy Sheriff as a "motorman" and I understood what they were thinking and doing.

By the time we reached Wash-  
**REVTMENTS**

ington, we totaled 268 bikes strong. We had completed our two day journey of 887 miles through what should have been considered absolutely picture perfect weather. It had been in the mid 50's in the morning and up into the mid 70's in the afternoon, under the most beautiful clear blue skies imaginable. I feel that God gave us that weather because he understood what our mission was.

On Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>, we were up at the crack of dawn to eat and prepare for what we had all come together for, the "Ride to the Wall". We arrived in the Pentagon parking lot at 0615, knowing that we were going to be there until the start of the parade at noon. This gave me time to walk around and talk with others that had assembled for this emotional gathering. There were people from every walk of life, most were veterans, some not. No matter who they were there was a silence bond between us. It was the need to get to the Wall.



I was able to take numerous pictures of the largest motorcycle gathering in the world. People came from near and far, some even shipping their bikes up from Australia to participate and to bring an Australian Flag that was presented to Artie Muller the National Executive Director for Rolling Thunder. That flag will be housed and displayed in Washington as a reminder of those Australian troops that fought and died beside us in Vietnam.

We had gathered for several reasons, to show respect for those that had given the most precious thing they had for this wonderful country of ours, their lives. And, to make the government aware that there are POWs and MIAs from all wars still out there and we want them back.

At noon the 375,000 - 400,000 motorcycles started to crank up and get ready to make the fifteen minute trip from the Pentagon to the Washington Mall area. I actually started my bike at 1245 and started to move out of the parking lot. At that point I understood why people jokingly call it **rolling thunder**. At times the sound was deafening.

We rode two abreast most of the way, with the crowds stepping out into the street giving us "high and low fives", waving flags and signs, as well as cheering and thanking us. I have to admit it was an emotional ride.

When we arrived at the mall area we parked our bikes and proceed to the "Wall". There were already large crowds in the area. As I looked around at those present, I saw that they had come from every imaginable country, judging by their dress and languages being spoken.

I found several names that I recognized and I stood there crying, along with most of the veterans that were around me. It was my time to talk and listen to those that had given so much. As I stood there, several people came up and patted me on the shoulder, without saying a word. Once I made amends with those lost souls, I suddenly began to feel better. It was hard, but that was the reason for the journey. All together, it took three hours and forty-five minutes for all of the bikes to make the trip from the Pentagon to the Mall area.

During my 3 days of travel I had time to think and reflect as to what the ride meant to me. At fuel stops I was able to talk with others and the feelings bridged the full gamut from "a nice way to show respect" to an absolute personal need to make the ride to heal themselves.

One thing I did find was almost everyone who participated in this ride felt all veterans, be they a Vietnam vet or from another war should talk to someone when they return. We all felt the healing process should start as soon as possible upon the return of those who have honorably served in the military. In the case of a lot of us who made this ride, it came forty years late, however, it did finally come.

The original concept of Rolling Thunder was a protest ride of sorts. It was to remind those in government that we wanted our POW/MIAs back. Since that time, various reasons have been added to the original concept. Having said that, the original reason as well as personal healing is the drive for most of us who participated.

It had been over twenty years since I first saw the wall and I have been compelled to return by a pull I couldn't explain. I have felt the need to return and spend more time talking and listening to those that are on the polished black granite wall. On May 25<sup>th</sup>, I did just that. I talked and listened and hopefully the saga is now over.

Overall, the trip was unforgettable. It was a time of healing and discovery at the same time. It's strange how you can ride a motorcycle 887 miles with the radio on, along with up to 268 other bikes and still be able to think and reflect. It was almost mystical at times.

My quest to the Wall is now

complete. May God Bless those who's names appear on the wall, their families, as well as all who serve this wonderful country of ours.

And may God Bless the United States of America.

Terry Longpre  
Vietnam 1967-68



(Terry Longpre at The Wall)

<<<<<< TSNA >>>>>>  
**DURING MY TOUR**

**Tom Rosinski**  
**7th Air Force Plans**  
**TSN 1968**

During my tour at TSN (Jan 68-Dec 68) my duty days were 12 hours a day, 6½ days a week and probably not as long as some of the other members of this association. I was lucky enough to have a ½ day off and being an avid golfer, I found that I could check our golf clubs from Special Services and play a round of golf at the Saigon Golf Club just in back of MACV. Prior to the TET Offensive, I could count on that ½ day off regularly. I had to bum rides to the golf course and was fortunate that a lot of the military vehicles heading for Hq MACV would give me a lift.

It was relaxing for me to get on the golf course. However, Tet changed that as the golf course was off limits for a long while after Tet 68.

However, when I did get back to my ½ day at the golf course, I found it very strange feeling as all over the golf course were gun emplacements and camou-

flaged bunkers which had been built during the Tet Offensive. I had heard stories about the VC coming across the golf course. Seeing the bunkers was a real reminder that TSN had been very close to being over run by the VC.

Again, thanks to the After Action Report which is posted on the TSNA Web Site, I again was taken back to what could have happened at TSN had not the security personnel performed so bravely that night. I am proud to have served in Vietnam and proud to be a member of the TSNA.

<<<<<<TSNA>>>>>>

**NOTATIONS**  
**FROM APPLICATIONS**

From March 2008 new member John G. Bowen: "SSgt. Illustrator assigned to Headquarters—200 man unit, only illustrator. Was there during Tet and the following rocket attacks. Participated in the big sand bagging details following big rocket attack in February. Also there for "Charlie's" attack on base during May at the 1200 area where I lived. I am writing a book about my tour".

From February 2008 new member Michael Ives: "Airman First Class in Vietnam, later SSgt. Was working night shift when 1968 Tet offensive began. On flight line. Remember all the rocket ground attacks from then until 30 May 1968 when my 1 year tour was over—worked night shifts all the time. No injuries. Currently live near Elko, Nevada as a mill maintenance mechanic at one of the large gold mines, (Barrick). Have amateur radio tech license call sign KD7DZD".



From the Publisher: As I was preparing this issue, I thought I would stop at 6 pages. Then Terry Longpre sent in his excellent article; then I remembered I had scheduled the article about Charles Penley for this issue, and on it went. Sooooo, what you see below is an attempt at saving some more written material for future issues, AND, in light of the fact that the Air Force has been in the news lately, I remembered I had this in my files from many years ago. Larry Fry



**Tan Son Nhut Association**  
**P.O. Box 236**  
**Penryn, PA 17564**

**Revetments** is an official publication of the Tan Son Nhut Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 236, Penryn, PA 17564-0236  
The Association is a non-profit fraternal organization chartered under the appropriate statutes and law.

President: Robert Robinson Gales  
Vice President: Larry E. Fry  
Treasurer: Lois F. Fry  
Secretary: Dale Bryan  
Dir. of Communications/Webmaster: Charles Penley  
Director of Marketing: Johnnie Jernigan  
Dir. of Membership Development: George Plunkett  
Director of Revetments: Walter D'Ambrosio  
Revetments Publishing Coordinator: Larry E. Fry  
Chaplains: Rev. Dr. James M. Warrington and Rev. Dr. Billy T. Lowe  
Co-Founders/Presidents Emeriti: Don Parker and John Peele  
President Emeritus: Wayne Salisbury

**Web Site: [www.tsna.org](http://www.tsna.org)**

Annual Membership: \$20.00  
Five Year Membership: \$80.00  
Life Membership: \$180.00



Highlights from the TSNA 2007 Reunion.  
Come and help us make some more great pictures THIS year!