

Counterparts

Post Office Box 40, Circleville, WV 26804

Hope this finds everyone having enjoyed a very meaningful Christmas, and about to embark on the best of all years in 1992. Association development continue apace, and Louisville Reunion shaping up well. Registration form included herein. This promises to be a very memorable occasion and it is hoped everyone will make that little extra effort to attend.



Starting out with errata.....

SITREP #13 omitted last number of Hà Nội Delegate to the United Nations. For the record: 212 679-3779, or 212 213-5796.

And...SITREP #7 contained list of Members in Memoriam which included a Ngo ~~Tran Soan~~. Both name and implied death are in error. Correct Name/rank: Col. Tôn Thất Soạn, 369th RVN Marine Bde., later Prov. Chief, Hậu Nghĩa. Col. Soạn has been reported to be alive, though appears to have aged 40 years since 1975.

He was held in highest regard, if not awe, by USMC advisors and was a highly respected prov. chief untainted by any hint or rumor of corruption. Word has it he has been released from re-education(sic) camp. This photo shows him within the past year, a sad contradiction from his previous robust health. As respected and professional as Col. Soạn was, there appears little doubt he was subjected to the worst during his imprisonment. We are fortunate he is still alive, yet regret the ordeal he endured.



And...SITREP # 11 mistakenly IDed SSGT Franklin Miller, USA/SF, as a Member in Memoriam. SSGT Miller is quite alive. We are happily in error.

And..SITREP #13 stated an updated roster would be included. It was not. This is entirely the fault of your editor, and not our more reliable and efficient Adjutant, Paul Brubaker, who handles onerous task of labeling and mailing SITREPs.

And...phone number for Lao War History info was incorrect as reported to us. No correct phone # has been given. If/when same is available, will provide.

1992 Reunion...Steve and Jeanne Herberth press on, and well on their way to setting up a full weekend for all of us. Registration form, with telephonic bulletin board number for ride sharing and/or bunking up also included on mail in registration form. Thanks to new member George Lafley for volunteering, following in footsteps of George Davidson. Phone number and instructions are on registration form.

Repeating info from previous SITREP.....Hotel is Breckinridge Inn. Reservations for group rate must be called in by 13 Feb 92, @ 502 456-5050. \$35.00/room/night, with possibility of splitting this if bunking up w/other member. Car Rentals: Budget Car & Truck Rental @ 1-800-866-8680. Ask for group rate under code CV1, repeat CV1, IDing self as Counterparts member. We have a tour of Ft. Knox on tap, as well as group discount buying splurge at US Cavalry Store. 10% off.

Speakers...Among subjects to be addressed- Current situation in VN/SE Asia for former Counterparts; POW/MIA matters; Highlands Assistance Project and current situation of Dega People; Amerasian Project(more later on this); and more. Tentative plans are to have an informal dinner/get together during Friday evening hospitality room gathering, with formal banquet on Saturday. Open mike available to permit members to say their peace and let others know who they are. Photographic displays, member slide shows, display and/or sales of other artifacts/items also on tap. All details coming forth in next SITREP, going out end January/early February. Any members having any thoughts or suggestions welcome to forward same to Steve and Jeanne:

P.O. Box 22025
Lyndon, Kentucky 40252-0925

Please make every effort to get your registration form in as soon as possible. This will make it much easier for Steve and Jeanne, who have put a herculean effort into making this the best reunion ever. Anyone who wonders whether the trip will be worth it is strongly encouraged to call any attendees from the Houston or San Jose Reunions(See SITREPs #7 and #12 for list of attendees, call number on roster). Also, reunion comments in SITREP #12, provided by Houston/'91 attendees, provide glimpse of what to expect. You'll want to be there and make sure you're picture and comments are in the Reunion Commemorative book, available shortly after. It will be a weekend you'll not soon forget.

Publicity notices have been placed in numerous publications, including 'Military' and 'Viet Nam' magazines, and word is getting out and about. Your attendance is encouraged, welcome and will be most appreciated. Do your damndest to be there.

AMERASIAN PROJECT: We're off and running, with more than enough to kick off first year. With apologies to those who submitted contribution after date of this SITREP, thanks and appreciation extended to:

CUVA Members

Louis Alicea
Larry Connolly
Marg Etense
Tom Harvey
Garland La Prade
Andy Lewandowski
Connie Menefee

COUNTERPARTS MEMEBERS

John Bailey
Phil Brick
Owen Kelly
Bill Laurie
Grant McClure
Charles Pegis
James Resau
Stu Beckley
Paul Brubaker
Phil King
Mike Little
Ben Myers
Sam Pfiester

and Tom Burch and the National Viet Nam Veterans Coalition Foundation:

'Enclosed is a contribution in the amount of \$150.00 in support of a project to sponsor an Amerasian child. We commend you on implementating this exceptional project.'

By Reunion time, we hope to have specifics on the child we are sponsoring, answering any questions members may have. At this writing Tom Harvey will be our designated correspondent with our sponsors, while Phil Brick has also volunteered to serve as our Humanitarian Project Officer on this and related matters. Any correspondence from either Pearl Buck Foundation and/or sponsored child will be reprinted in the SITREP. Anyone with ideas for future humanitarian projects, in addition to VIET NAM VETERANS RESTORATION PROJECT (Member Mike Peterson), QUIET RETURN (Member David Keen), HIGHLANDS ASSISTANCE PROJECT (Member Mike Little) is encouraged to submit same to Phil.

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'Even when you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there.' Will Rodgers

'The trouble with the rat race is that even if you win, you're still a rat.' Lily Tomlin

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POW/MIA ISSUES Shifting fog, smoke and mirrors again. Photo of Capt. Donald Carr, purportedly taken in Laos within the past year, now reported to be an incredibly similar likeness though not Capt. Carr but rather some other 3rd country national residing in Thailand. Source of photo also reportedly being 'less than cooperative' in providing further details on photo. Joint US/Lao POW/MIA team to travel to NE Laos to follow up on this photo.

.....New York Dailey News sources report former KGB Maj. Gen. Oleg Kalugin, who once headed Soviet Counterintelligence, has stated that US POWs were interrogated by KGB in 1978 (rpt. 1978) near Hà Nội. Three people, a CIA agent, a ranking Navy officer, and an Air Force officer were interrogated, according to Kalugin, who also stated Hà Nội officials were 'likely lying' in denials of continued POW imprisonment. Kalugin further indicated his belief that two of the POWs were subsequently returned to the US and will no doubt provide additional commentary during expected talks with Senate investigators this month. Other info... photo of Lt. Daniel Borah, USN, released last summer as evidence of his detention in a Lao camp, now revealed to be photo of Lao highlander who has since been interviewed by US officials. On 12 Nov 91, DoD announced identification of remains of SP4 Robert J. Engen, USA, and Sgt. Walter E. Lewellen, USA, previously listed MIA in Laos since 18 Feb 71. Recovery the result of joint US/Lao excavation conducted earlier in year. Of remaining unresolved cases, 581 last sighted in NVN; 1,075 in SVN, 526 in Laos (85% of which fell within areas of NVA control); 83 in Cambodia; and 6 in PRC territorial waters. Total unresolved cases: 2,271. Anyone wishing to express opinion to D.C. leaders: Members of Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Issues; 705 Hart Senate Office Bldg.; Washington, D.C.; 20510. In related matters, friction continues between those advocating normalized relations prior to POW/MIA issues being resolved, and those opposed to this position. Members of the National Viet Nam Veterans Coalition held a demonstration at Mobil Oil HQ (3225 Gallows Road; Fairfax, Virginia) in protest of Mobil's willingness to deal with Ha Noi. The NVVC expressly requests Mobil service stations not be picketed, there being no reason to penalize independent operators for corporate policies over which they have no control. Daniel O'Flaherty, vice president of the National Foreign Trade

has, in the meantime, issued a statement urging normalized relations and prompt removal of current trade embargo. Unless this is done, Mr. O'Flaherty feels foreign competitors will 'have picked the tree clean' in VN, and gobbled up all the markets. One wonders if the typical rice farmer enjoys prospects of having his tree 'picked clean'.

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LOCATOR EFFORTS at last report, J.C. has hit paydirt, finding two US counterparts sought by VN friends. More details on this in next SITREP. 'Military' magazine ran a full page article in their Jan '92 issue, describing this outfit, and carrying a locator list. Hoping no one goes blind reading photocopy reduction:

Sincere thanks to Michael Mark, Editor, and the staff at 'Military'.

As mentioned in previous SITREP, 'Military' is a \$14.00/year monthly publication covering both historical and present subjects within the military sphere. They'll send a sample copy upon request: 2122 28th St.; Sacramento, California; 95818-1999.

And....following phone call cited in last SITREP, Sgt. Kiên Phát, TQLC/RVN Marine hopped on a bird and came down to meet again with your editor, Bill Laurie, ending over 16 years of rather unpleasant conjecture and doubt as to his fate. Phát arrived approx 1330 hours and subsequent discussions/recollections did not end until 0530 hours the next day, after two bottles of rượu nếp than had been consumed. Bona fide whirlwind of emotions, whip-sawing from peaks of belly laughs to wet-eyed periods of long and deeply held anger, mumbled curses, and tragic news that other mutual friends were KIA. Profound and effusive thanks, once again, to Martin Hà as well as Phạm Đình Thừa of 'Đa Hiệu' magazine.



Kiên Phát and Bill Laurie, Nov '91

Counterpart search

Members of the U.S. military, and civilians, have served in the capacity as advisors for the armed forces of many countries around the world for over a century. In many cases these countries were allies of ours during an armed conflict, while in other situations we offered the assistance at the request of the host nation with strict guidelines prohibiting our personnel from becoming involved in actual combat. In some situations, the involvement was shrouded in secrecy.

Close bonds between the U.S. advisor and the officers and men that he worked with often developed. This was most evident where advisors served in combat with the men they assisted. A special relationship involving respect and friendship was the end product. The war in Vietnam underscores the largest and longest of such efforts involving thousands of American advisors.

The role of U.S. advisor with his Vietnamese counterpart was a difficult and demanding one. Not everyone could or should have served in such a capacity. The advisor had to understand that he didn't command, but was there to help, often on the ground in combat, to assist his Vietnamese counterpart in such ways as requests for U.S. air or artillery support, to coordinate operations with other U.S. units in the area or to train the Vietnamese troops in the use of U.S. equipment. It was rare that an advisor had to train his counterpart in tactics. After all, in most cases, the U.S. advisor had no combat experience or maybe one year, while his counterpart had been fighting a war for many years. Many advisors ended up extending their tours because they believed what they were doing was just and correct.

The end conclusion of the war in Viet-Nam resulted in most friendships that had been formed between advisors and counterparts being terminated because the two parties, American and Vietnamese had no idea as to how to contact each other. Many former Vietnamese military now live in the U.S. and wish to find those Americans who served with them.

Bill Laurie is with an organization called "Counterparts" that has been working to reunite advisors and those with whom they served. A re-

union will be held at the Breckenridge Inn Hotel in Louisville, KY, 6-8 March. For information on that event contact: Counterparts, P.O. Box 40, Circleville, WV 26004.

Bill contacted me and asked if he could submit some names of Vietnamese officers who are seeking the whereabouts of U.S. personnel who served with them. It occurred to me that a special format is justified and we will print it from time to time when we have input. We will call it "Counterpart Search." Personnel interested in corresponding with the names here may write to J.C. Fischer, Locator/Historian Counterparts, 100 Red Oak Circle, Temple, TX 76502.

Lt. Col. Nguyen Van Lan of the ARVN 81st Airborne Special Operations is seeking Maj. Peyton, Cpt. Huggin or Sgt. Year all from 6th Special Forces Group, in Nha Trang.

Maj. Nguyen Van Chinh of the ARVN 37th Ranger Battalion is seeking Maj. Trappnell, Quang Nam (71-72), Maj. Burnett Duc Duc District, Quang Nam (66) and Sgt. Kirrely Duc Duc District, Quang Nam (66).

Huong Van Tuyen who served with Advisor Team 15 is seeking Maj. James Jackson, DSA Quang Nam (65), Maj. Sherman Foster DSA, Hoa Vang District, Quang Nam (65), Maj. James Swenson, DSA, Hoa Vang District (67), Maj. Webb, DSA Hoa Vang District (70), Maj. Crump, MACCOMUS, Quang Nam (72) and Col. Robert E. Loya, PSA, Quang Nam (72-73).

Lt. Col. Le Nguyen Binh is seeking Col. James Drummond, advisor to the ARVN 7th Div. (60-62).

Marine Capt. Tran Van Loan of the 2nd Bn AKA "Crazy Buffalo" is seeking Capt. Donovan USMC, Capt. Carlock USMC and Capt. Smith USMC. All served with Capt. Loan in 1972 during the recapture of Quang Tri City.

P.J. Burkett wants to contact anyone who served with her father Maj. Joseph William Burkett, an advisor with Team 81. He was KIA 13 July 1964. □

New locator requests..... New Member Nguyễn Thanh Dinh is looking for Maj. William H. Gavan and Cpt. William Leaptrott, both of whom served with Dinh in the Quảng Ngãi PRUs; and a Quảng Ngãi Cố Vấn named Flynn, circa 1969-1972. Dinh arrived in US this past July, after almost 13 years of imprisonment. Please help J.C. on this and other requests and check your local phone books and veterans groups. Your eyes and ears can be very helpful. And.....New Member Col. Lê Nguyễn Bình is looking for LTC Paul Brinkman, formerly Cố Vấn, G2/7th ARVN Div(965-'66); G2/US 9th Div('67-'68). LTC Brinkman formerly lived in San Diego. Also, Col. Binh would like to find LTC James Durand, Cố Vấn, G2/7th ARVN Div., circa 1964, later with USEMB, Phnom Penh, circa 1970. Again, scour your phone books. Make a call if you find the right person, and pass on info to J.C.(100 Red Oak Circle; Temple, Texas; 76502-3503).

We'll no doubt find entire process becomes much easier/less difficult as word gets around, and look forward to getting a lot more people together again. It's not easy, but with persistent effort can be done, as evidenced by 21 Nov 91 article in Washington Post, describing diligent effort of Col. David Wiseman(USMC, ret.) to find his old counterpart Trung Tá(LTC) Trần Ngọc Hue. Col. Wiseman frequented VN restaurants; speaking with members of VN community and asking if they knew Trần Ngọc Hue, or recognized him from the picture Col. Wiseman carried with him. After 18 years, someone looked at the photo and said 'Yes, I know this guy. He's alive.'. From that point it was a downhill pull, with Hue and his family arriving in the US this past November. Efforts underway to contact Wiseman and Hue. It can happen if you make it happen.

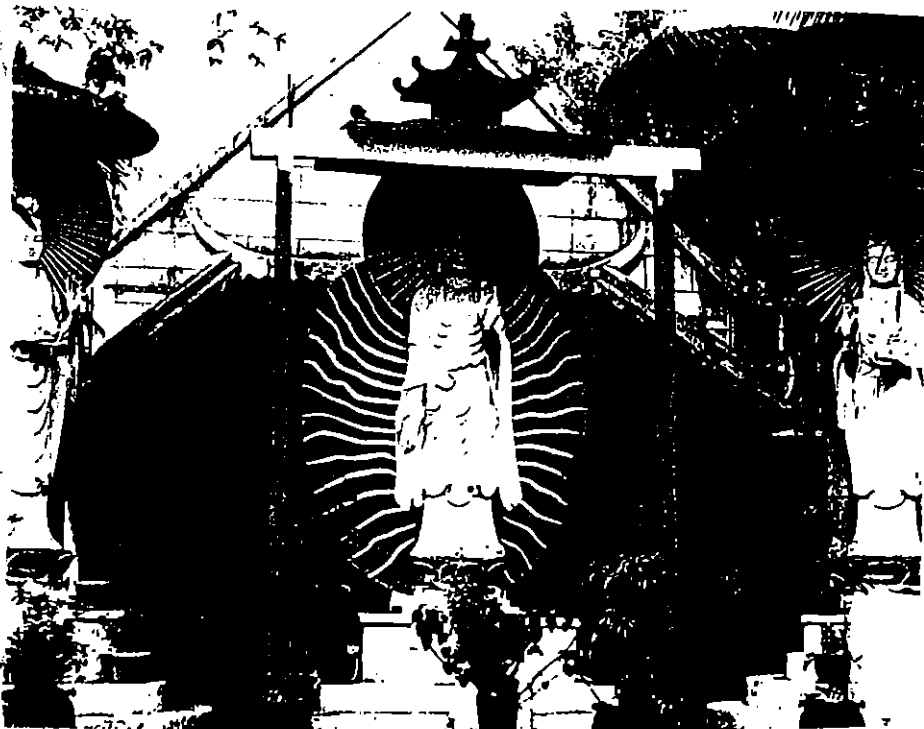
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'Ban Mê Thuột' word origin: Literal English meaning is 'Village of Father Thuot' a legendary Rhade(Ede) who led his people against invading Khmer and Lao.

Đà Lạt(Đắc Lắc) Prov., of which Ban Mê Thuột is the capital, is a M'Nong word roughly translated as 'lake area'.

'Kontum' is from the Bahnar language, meaning 'village by the lake'.

Source: NƯỚC TÔI, DÂN TÔI (MY COUNTRY, MY PEOPLE), Đông Tiên Publishers, P.O. Box 4708; San Jose, California, 95150-4708.



Buddhist Shrine, somewhere on QL 1 between Sài Gòn and Củ Chi

Finally, Greg Cook, who served with C Co., 2/1, 196th Bde., would like to find Nguyễn Minh Hoang, a Kit Carson Scout with whom Greg served. Hoang began his tour in RVN as an NVA Sapper. He was abandoned and left on a mountain trail, during near fatal bout with malaria, and found by US troops. After his capture, Hoang made the transition from POW to Kit Carson Scout and, as Greg notes, was accepted and found to be 'a hell of a decent guy'. Hoang reportedly living somewhere near Cam Ranh Bay/Nha Trang, after losing his lower leg. Neither Greg nor anyone else who served with Hoang knows if he remains in VN or has come to the US. Perhaps any members going back to Cam Ranh area, one of these days, can check around.

Closing out Locator news this month... We may be able to get nation wide coverage once more people have been reunited. Contacts have been made with some feature story authors who are not only interested in the subject but who also have access to 'Parade' magazine and other mass circulation periodicals.

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Travelers to Asia need take note of increase in passport thefts throughout the area, with most being lost to pickpockets. Hong Kong reports 38% increase over 1990, Thailand up 26%. Be alert if traveling back.

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HONG KONG update- No change in policy shift and implementation of forced repatriation program. Human Rights organizations continue their protests, to no avail at this writing. Little news coverage in recent weeks; present situation unk.



4/10/91

Forced repatriation

Hong Kong police carry a Vietnamese refugee, reluctant to be repatriated to Vietnam, to a plane Saturday at the airport in Hong Kong. As many as 10 security forces at a time hauled struggling men and women into the rear of a transport plane for the flight to Hanoi. Fifty-nine boat people, some kicking and screaming, were forced to leave the British colony for Vietnam.

The Associated Press

HUMAN RIGHTS In unexpected move, Hà Nội has re-

portedly freed several dissidents, foremost of whom is poet Nguyễn Chí Thiệu. Author Dương Thu Hương, and Human Rights activists Dr. Nguyễn Đán Que and author Doan Quốc Sỹ also said to have been released. Current whereabouts and condition unk. At the same time, evangelical Christian leaders remain imprisoned or subject to arrest if not yet in jail. INDOCHINA JOURNAL reports ten known leaders are still in jail, some of whom were arrested earlier in 1991. Three of the ten are Dega people, representing Jarai, Koho, and M'Nong minorities. Vacillating policies will probably continue as Hà Nội sails through uncharted waters muddled by mutually exclusive objectives of economic freedom and retention of political orthodoxy. Hà Nội has, after 15 years of Red Cross appeals, agreed to let IRC representatives inspect camps in which political prisoners are held. This is a significant departure from long standing refusals. This move, and release of some political prisoners, is seen as direct result of Hà Nội's awareness that Human Rights violations are indeed an obstacle in normalizing relations w/US. Recent information received lists former QLVNCH

personnel still imprisoned. These are:

BG Phạm Duy Tắt, Rgr. Command, MR II
 BG Mạch Văn Trường, CG SD 21(21st Div.)
 BG Trần Quang Khôi, Armor Command, MR II
 BG Phạm Ngọc Sant, CG, 6th Air Div.

Col.s/Dai Tá:

Trần Hữu Độ, MSS(Military Security Service)
 Nguyễn Văn Sào, Political Office(MSS)
 Nguyễn Văn Hân, " " "
 Nguyễn Văn Lân, Naval Security
 Trường Bảo Chương, Dept., G2, JGS
 Phạm Văn Phó, G2, MR 2
 Bùi Hợp, Dept. CO, National Police
 Nguyễn Xuân Lộc, MR I Military Police CO
 Nguyễn Quốc Dĩ, Political Warfare Office
 Vĩnh Biên, " " "
 Can Văn Vy, CoS, Rgr. Command
 Phạm Duy Khánh, Cmdr., MR II RF
 Bùi Quang Khương, Cmdr., 4th Air Division
 Lê Tung Luân, Cmdr. 101, RVN SEALs
 Nguyễn Văn Cua, Chau Doc Prov. Chief
 Nguyễn Kim Tây, Bde. Cmdr., Rgr.
 Vĩnh Đắc, Regt. CO, unspecified Regt.

LTC/Trưởng Tá

Lê Hữu Tông, National Police
 Hồ Văn Kiệt, Central Intel
 Nguyễn Lưu Hải, Dep. Cmdr., Special Police, MR II
 Trần Văn Xoán, Police Intel
 Trương Văn Ty, Dept. Cmdr., 101st RVN SEALs
 Nguyễn Văn Sang, 68th Regt., 101st RVN SEALs
 Nguyễn Thiệu Sang, 101st RVN SEALs
 Trần Văn Dấu, Cmdr., 2nd Rgr. Grp.
 Hồ Đắc Sung, Military Security Service
 Huỳnh Kim Hiệu, " " "
 Trần Ngọc Diễm, " " "
 Nguyễn Thân, " " "
 Trần Văn Mẫn, " " "

Major/Thiếu Tá

Thần Trọng Vi, 101st RVN SEALs
 Hồ Việt Tông, " " "
 Trần Chánh Trí, Military Security
 Huỳnh Minh Chiêu, " "
 Đào Thanh Phong, Special Police
 Vi Khi Ba, " "
 Phạm Quang Nghiệp, " "
 Phạm Tấn Ngọc, " "
 Nguyễn Công Quân, " "
 Đoàn Bá Lộc, Sub Sector(Dist.), Intel.

That's 44 individuals known. Hà Nội is sensitive to world opinion, and aware that some Americans view human rights as a legitimate matter for discussion during entire normalization process leading to full diplomatic relations. It is believed that world opinion alone forced Hà Nội to release Nguyễn Chí Thiện and others. Keep those cards and letters going out.

There are reports of Hà Nội's preparing to release all camp inmates, in response to US stipulated conditions for normalized relations. We shall see. Beyond release of prisoners, a change in attitude would be welcome, which would finally put a vestigial atmosphere of war to rest. Late in 1990, Việt Nam Vet and author Al Santoli interviewed former VC Gen. Trần Văn Tra, who was making a tour of US college campuses. Several questions were posed to Tra:

Santoli: 'Can QLVNCH members become members of the government's official veterans association, of which he is vice chairman?'

Tra: 'Those who were (QLVNCH/RVN) soldiers are not considered veterans by the people. The people in Viet Nam do not accept them.'

Santoli: '..would it be possible if American veterans could visit Việt Nam to bring private humanitarian assistance to former soldiers of the Republic of (South)Việt Nam?'

Tra: (as related by Santoli) general statements about their being a lack of veterans facilities in VN.

Santoli also reported that Tra 'turned noticeably red' at these questions, which he answered 'curtly'. Text of this letter available to members for SASE(send to editor, Bill Laurie, 1462 W. University; Mesa, Arizona; 85201). If Tra's attitude is any indication, there's some distance to go before true reconciliation is attained, and the hatchet is buried, as it should be.

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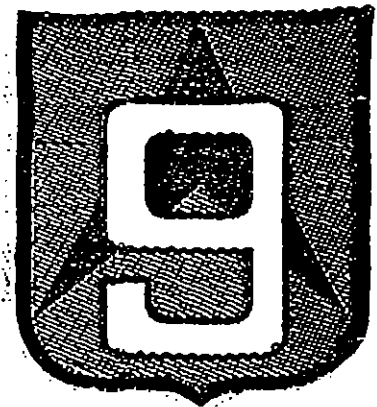
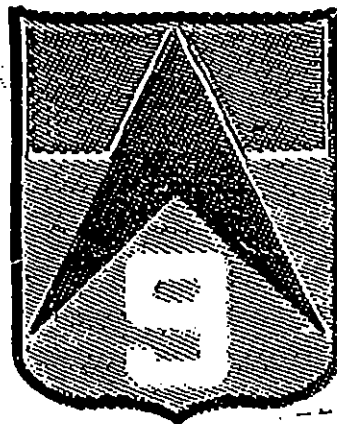
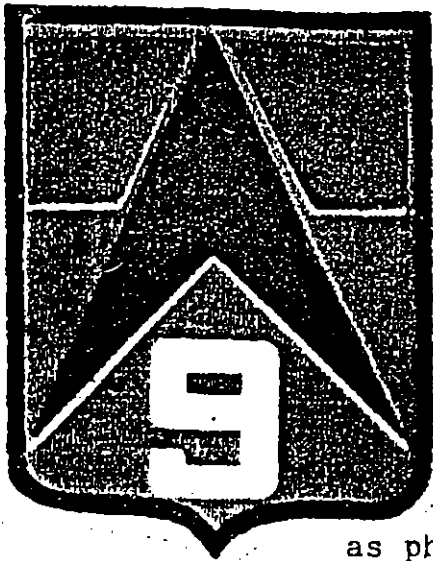
Little known fact: B-52 tailgunners are credited with two confirmed MiG-21 shootdowns over skies of NVN.

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HIGHLAND ASSISTANCE PROJECT L.O. Mike Little reports receiving Hà Nội OK for a trip to VN. Mike and Kay Reibold will depart 24 Feb and return 12 March, 1992. Scheduled itinerary: Sài Gòn, Nha Trang and-knock on wood-Pleiku. As previously reported, HAP has immediate objective of establishing a training school for Dega nurses who will then serve in leprosariums in the Highlands. Hà Nội's approval is a definite breakthrough, the significance of which will be either amplified by permission for Pleiku trip, or diminished by refusal. Congratulations to Mike and Kay for their persistent efforts and tenacity, without which this trip would not be possible. This rules out Mike's being at the reunion, but he is forwarding two videos showing HAP progress to date and Kay Reibold's examination of Dega life today. Mike has also promised a trip report for inclusion in future SITREP, and will no doubt elaborate on extent to which current policies are, or are not, in conflict with Dega culture, customs and future as a people. Meanwhile, Mr. Kok Ksor, President of Montagnard Foundation, has forward a 35 pp. synopsis of past and present Human Rights violations committed against the Dega People..It is not pleasant reading, nor will it come as a surprise if one recalls our own less-than-admirable treatment of American Indians upon conclusion of the 'Indian Wars'. Simply put, Hà Nội's present policies have all the hallmarks of cultural genocide. Copies available, with courtesy of tax deductible donation, from Montagnard Foundation; P.O. Box 17064; Spartanburg, South Carolina; 29301. There is

no significant news coverage or corresponding public awareness of this situation, as there should be. Feel free to write letters and spread the word.

HMONG No response from Hmong American Veterans Association, cited in last SITREP. Correspondence with Lao Human Rights Council (Vang Pobzeb, Chairman); P.O. Box 100960; Denver, Colorado; 80250 resulted in receipt of a 'White Paper' addressing retribution policy against lowland Lao and Hmong refugees forced to return to Laos. The study, dated 25 Sept., 1991, is based, in part, on interviews conducted in Chieng Kham Refugee Camp, Thailand, in August of 1991. Simply put, treatment of Hmong closely parallels description of that extended to Dega of VN. These interviewed express great fear of fate awaiting anyone sent back to Laos, and provide ample evidence upon which to base these fears. Mr. Pobzeb also sent information about a conference addressing this subject, held last Sept. in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Schedule mentioned a video tape, apparently filmed in either Thailand and/or Laos (a guess at this point), dealing with these Human Rights violations. Efforts underway to arrange for Hmong speaker at reunion as well as showing of video tape.



Shoulder patches shown above are variations of QLVNCH/ARVN 9th Div. patch, as photo-plagiarized from Clement Kelly's bi-monthly publication, VIET NAM INSIGNIA COLLECTOR Newsletter (\$15.00/year, payable to Clement V. Kelly Jr. not VNICN, @ 122 E. 21st Ave.; Covington, Louisiana; 70433). Many thx to Clement for running notice of our March reunion, as well as brief write-up on our patch. Each issue contains facets of history, as well as warnings about fake insignia-for which there is a veritable industry-which has little value. Last edition mentions problems in dealing with a Bob Chatt of West Coast Militaria who reportedly has problems paying money owed. Clem also warns of a VN patch scam run by one Barry Pipino, out of Maryland. Be careful in dealing with supposed 'genuine in-country made' patches, as you may be throwing \$ away.

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Great Moments in Western Civilization, #85: 8,000 Los Angeles trial lawyers have taken acting lessons from Applied Theater Techniques, in down home, laid back southern California. (Harpers Magazine)

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'Half a piece of bread is half of piece of bread, but half the truth is a lie.' -Russian adage

Counterpart quote: 'During my time over there I said: When I leave this country, I want to be able to say that my troops are better off because I was here. I wanted 'em to be more aggressive. I wanted the villagers to know we were there. I wanted 'em to be good to the villagers. I didn't want to see any pilfering going on. And I wanted the junks on patrol. I knew our junks were recognized, just like you recognize the silhouette of a police officer. ...And when I left the country, I said to myself, I know they're better off now than when I came. I saw the men getting more pride. .. And we were effective. .. They enjoyed my company, I enjoyed theirs. ...The English have a saying: "He went bush." Well, I went bush. It was mutual respect. Member Jim Vincent as quoted in STRANGE GROUND, Americans in Viet Nam(Harry Maurer, Holt Books, 1989.

COUNTERPARTS LIT Viet Nam magazine, Feb '92 edition, has article on Australian Capt. Barry Petersen, a Co Van to to Rhade, M'Nong and Jarai people in Darlac Prov., 1963-1965. Instrumental in building an effective fighting force comprised of the Dega he respected, Petersen ran afoul of political intrigues supporting and oozing forth from Sài Gòn, and was encouraged to leave the Highlands. Article cites recent publication of his book, TIGER MEN, in Australia. Efforts underway to contact Petersen. ... also..story on the exploits of the QLVNCH 30th Special Rgr. Bn., whose early forays into war Zone D, under capable leadership of Col. Do Van Dien(graduate of Rgr. School, Ft. Benning), created more than a few problems for resident VC. Previous edition of Viet Nam carried article by Ed Sprague, which detailed events prior to the end in 1975, when chaos and confusion rekindled enmity between Dega and ethnic Việt Nameese. Sad, uncomfortable reading, yet a truthful aspect of entire counterpart experience, which must be, regretably, acknowledged.VFW Magazine, Jan '92 carries Richard Kolb story 'Indochina Interlude: The Advisory War, 1957-1964, relating gradual buildup of various advisory elements in VN and Laos. Good 4 pp. summary and overview.

ARCHIVAL LIT

A STORY
OF ONE
VIETNAMESE
AND THE
END OF HIS
WORLD
The Will of Heaven
BY NGUYỄN
NGOC NGAN

THE WILL OF HEAVEN, by Nguyễn Ngọc Ngạn(Dutton, 1982). In 1970 Ngạn, a young Đại Úy/Capt., found himself assigned to the 9th ARVN's 1st Bn., in Vĩnh Bình(AKA Trà Vinh) Prov., in the lower Delta. This book spans his time with the 9th, and then incarceration and eventual escape by sea after 1975. Ngạn fondly recalls two advisors, a Capt. Johnson and Sgt. Bracker, both of whom tried to eliminate periodic chicken theft and other transgressions against villagers. Most of the book deals with Ngạn's wretched experience in the labor camps, and vengeful treatment of prisoners, including one incident which bears summary here. One prisoner, known only as Tru, watched as a prison guard used a VNCH(RVN) flag as a dust cloth. Tru snatched the flag from the guard saying 'Give me that you bastard. Take a good look at it you son of a bitch. This was once the flag of a nation. Generations of our people fought and died for it. I'll be damned if any son of a bitch of a communist will ever use it as a dust rag. If we had won the war, we would have destroyed your flag, but we would never have desecrated it this way. You're all a bunch of no-good subhuman...' At this point Tru was knocked down, subdued, and taken away for trial(sic), during which he reiterated, to an apoplectic cadre, his love of the flag and what it stood for.

The sentence for his crime, as stipulated by the camp commander: 'This convicted criminal shall be tied to a wooden column and stand in an upright position for a period of three months.' During the first week, guards would remove his gag and attempt to feed him rice, sometimes having it spit back in there face. Malaria came the second week, and in the third week his appearance was so haggard that the camp commander appeared willing to grant a reprieve and brought Tru in for an interview. Tru advised the commander that 30 April 1975 was not 'Liberation' Day but rather 'Enslavement Day', and that he, Tru, was 'an educated man, not a communist slave-robot.' Tru was taken away and never seen again. Another prisoner, sentenced to death for an escape attempt, was asked if he had any last words. Former Bn. CO Nguyễn Văn Hồ 'winc'd' upon hearing his death sentence, then 'straightened up, his eyes blazing...' and responded 'I shit on you, you communist son of a bitch, and on Hồ Chí Minh, and on your whole murdering regime. You're all a bunch of lying murdering bastards.' Maj. Ho was executed immediately. This book is one of the first detailed accounts, available in English, of harsh labor camp conditions. Though published by a major publisher, it was not a best seller, which says something about something. It might be in local libraries.

Unpublished manuscript received: SECRET TALK IN COMMUNIST PRISON, by former General (7th Div., MR IV) and Senator Huỳnh Văn Cao. Approx. 40 of the 108 pp. deal with Cao's twelve years in a NVN prison camp, hardly a paragon of penal reform, and administrated with a mutated blend of three stooges incompetence and Charles Manson vindictiveness. Same old story. Cao describes one inmate, ETC. Hang, former Quảng Tín Prov. police chief, and his being beaten to death for listening to BBC on a purloined radio. Cao was released in 1987, and expresses gratitude for the intercession of those who appealed for his release, including Neil Sheehan, Dr. Tran Khanh Van, a Mr. Funseth of US State Dept., Congressman Stephen Solarz, and Senators Edward Kennedy and Robert Dole. A publisher is being sought.

FLOWERS FROM HELL/Hoa Địa Ngục, Nguyễn Chí Thiện volume of poetry is available from Yale Southeast Asia Studies; Box 13A; Yale Station; New Haven, Connecticut; 06520, for \$7.00 plus \$1.05 p/h. Bi-lingual English/VN edition. This is both an epic and a profound tragedy of an idealistic young man who once thought 'the banner with the glowing star would lighten up the land I loved' only to find out, to his heartbreak and dismay, that Uncle Ho's 'rubber sandals weigh like a hundred pairs of iron boots' and Việt Nam would become a land where 'ghosts take comfort finding out that down in their own Hell they suffer less than men on earth.' Buy it, read it, then try and figure out why no one, ever, anywhere has covered this in the 'media'. Yale SE Asia has a number of other worthwhile Indochina monographs

'Thinking is as unnatural and arduous an activity for human beings as walking on two legs is for monkeys. We seldom do more of it than we have to; and our disinclination to think is generally greatest at times when we are feeling the most comfortable.' -Arnold J. Toynbee

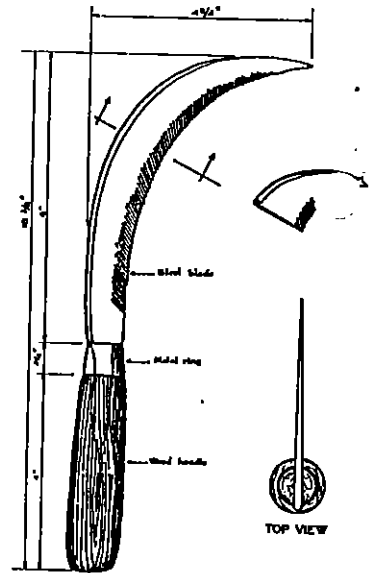
-Implementation of Sài Gòn's 1970 land reform program brought about distribution, free, of 2,500,000 acres of farmland among 800,000 formerly landless peasant families. Near its completion tenant farming dropped from 60% to 10% of arable rice land

MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

Thiếu Tá Nguyen Van Ho
 Spec⁴ James T. Davis
 Capt. Kenneth Good
 Capt. Walter Moon
 Sgt. Gabriel Alamo
 Sgt. John Houston
 Trung Tá _____ Hang
 Tướng Lê Nguyên Vỹ

REMEMBER THEM

Lưỡi Hái,
 a rice stalk
 sickle



We're kicking off a new section in this edition. Members are invited to send in recollections of any specific experiences, individuals, events, and/or places which stand out in their memories, and are representative of a meaningful aspect of the overall counterpart experience. Our inaugural entry is a 'MEDCAP Memory', submitted by a member who desires anonymity.

'We'd been running MEDCAPs at an outlying orphanage for sometime, and local village people would often drop by. Often, we'd leave with a sense of helpless frustration at our inability to deal with the medical problems we encountered; it got under your skin and into your head. One day a village girl, about 17 or 18 came in with a very visible infection or fungus or God/Buddha knows what all over her face, asking if we could help her. Her face was grotesque, and it was difficult to look at her and not show visible expressions of pity and bewilderment. Sometimes an SF medic came along with us, but that day we were alone, amateur Bác Sĩ's, and had never seen facial disfigurement quite like that. Even worse was the realization that this girl, who had probably been attractive at one time, now had little chance to marry, in a war-torn country already short of eligible and available young men. Having no idea what it was, or what we or anyone else could do about it, it was decided to bring her on back into town and see if a real US Army doctor would take a look. The jeep ride was unpleasant as doubts and frustration built up. What if it were a rare incurable tropical disease? What if we were hassled with redtape about 'admitting locals'? What if we had to tell her, for whatever reason, 'Xin lỗi'? With expectations of having our impotence rubbed in our faces, and having to drive a young girl with crushed hopes back to her hamlet, we got back and asked an Army doctor if he'd take a look. 'Sure, sure, bring her in'. So far, so good. The young girl sat down, pleading and hopeful eyes staring out from a very ugly mask of diseased tissue. 'Ông Bác Sĩ' leaned forward, looking closely and carefully, while gently touching her cheeks, chin, forehead with his fingers. We watched, waiting, hoping. Still looking at the girl, the Doc spoke to no one in particular and said 'I'll be damned'. He looked at us and continued, 'Subcutaneous Impetigo. Most advanced case I've ever seen, but we can take care of it.' We then translated Doc's instructions, telling the girl she would receive a shot, and a bottle of pills to be taken twice a day. Bouncing around in the jeep ride back to her hamlet, the girl clutched her pill bottle as if it were gold. We let her off, receiving effusive thanks. A week or two later, during another MEDCAP session, we stood dumbfounded as she came by to thank us, her disease gone, and new tissue restoring her face to what it had been before, adding more beauty to her sincere and grateful smile. After something like that you go back, sit by yourself with a beer, and listen to the wind rustle through coconut palms, because nothing else matters.'

Now, esteemed and worthy members, it's time for you to submit your memories and experiences. Everyone had many things which left a profound and lasting impression, never to be forgotten. Your fellow members would enjoy hearing about it, so sit down and put it on paper, send it in, and we'll run it verbatim. We may eventually be able to use some of this material in the anthology/oral history that has long been a specific goal of this assn. Send your material to editor pro tem, Bill Laurie, 1462 W. University; Mesa, Arizona; 85201. We'll carry as much as we have space for.

Another new feature, starting next edition, will be a member profile, highlighting experience of individual members, their thoughts, and present occupation, etc. Membership is expanding faster than we can get to know each other as individuals, and this column will partially remedy that shortcoming. A general format outline will be sent to members randomly selected, or to anyone who wants to intro him/herself to the rest of this gaggle of rather interesting people. Modesty, or other reasons, may compel some to request anonymity but please consider that we're all dealing with kindred spirits and need not be hesitant about 'bulls__ting in the bunker'. Remember, if you do not receive an outline format and want to, you need only ask, and S-1 will grant your request. Write your PIO/editor at address cited above.

And yet another new item, listing and welcoming new members, whose curriculum vitae will be cited in future roster updates. Without further ado, welcome on board, with thanks for interest and support to: Hank Dagenais, Mike McMunn, Art Artman, Henry Billings, Nguyễn Ly Hưu, Nguyễn Thanh Dinh, Paul Lyczak, Nguyễn K. Sơn, Quy Dinh Vo, Andrew Lewandowski, Mike Wall, George Lasley, Bill Blakely Jr., Tom Foley, Malcolm Dixon, Tom White, John Dunn, Larry Cole, Pete Blair, Jim Coolican, Jerry Washington, Fred Hastings Jr., and Phạm Duc Khoi.



Q1. 1 convenience store -bananas, Biere Larue (Bia Lớn), Ruby Queens, Cà Phê Đá, JP-4, bánh mì, and service with a smile.

These are some of our new members. Future editions will include all accepted applicants not on preceding updated roster. Again, grateful welcome extended new members, who are encouraged to jump in this thing as deeply as they see fit. There's no clique of 'good ol' boys' and everyone, in a manner of speaking, has been a member for the past 20 years or more, and has only lacked filling out the paperwork (and no need to pull out shot record!).

LETTERS

All advisors remember the Montagnard. All who knew them remember their honesty, loyalty and dedication. Recent information confirms that the communist government has in place policies and programs which amount to genocide of the tribespeople.

We as a nation owe a debt to our loyal allies, to ensure they have at least basic human rights guaranteed. Now more than ever, as we near normalization of relations with communist Viet Nam, is the time for us to demand our government include human rights for ethnic minorities as part of the normalization process.

Now is the time to write the President, lobby Congress, mobilize local political action groups, make waves. Do Something!

Max Lund

(Max also cited study of Human Rights violations against Dega people, previously described on p.8 of this SITREP.)

On behalf of the Đa Hiệu Magazine and the Việt Nameese National Military Academy Alumni Association, we thank you very much for your donation to our press fund. It is a great pleasure to learn that we do cherish the same goal: extending our reach to the former comrades in the Việt Nam War. Although we are no longer active in the armed forces, the belief of Honor, Duty, and Country has still been vivid in our life. Therefore, mutual assistance among us should be obvious and necessary.

We hope this beginning conversation will broaden and flourish the communication channel between the two organizations.

Phạm Đình Thừa
Editor, Đa Hiệu Magazine

(A donation was made to Đa Hiệu in gratitude for their two page spread on Counterparts/Tường Hữu Mỹ Việt Đông Nam Á, and listing of locator requests.)

I disagree with the NVVC with respect to normalization and lifting the VN trade embargo. Human Rights and POW/MIA issues are extremely important but we'll be able to influence these issues to a greater extent if we have a presence in VN. Communism in Eastern Europe did not crumble because we kept them isolated, to the contrary. ...Our presence there can only improve things for those who supported us .. The people of VN want us there, the same people we sought to help some 30 years ago. Let the damn politicians duke it out among themselves. We need to help these people and keeping them isolated is not the way to do it.

Tom Harvey

I gladly join 'Counterparts' and believe many others will also join to work together as friends and comrades as we did before. I will do what I can to strengthen and build our organization.

Col. Lê Nguyên Bình

On April 30, 1975, after the collapse of the former Republic of Việt Nam, I was held captive in the prison of so-called 'Re-education camps. ... I was released on February 13, 1988, after almost 13 years in the communists' prison, and arrived in the USA as a refugee in July 1991

During the Việt Nam war I worked very close to many US Advisors such as Maj. William H. Gavan and Cpt. William Leaptrott, both served with the Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU)/Quảng Ngãi Province as well as PRU/HQ's, Military Region I, Da Nang. Also my 'uncle' Flynn, Quảng Ngãi MACV Advisor between 1969 and 1972.

So would you please help me get in touch with them for recovery of our friendship and comrade-in-arms. I would greatly appreciate it.

Nguyễn Thanh Dinh

Thanks to all for taking the time to make their thoughts known. Keep the cards and letters comin'.

-0-

Response to membership questionnaire has been sufficient to generate a separate edition of the SITREP. There simply is not enough space to deal with it here. Compilation of member thoughts and responses will be available and discussed at reunion. Thanks to all for thoughts, opinions, suggestions, all of which are vital to the goals and purposes of this outfit.

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Other reunions...

Greetings,

Many of our members at one time or another served in your unit either in peacetime or combat, who also served with Team 162 in Việt Nam (Airborne Advisory Grp.). We are trying to find some of these lost troopers so we can put our 1992 reunion together. What are the chances the information below can be put in your newsletter? Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Mike George

Glad to help Mike. Here's info on Society of VN Airborne Reunion:

24-27 June, 1992 at Clarksville TN/Ft. Campbell Kentucky.

Point of contact:

CSM(ret.) James Collier
7755 Strawberry Hill
Goodlettsville, Tennessee
37072
615 876-3642

And.. All Services Việt Nam Veterans Reunion
15-17 May, 1992
Holiday Inn Capitol Plaza
Contact Bill Robinson 502 363-5296
or Pete Jukubiak 502 363-5550

Thx to Ray Battreall for sending this in, with suggestion that we might pick up support from either group. Anyone able to attend either reunion could pass out info. Volunteers?

Son of counterpart
makes good

Military

■ Khang Nguyen, 20, son of Tham and Le Thi Le Nguyen of Mesa, has been named as company honorman for Recruit Company 89 at the Navy's Recruit Training Command Station in San Diego.

Nguyen was also selected from among 261 recruits in his division to receive the Nguyen Navy League Award, given to the recruit who displays the highest standards of personal character, attention to detail, academic achievement and leadership ability during boot camp training.



PRODUCTS

Video 'Steam in Việt Nam', 55 min., in color, of steam rail engines in VN is available from:

Rail Trails Videos
Stagecoach Plaza
1560-1 Newbury Rd., Suite 123
Newbury Park, California
91319-8576.

Advertisement, in 'Trains' magazine (p. 7, Jan '92 issue) does not provide info as to date or location of railroads taped. Price: \$39.95, \$3.00 p/h. California residents add 8.25% ~~extortion~~ tax.

Anyone viewing same invited to submit comments.

Southeast Asian Ministry 105 W. University Ave. St. Paul, Minnesota 55101 Has Hmong Pa N dau needlework for sale, as part of their boot strap, self-help programs for Hmong refugees. Not known if catalog is available and/or if mail order is accepted. The Ministry also has available, at no cost (but donation is appropriate, and goes to a good cause) a 23 pp. monograph, OLDER CAMBODIAN REFUGEES' STORIES, compiled by Kim Huor Tann. First person accounts of life, such as it is, in Cambodia prior to emigration, and adjusting to US life, and Minnesota snow.

General Miscellanea ... US sends first Ambassador to Laos since 1975 .. Lao National Airline gets its first jet, a Soviet TU-154M for service to Thailand, VN, and Cambodia ... 6,400 tourists visited Laos in 1990, compared with 258,500 for Việt Nam, and 3,700,000 for Thailand ... US State Dept. warns of risk in traveling to Cambodia due to unsettled military/political differences .. Heineken Brewery will open a brewery in Sai Gon in 1993 .. VN's 1991 inflation rate: 70% ... December typhoons caused nearly 200 deaths in Quảng Nam and Quảng Ngãi Provinces ... VN's 1991 exports were 10% above 1990 totals ... Cambodia's Prince Sihanouk criticized some US Senators opposed to Khmer Rouge participation in the Supreme National Council, saying the lawmakers were interfering in domestic issues .. Khmer Rouge mortar fire directed at unk. targets in Kompong Thom Province, north of Phnom Penh, destroyed civilian housing, caused 13 known deaths, and caused 10,000 people to leave their homes .. Mrs. Cindy McCain, Senator John's wife, led seven doctors and other nurses to VN last week, all part of the American Voluntary Medical Team (AVMT) she founded in 1988. Primary objective is to bring medical care to the needy, as well as advising VN doctors on advanced medical techniques. Trip constitutes AVMT's 30th plus trip to impoverished nations in past 4 years.

OK, that's it for this issue. Members are asked to send in brief articles describing memorable event, person, and should also feel free to submit photocopies of any photos for reproduction in SITREP. Next SITREP will have a masthead, and work is (still) underway to come up with a cleaner format, etc. Suggestions welcome. Any artists willing to draw up cover format? Reunion info follows. Please respond as soon as you can, lightening burden so ably carried by Steve and Jeanne Herberth. Pack your bags, bring your ideas, slides, photos, and wonderful charming selves to Louisville. We all look forward to continuation of last year's hard fought Army-Marine joke duel between Cesar Coronado and J.C. Fischer. See you there.