



REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam



AUGUST 2013

SUSIE'S NOTE

June 27, 2013

I would like to renew my membership to 5 years.

I've enjoyed being a member of the TSNA, it's felt like "coming home" again, only it's the opposite of you. I am coming home to TSN Airbase where I spent 6 years working, meeting a lot of you and loving every minute of it.

I enjoyed meeting a lot of you last year at the Reunion. Many years have gone by, but the bond seems much stronger now.

Sincerely,

Susie Man Ahrens



NOTATIONS FROM APPLICATIONS



My hooch was just past new chow hall on the right—I had been in country 6 months when first Tet took place. I was nominated for PACAF Airman of the year—didn't make the cut. Robert Garrido worked with me and he was killed mid-May of 1968. Another guy worked in my shop (can't recall name) completed his tour, came back to the states, got job as a civilian tech rep, three months in country was killed in our hangar during rocket attack (as a civilian). I went to Kuala Lumpur MA on R & R in April 1968. Got a "Dear john" letter while in country. HA! I have 2 daughters and 5 grandchildren.

Also I served in Kandahar Afghanistan in 2003 (Air Force Reserve).

Thank you folks for all you do. I really enjoyed Charlotte 2011 looking forward to next year!!

James R. Ricks (Hot Rod)
460th AEMS
Jun 67— Jul 68

I was an assistant base operations officer at Tan Son Nhut, a captain at that time. Duties including monitoring airfield for safety issues, dealing with transient aircrew support, dealing with Vietnamese airfield authorities and Vietnamese Air Force liaison, supervising clearing of runways and ramps after crash landings and other accidents, monitoring VIP arrivals and departures, and other duties.

Base quarters were not available to low-ranking officers. I lived in an apartment in downtown Saigon at 127A Nguyen Hue with two other Air Force officers.

After returning to CONUS, I was sent to Texas A & M University to obtain a masters degree in industrial engineering. The rest of my Air Force career was spent mostly in Air Force weapon system test and evaluation. I retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1978 after 24 years of service and then spent 22 years with professional service companies supporting military system test and evaluation. I retired completely in 2000.

Augustine R. Letto (See Page 2 for more from
377th Combat Support Group Gus.)
Jan 66—Dec 66

Thanks to Gus Letto,
Jan 66-Dec 66
377th Combat Supp. Grp.



Photo from the control tower monitoring a VIP departure. This was around March 1966, maybe the departure of vice-president Hubert Humphrey. Base Operations, where I worked, is on the left side of the photo.



Approach from over the South China Sea to Nha Trang Air Base. The runway is out of view but the parking ramp is visible on the far right of the photo.



Need a shoe repair in downtown Saigon? No problem.



Approaching Qui Nhon from the South China Sea coastline. I expected that someday, after the war, Vietnam would become a tourist destination. I think the prediction has become true.

My Band of Brothers

George A. Bontya
TSN 1970-1971

In 1990, a group of Vietnam Veterans built a memorial in NJ to the 56 KIA's from our town. We started an Honor Guard and made several trips to the Wall to honor them plus the 58,000+ on the Wall. This was one of those trips.

I can remember that day like it was written on a page of History. The drive from New Jersey to Washington DC was no different than any other trip we have made to the Wall, except we were doing it as a group of Vietnam Veterans, Army, Navy, and Air Force & Marines. You see, we were representing our fellow veterans, our city and county honoring the more than 58,267 names on the Wall. Those 58,267 had paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Among those names were 56 of our fallen brothers from our own home town. Guys we went to school with, played ball with, hung out at the drive-in and just plain grew up with.

When we arrived in Washington, it was raining so slightly. A mist hung over the Memorial and fell to the ground like teardrops. It was the Anniversary of the Wall, Veterans Day, and there thousands of veterans there to pay tribute to those brave men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice. One by one, the names were read. We just happened to be standing there when a name is read and I recalled him, one of the guys from our home town. A chill runs down my spine. Of course there were those customary speeches by a group of selected dignitaries, some music, but that was not the reason we were there.

As the rain kept falling, all the groups lined up with their

wreaths to lay in front of those shiny granite stones, black as the night, glistening with raindrops. The signal was given and down the path we marched, stopping by one of the panels to present our wreath. A 21 gun salute was followed by Taps. There wasn't a dry eye there among all of those combat veterans that stood side by side in the lightly falling rain.

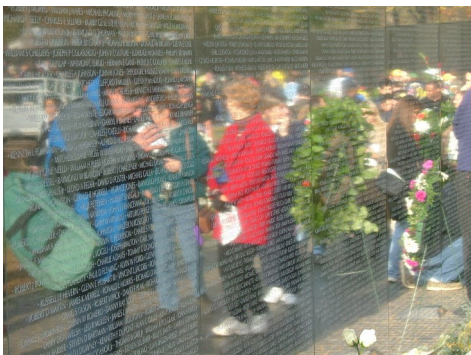
After the service we still had two more stops to make. We walked over to the statue of the 3 Servicemen where we placed another wreath. All was quiet as we stood there. No words were spoken by the many that filed past this Memorial. Three soldiers stood there with eyes that seemed to stare off to some distant land. We had our photo taken that day. This is the photo you see here.

The Woman's Memorial was just a short walk from where we were. There were flowers, wreaths, and letters placed at the base of this memorial, dedicated to all the women who served in Vietnam. We stopped to talk to a few Donut Dollies that served with the Red Cross. I thanked Jackie from New York for her service and told her, "Welcome Home", we hugged and she repeated those words as a tear ran down her face. I'll never forget that moment.

Being part of the Vietnam Veterans United Honor Guard from Hamilton Twp. NJ was one of my proudest accomplishments since returning home. It is something that I will always remember for the rest of my tour here on Earth. I thank the members of our Honor Guard for all we did over the years. You see, we were a "Band of Brothers".

God Bless America

George



"REFLECTIONS"



VVU
HONOR
GUARD

VIETNAM
WOMEN'S
MEMORIAL



THREE
SERVICEMEN
STATUE

REUNION RECIPE REPORTS

CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

By: Gary Fields
377th CES
Feb 69 - Feb 70

2 1/2 cups flour
1/4 cup white sugar
3/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 cup (two sticks) butter (room temperature)
2 eggs (room temperature)
1 package Jell-O instant vanilla pudding
1 tsp. vanilla
1 12 oz. package milk chocolate chips
1/4 tsp. salt
1 tsp. baking soda

Preheat oven to 375. Mix butter, white sugar, and brown sugar until creamy. Add eggs and vanilla and mix well. In a separate bowl, combine flour and baking soda and mix well. Add dry pudding mix and salt to flour mixture and mix well. Slowly add flour mixture to sugar mixture until both are combined and it forms a dough. Add chocolate chips. Drop by teaspoonful's onto a greased cookie sheet and bake for 9-11 minutes. Let cool. Enjoy!

GINGER CRINKLES

By: Rena Csordas
Wife of TSNA Member Andy Csordas

2/3 cup vegetable oil
1 cup sugar
1/4 cup molasses
2 cup flour
1/2 tsp. salt
2 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. Ground cinnamon
2 tsp. ground ginger
Extra sugar

Combine dry ingredients - set aside
Combine oil and 1 cup sugar - add egg - beat well
Stir in molasses - add dry mixture - stir well

Roll dough into small balls (1/2" - 1"), roll in sugar.
Place on baking stones or greased cookie sheets

Bake 350 for 10 - 12 minutes

MMMMM GOOD!!!



TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION 2014 REUNION JUNE 12-15

HOLIDAY INN EVANSVILLE AIRPORT
7101 HIGHWAY 41 NORTH
EVANSVILLE, IN 47725

GUEST SPEAKER:

Paul E. Galanti, Commander, U. S. Navy (Retired)

Commander Galanti was raised in an Army family in many states, Japan, France, Germany and Turkey. He graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1962 and entered Navy Jet Flight Training. He departed for Vietnam with Light Jet Attack Squadron 216 aboard the U.S.S. Hancock in November 1965. Shot down and captured while flying his 97th combat mission in June 1966, he remained a prisoner of war in North Vietnam's infamous Hanoi Hilton for nearly seven years.

Released from Hanoi in February 1973, he served in Navy recruiting in Richmond, Virginia, earned the Master of Commerce degree from the University of Richmond in the evening program and served in the office of the Commandant as a Battalion Officer at the United States Naval Academy.

His personal military decorations include the Silver Star, two Legions of Merit with Combat "V", the Bronze Star with Combat "V", 9 Air Medals and 2 Purple Hearts.

After retiring from the Navy, he was the CEO of the Virginia Pharmaceutical Association, the Medical Society of Virginia and the Science Museum of Virginia Foundation.

He's a member of twelve veterans' organizations. The Virginia War Memorial Foundation named its new \$8 million education center after him and his wife. In 2010, Governor Bob McDonnell appointed him Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services, the agency that provides services to Virginia's 830,000 veterans and to the Board of Visitors of the Virginia Military Institute.

He and his wife have two grown sons and live in Richmond.

To err is human-

But when the eraser wears out ahead
of the pencil, you're overdoing it.



“Welcome Home/A Monument of Honor”

At the reunion in Chattanooga, Ross Lewis did a presentation and book signing on his book Welcome Home/A Monument of Honor.

The comments made by some of our members who attended the presentation are in the July 2013 Revetments. (see <http://www.tsna.org/revetments/2013/jul2013.pdf>).

If you received a copy of the book at the reunion and have read it, I am sure you probably had strong emotions for those whose experiences are detailed. At least two of our member's stories are in the book; Rev. Bob Chaffee and Randy Smith. I know I was very emotional as I read all the stories and looked at the pictures. It brought back a variety of memories.

We do have a few unsigned extra copies of the book for sale. All profits will go to TSNA. Due to the size and weight (over 2 pounds) the cost will be \$37 and that includes approximately \$15 for the postage and handling charges.

Make check payable to TSNA and mail it to:

Johnnie Jernigan
956 Donham Drive
Beavercreek, OH 45434.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Sometimes publications drive us up a wall even if they are looked upon as basic honesty and truth. For many decades I have received “The Old Farmer's Almanac”. Its' first issue came out some 221 years ago. (You figure that date out.)

As the publisher says, “Simply-put this Almanac is about time and timeliness”.

I could not challenge this at all until I turned to page 56 entitled “Best days for August 2013” Going down the list I spotted “Best days to start projects – August 7 and 8”. “Best day to end projects August 4 and 5”. Now my fellow TSNA members the question; How can you finish a project before you start it? I went to school and discovered that 7 and 8 are not before 4 and 5 on any calendars. Thus by this Almanac we finish before we start!

How can a Chaplain build a sermon on such “great” facts? Well, searching a little more we discover a statement that was printed in the Almanac in the 18th century editions. “We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths; in feelings, not figures on a dial”.

So the sermon is now taking form. We hope that you all take the time to ponder life, past and present, your joys and

yes your sorrows, your now's and your tomorrows, your friends and yes those others. Above all, the good gifts that God has given you.

The Almanac says “at best, time can be used wisely as God's gift, a most precious commodity”. That's a pretty good lesson. We can and should all live with that!

End of sermon

Chaplain Bob

THANK YOU!

By: Johnnie Jernigan, TSNA Director of Marketing

First off, the whole TSN Association and I would like to say a big “Thank You!” to all who have shopped on the TSNA BX site. We have many items that when displayed will show your connection to TSNA and the military as a whole. We have patches, pins, hats, coins, magnets, and many other items priced very low and that includes shipping. Take a look at the site: <http://www.tsna.org/tsnapxbx/index.html> .

Second, we would like to say “Thanks!” to all who attended the Reunion in Chattanooga and all who purchased items from the BX. We took in around \$1500.00. Most of that was for the sold items but many gave their change to the Association by saying “Keep the Change”. Thank You!

BTW, we did have items at the reunion that aren't available on the web page. Items such as the beautiful coin holders or the wooden paperweights, each hand made (and donated) by Sharon's 84 year old father, Ezra Wilson, a TSNA Life Member. Since they are one of a kind, I can't put them on the web site but if you are interested send me an e-mail at jernigan1@ameritech.net and I will send you pictures and prices of the items. All proceeds go to TSNA.

Third, we had a very good Silent Auction thanks to all who donated the items. There were many great items given and the Ladies (and you know who you are) worked hard to properly display them and come up with a good starting amount. There were some bidding wars going on for items and we liked it. As always, the big winner is the Association. We took in around \$1300.00 this year. I have heard many say they know what they are bringing next reunion. You will have to be there to see.

If there are items that you would like to see in the BX store or at the reunions, please let me know by sending me an e-mail at jernigan1@ameritech.net . I will do the research and see if they would be profitable to stock. No guarantees, but your ideas are welcome.

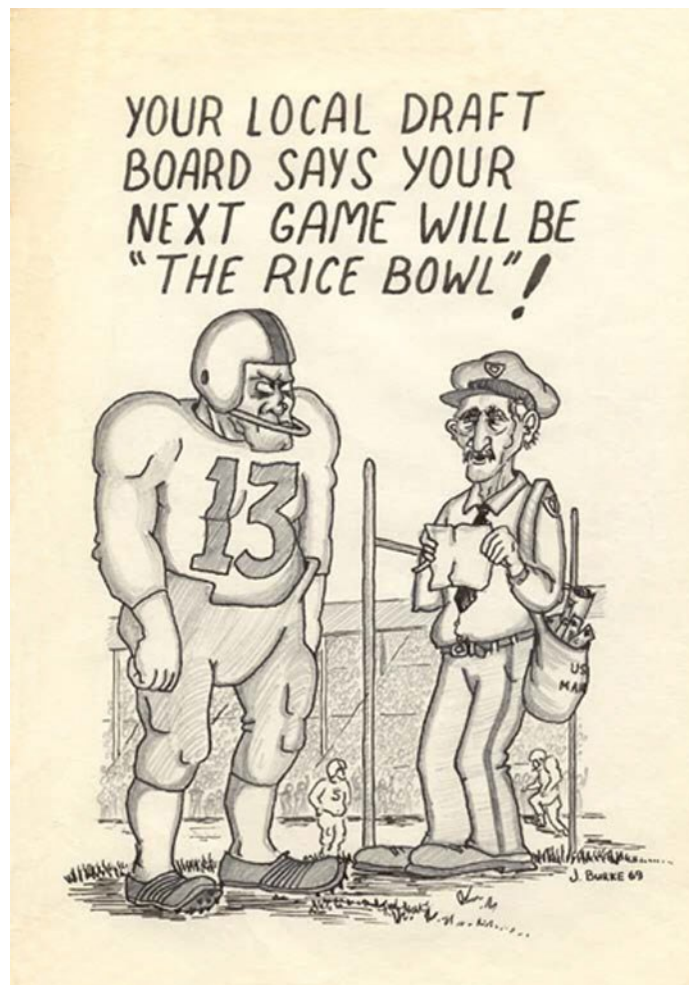
Again, “Thanks!” to all who participated in any way to make the BX as profitable as it is. It goes a long way to fund the many things TSNA does for its members and all veterans.

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



And our thanks again to John Burke, TSNA Life Member, for another great cartoon.

TAN SON NHUT MILITARY ORDER OF THE DRAGON

TSNA Life Member Harold Boone was unable to attend the 2013 Reunion in Chattanooga.

On Sunday July 28, TSNA President George Plunkett met with Harold and his wife, Brenda, to present him with his Award.

This award is presented to Harold for his outstanding performance as Chairman of the Memorial Bench Committee, the product of which was a memorial at the National Museum of the USAF that will chronicle and proclaim our service to country, dedication to duty and sacrifice for generations to come.



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