



# REVETMENTS

The Official Journal of The Tan Son Nhut Association

A Memorial to the American Experience in Vietnam



JANUARY 2022

## Like the Wind By Andy Csordas-Associate Chaplain

A cold front moved in yesterday, but before the rain it was quite windy. As I watched leaves and other items blow around I thought about how the wind is like God. Can we see the wind? Except for a vision can we actually see God here on earth? Can you hear the wind? Can we hear from God? Can we feel the wind? Can we feel God's loving kindness on us and our family?

Scriptures actually say a lot about wind, probably more than we typically think. In one example in **Exodus 10**, scripture talks about one of the plagues brought on Egypt. It talks about the east wind bringing in the locusts to devour the vegetation in Egypt and a few verses later it talks about the west wind that took the locusts out to the Red Sea. The Egyptians could not see the wind but they certainly saw the locusts come and go, scripture tells us there were so many locusts you could not see the ground.

In my work life I have done disaster restoration for commercial buildings. For hurricanes I would typically move into the area of the projected path to prep for the storm, move out a little bit to make a base to work from and then go back to manage the cleanup and restoration. I have seen amazing things done by the wind including destruction of buildings, heavy trucks blown around and even relatively fragile branches sticking out of a building exterior.

If you have ever been in a very large storm you will hear the effects of the wind. The sound changes depending on the velocity and what is around you but you can hear it. Can we hear God speak to us? Yes we can, but he mostly speaks to us in a still small voice. **1 Kings 19:11-12** tells us about God talking to Elijah after an earthquake and fire: <sup>11</sup> . .

*. and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; <sup>12</sup> and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.* We have to listen for God to speak to us, not typically like a voice from a friend, but in our hearts the Holy Spirit will speak to us, IF we listen.

We can feel the result of the wind. A soft summer breeze along the coast is really nice. A howling very high wind bringing snow at 10 below zero in the Dakotas is not as nice as the soft summer

breeze. But in both cases we can feel the wind.

We can also feel the love of God, it can be like the soft summer breeze. **Psalm 119:76** says to us, *May your unfailing love be my comfort.* **Psalm 136** ends every verse with "*His love endures forever*". **Psalm 32:10** says, *Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in Him.*

I pray that you will be still and wait on the Lord, listen for His voice so you can feel his saving love for you and yours.

Hi Larry,

Here's an oddity for you. I spent about 7 months at Tan Son Nhut and my tour was cut short because of Vietnamization and my job in the 1876 Comm Sq was taken over by a Federal Electric Corp. My tour started on 1 June 71 and ended on 1 Jan 72. I spent a total of about 30 minutes of the early morning midnight hour of 1 Jan 72, as I was on a troop flight, Freedom Bird, back to the United States. As we rapidly ascended, looking out the plane windows we could see remnants of either some ground warfare or fireworks. I was so glad to be leaving yet sad that others were still left behind. After approximately 24 hours and crossing the International Dateline, we approached the west coast. Travis AFB airport was fogged in so we flew down the coastline to Oakland International. As we flew, we could see the continuing New Year's Eve fireworks displays and celebration. But it scared hell out of me! I had just awakened from a nap and seeing all of those fireworks made me think that they had taken us back in-country. What a relief!! So, the irony is when I post my tour dates of 71-72, it always felt odd as I had only spent that 30 minutes or so in-country.

Jimmy Avera

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Following the next page about TSNA 2022 get-togethers, you will find "TET" articles taken from previous Revetments.

*We have had a number of new members who have never seen these, and the rest of us probably can't remember them.*



# SAVE THE DATE

Depending on what COVID does in 2022, The Tan Son Nhut Association is planning on hosting a reunion in Dayton Ohio on September 22-25, 2022. COVID restrictions have hurt military reunions extremely hard, but some associations are trying to make reunions happen in 2022. We are one of those associations, so please "save the date."

We will publish more information including registration forms, hotel reservations, etc. in the spring of 2022, so keep your eyes open for more information in the coming months.

We are contracting to meet at the Hope Hotel and Richard Holbrooke Conference Center, 10823 Chidlaw Rd, Wright Patterson AFB, Dayton Oh 45433. (Just outside Gate 12A) Room rates will be \$109.00 and a Breakfast for two is included in that price. Additional information is being developed and as it is developed it will be posted on the website: <https://www.tsna.org/mainpage.html> and in the Revetments Newsletter.

## Amenities



- Hope Hotel is a Full-service convention and banquet facility with:
  - More than 20,000 square feet of modern/fixable conference space with capacity for up to 1,000 people
  - Largest ball room in a 3-county area
  - Versatile, fully equipped meeting rooms
  - Full-service restaurant, Packy's Sports Bar & Grill, inside the conference center

- On- and off-site catering and banquet services
  - Business center lounge with computers, copiers and break-out/study rooms
  - Complimentary on-site parking including RV/Motorcoach parking
  - We offer 265 guest rooms with microwaves, mini-refrigerators & flat screen TV

- On site Fitness Center
  - Coin-operated laundry on site
  - Valet dry cleaning
  - Fax/copy/postage service

•\$75.00 one time Pet Fee

•Airport Shuttle Transportation: 937.898.4043

www.chartervans.com: 1-person \$40.00 one-way

2 or more people \$20.00 per-person one way

A banquet is planned for Saturday evening. We are encouraging all who can attend to attend and we look forward to seeing you in Dayton.

As a 20-year old E-3, I arrived at TSN in early January 1968. I was on orders to be assigned to the 377<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Group at TSN, very quickly I was transferred to the Field Maintenance unit and sent to the "tire shop". I spent less than a day there before once again being reassigned to Det. 1, 460<sup>th</sup> TRW, specifically, the RB-57E "Patricia Lynn" unit. The unit had four RB-57's, even though we never had more than three on base, as one was always back "in the states" being re-configured with the latest and greatest technology for reconnaissance. We worked two 12-hour shifts, and as the new guy I spent the early weeks on the Day Crew, where I met William "Bill" Cook.

The actual night of the first attack I was in my bunk in the 1200 Area trying to catch some "Z's". As the first rockets hit, it was very confusing and disorienting, trying to grab clothes, helmet, boots, and flak vest. I decided that if I was going to die, it would be with my boots on....so since they needed someone for night crew, I quickly volunteered. At least, I would be in a better position to run when trouble started. On night shift, I worked with Gary Devena, Lawrence Paul St. Julian, and Felix High. Together, we spent many nights "hunkered" down in bunkers, revetments, and at the height of fighting on base, in Base Ops armed with M-16's. Fortunately, none of our guys was injured nor were the RB's damaged. We continued to launch missions nightly amid all the "fireworks", always keenly aware of the rockets, mortars, and snipers.

My story is not as hostile and scary as some others, but I entered TSN, a very naïve, southern boy, but left wiser than my years. I have attempted on numerous occasions to contact many of my fellow crewmembers, but have not been very successful. Within the past year, Bill Cook and I have found each other and have shared emails and phone calls, we are both looking forward to the 2018 Reunion in Dayton, to see each other for the first time in fifty years!

I would be remiss, if I did not give a "shout out" to the 377<sup>th</sup> Security Police, and others who kept us flight line grease monkeys safe, so that we could perform our duties. Honor and remembrance to those who fell, and so thankful to have served with those that were able to return home safely.

May God Bless America and all of its Warriors...

Richard A. Cooley, S/Sgt 1966-1970. United States Air Force

I was a SSgt and night shift NCOIC, APO Breakdown, Saigon AMT, when TET hit around 2AM, January 30, 1968. We occupied a slatted building backing up to perimeter fence and French Cemetery-were VC had obviously hidden. Initially, I was a bit confused as splinters flew but after a few seconds I realized we were being shot at. The VC were firing on us as we sorted mail. Shortly afterwards grenades and 122 MM rockets were hitting our compound and outside my building. I shouted hit the floor and directed my troops to crawl across a gravel road separating our building from the command compound. Our Commander, Captain Morioka had opened a CONEX and was issuing M-16s with two clips each. Me and other QRT SP Augmentees were quickly assigned perimeter defense near our building. We were instructed to fire at any incoming fire until it ceased. As the night wore on our ammo was replenished. By afternoon A1E aircraft were dropping bombs just outside perimeter fence and tanks were strategically positioned along fence firing into residential community outside the base. Smoke was choking. Somehow in this melee and my adrenaline pumping a piece of shrapnel about the size of quarter had hit me and was stuck in the front upper left of my flak jacket. One of my guys noticed asking me if I knew. I dug the shrapnel out and brought it back home. Jan still has it to this day.

Jim Faulkner  
Mar 67-Mar 68  
OL 1508 USAF Pac Postal Courier Service

I was assigned to the U.S. Air Force Mobile EOD Team at Tan Son Nhut unit and our office was in the 900 buildings across from the VNAF air park.

My AFSC was not that of an EOD type however I learned very fast how to work with the unit and do some of what they did (morgue duty), etc./ due to the work load, as my duties were not really needed.

I also assisted the AP's at the gate near our office/hutch/barrack's when needed and I had the time. During my tour at Tan Son Nhut I also flew with the Specter birds occasionally as an observer.

Terry Longpre  
Jan 68-Jan 69  
377th Supply Squadron

## Remembering TET '68

Michael Mitchell  
12th. R.I.T.S.  
Apr. '67 - Nov. '68

I have to start out by saying that I have just observed another Memorial Day, #63, in my life and it reminded me of what is really important. I am here today because of the many sacrifices made by men I never knew, men who were young men so many years ago in a place that is listed in "history" today, Vietnam. To be exact, Tan Son Nhut AB, Republic of Vietnam during a time that when I look back seems like yesterday but many years ago per my calendar.

The more I read the stories in "Revetsments", the more I realize how little I knew about what was going on around me in those days, what was being done by men who deserve the life long respect of men like me but yet may never know that we existed because there were so many of us stationed at that airbase, each doing his job and doing it well without regards to what it might mean to someone else. I believe that's what is learned by one who serves in the military, you do your job and go about your business without realizing how important that job might be. How many lives have I saved or how many will be saved in the future by what I'm doing right now. We tend to not think in the present, it's our job and we do it, one more day in-country and one day closer to going home.

But later, in the future, we sit and look back, we learn that what we did at the time meant so much in the overall scheme of history.

I remember Tet '68, the night suddenly lit up with tracers, the sound of explosions around the base and the 122mm rockets that for weeks would hit the base. I remember also being scared because I didn't know what was going on, everything was suddenly different from my normal routine. I had been on the base for 8 months and the war was on the "perimeter" of the base, or downtown, or in the "boonies". But this night, the war was real, it was close, and I could feel it closing in on me. I was in the Air Force and was unarmed but then why would I need to be armed, the war was somewhere "off in the distance" and anyway, I worked in a very safe building with others like me who did classified photographic work, why did we need firearms? We had a base that was secure and protected by the Air Police and anyway, the VC would never attempt to attack this great base, it would be useless and a suicide mission with no possible chance of succeeding. But this night, Tet '68, this 20 year old airman was starting to realize that something was wrong, something didn't fit and for the next several months my life changed in so many ways.

I grew up, proud to admit it, during the next few months. I was given a chance to leave Tan Son Nhut in April '68 but felt that my "job" in Vietnam was not completed so I extended my tour for another 6 months. That's right, I extended my tour because I had a job to do that was not finished, I knew my job in my field and could do it better than anyone else at the time and had lived through the many rocket attacks, the probes of the base, and even survived being pinned down by a sniper that had gotten into one of the radar towers.

But my story is just one of the many that could be told, nothing special, nothing heroic, just a guy doing his job. I don't even have a wound to show my children, at least not on the outside.

I hear the rumblings, "Let's get to the point" and the point of my story about TSN is the guys that I never knew did so much to protect me. The guys that faced the enemy that I never faced, the guys that did their jobs in a very professional manner. The ones who, in a lot of cases, made the ultimate sacrifice to carry out their assigned duty without regards to who they were protecting. I have only become aware of some of these things while reading "Revetsments" and felt that I had to say something to the many who, like me at the time, were just doing their jobs. I feel that I owe a debt to so many and now all I can say is "Thank You".

I know that when I returned home I was treated differently by a lot of my friends and those people that I would meet. Once they found out that I was in the military and had served in Vietnam, well, let's just say that even in August it could get a bit chilly.

We, the returning Vietnam vet, endured some things that we didn't deserve but I'm sure that most of us took it in a military manner because we knew what we had done for our country and do to this day.

(From January 2011 Revetsments)

# YOUR HELP WANTED BY TAN SON NHUT ASSOCIATION

## Your TSNA is in search of:

**Short Stories about serious or funny incidents in and around Tan Son Nhut Air Base.**

**PHOTOS:** Color, Black & White  
**MAPS:** Any size  
**UNIT PATCHES:** Scanned, or a photo  
**POEMS:** That you wrote  
**MPC:** Scanned, or a photo  
**7th AF News Article:** Scanned, or a photo  
  
**DATE:** January 01, 2022



**Inquiring minds want to know!**

**The Revetments Editor, needs your help. We need your input, for stories and photographs to place in the TSNA Revetments newsletter. All photographs remain your copyright. Email Larry Fry at: [lfry2@dejazzd.com](mailto:lfry2@dejazzd.com)**

**THANKS TO CHARLES PENLEY FOR THIS GRAPHIC. READ IT AND HEED IT!! :)**

### MY TET TALE

I was in the 377th Supply Squadron. My hooch was not far from the road that was across from the French cemetery. In the early morning it was quiet. Then we heard automatic weapons fire coming from the area of the cemetery. That was immediately followed by a series of whistle sounds, of the kind that a football coach would use. The weapons fire continued and then the base sirens sounded. Mortar rounds started coming in over the base.

Battle activity was coming in from all over the base with orange flashes. Occasionally a bullet would rip through our hooch and at about 0500 one hooch member said he had been hit in the ankle.

At about 0530 a Huey flew in low and fired rockets into a position near the cemetery.

Air Police in full battle dress ran through our area.

I don't recall everything that followed except my supply office was put under immediate battle command and our work schedule was 24/7. We sacked out wherever we could find a space on the floor or desk. It was risky taking breaks outside for a cigarette. The Air Police advised that the enemy was still on the grounds.

Mark Reveaux, May 67-May 68, 377th Supply Squadron

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**Revetments** is an official publication of the Tan Son Nhut Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 236, Penryn, PA 17564-0236  
The Association is a 501(c)(19) tax exempt Veterans' Organization incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

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**"TET" DAMAGE PHOTO BY  
TERRY LOVE**

### **January 1968**

I was stationed at Tan Son Nhut AB from 15 Jan 68 to 9 Dec 68. My duties were as NCOIC, Headquarters 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force Plans. I lived in Ellis compound down from the R & R Center and the Heliport.

On the night that the 68 TET Offensive started me and my hooch buddies spent several hours in a bunker adjacent to our quarters. We could hear the incoming 122's and gun fire all around us. The flashes from gunships and helicopters lighted the night. It was a scary time for a support troop not anticipating any action.

When the All Clear came we headed for the main road to walk to the 7<sup>th</sup> Air Force compound where we worked. I recall that all the way up were tanks lined along the roadside. We could see damage all around us. During a tour of the base later I recall that the Base Chapel had taken a hit.

Of course, the week following that night the rockets continued and we spent several nights under our cots when the siren went off. Some of us got so concerned we decided to take our blankets and just sleep in the office..

**Tom Rosinski CMSGT (Retired)  
(From Revetments, November 2007)**

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