



COUNTERPARTS

THƯỜNG HỮU ĐÔNG NAM Á

SITREP

41

Volume VI I

Issue 2

Summer 2004

ASHEBORO REUNION LINKS WITH MONTAGNARD EVENTS

Memorial Day Weekend event draws enthusiastic group of *Counterparts*.

By
Ken Jacobsen

Although only a small number of members made the trip to Asheboro, the 2004 *Counterparts* Reunion was well worth attending. In addition to meetings and the traditional Saturday night banquet, *Counterparts* who went to Asheboro had the unique opportunity to participate in the annual Save the Montagnard People (STMP) picnic.

As part of our business meeting, new member Dave Tooker gave a well-illustrated briefing based on his experience as a *CoVan* with the RF/PF in the Delta. Dave has given this same lecture to active duty Army officers and to high school students and noted that many in these groups have told him that his presentation was their first exposure to the "real" Vietnam War.

Bill Ridley offered an overview of Vietnam tour opportunities offered by his Travel Agency, including a special price for *Counterparts* members. Details of Bill's package are on p. 15.

There was an extensive discussion of *Counterparts* present situation and the challenges faced by the organization. All agreed that there is an urgent and continuing need for members to step up and offer their talents and skills to keep us moving forward. We are being kept afloat by the efforts of a handful of members, many of whom are long past their original "DEROS".

We were also reminded that nominations for a new slate of Officers are still open. A copy of the Nomination form is in this issue on p. 16. All members are urged to submit nominations.

With the Montagnards in Asheboro

By
Rich Webster

Our reunion was held in Asheboro at the same time as the annual Memorial Day Montagnard picnic. A group formed to help the Montagnards preserve their culture, Save The Montagnard People, Inc, (STMP), has purchased a 130 acre farm 12 miles southwest of Asheboro to broaden recognition of the people they were trying to help.

Counterparts' members attended the festivities, mingled with our former allies and enjoyed the company of the Dega people. (Montagnard is a French word for mountaineer, or mountain people).

Our commander, Pappy Hicks, has been instrumental over the years in fighting for the rights of the Hmong and Dega people, and was one of the principals in getting the first group to America in 1986 and the second group in 1992. During the Vietnam War years, Pappy was adopted by the Ede (Rhade) tribe and given the name "Y Among Nie".

It was a very moving experience for me to talk to several of the former Montagnard guerilla fighters who aligned themselves with us for the duration of the Vietnam War, before we ignobly abandoned them and our South Vietnamese allies in 1975. Through a meeting held at the US embassy in April 1975, the Montagnard leaders say they were encouraged to form a guerilla army for operations behind the NVA lines, and so they did.

As a former advisor with the Regional Forces/ Popular Forces of the South Vietnamese Army, I had a strong feeling of empathy as I mingled among the one

(Continued on page 3)

COUNTERPARTS Officers

Commander
D. L. "Pappy" Hicks
(903) 842 3329
utsidih@juno.com

Executive Officer
Darryl E. Nelson
dezi@clarksville.com

**Adjutant and Web Site
Administrator**
James F. Alkek
(713) 668 4287

SITREP Production Manager
Bui Quang Lam

Historian
Jim Davis
(205) 987 7718
k4aaf@charter.net

Constance Menafee
constance@menafee.com

Archivist
Richard "Dick" Williamson
(707) 425 2045
arty@community.net

**Public Affairs/Information
Officer**
Rich Webster
(217) 243 3029
covanmi@mchsi.com

**Quartermaster/Logistics
Officer**
(VACANT)

Locator
Joe West
(209) 723 5925, (209) 725 6856
uschl@cell2000.net

**Humanitarian Projects
Officer**
Michael Bickford
bickusmc@webtv.com

**Veteran's Association
Directory Compiler**
Benjamin N. Myers
(561) 967 3717
Vet Locator@prodigy.net

Reunion Coordinator
Darryl Nelson

**Honorary Members In
Memoriam Compiler**
W. Michael McMunn
(570) 321 7102

Hmong/Lao Liaison Officer
Grant McClure

Montagnard Liaison Officer
Mike Little
littlecrazy@cox.net

Vietnamese Liaison Officer
John Cook



COUNTERPARTS SITREP

The Official Publication of Counterparts/Thúông Hữu Đông Nam Á

Volume VI

Issue 2

Summer 2004

Commander's Corner

All who went to the Reunion in Asheboro, NC had a great time. We visited the Montagnard Site just out of town about 12.5 miles. Our members met some great people.

Counterparts were glad to join the fine people of Save The Montagnard People (STMP), but we also had our own business to handle. We had our annual meeting on Saturday afternoon. By majority vote of those present, we changed our membership requirement to have a valid quorum. We have never had a valid quorum at a Reunion since we started. We voted that five or more Members in good standing will constitute a valid quorum. Our second vote was to change the duties of the Adjutant and establish the position of Quartermaster. This will relieve the Adjutant of this added responsibility.

On Saturday night we held our Dinner, which as an old soldier I still call supper, I don't care what time it is. Ken Jacobsen set the entire thing up from his home by phone. Outstanding. The meal was good and the Guest Speaker didn't show up until the next day. Wires were crossed. So I talked about the Montagnards, which I have personally known for many years.

On Sunday we went to the Montagnard Site to eat, meet old friends and new friends. I had to talk to all, since I am an adopted Montagnard and know many of them for years. I talked myself into a crash in the middle of the floor at the site and they took me to the hospital in Greensboro. I had a friend, Dr. John Freeman, ride with me in the meat wagon and look out after me. Thanks, old buddy. I did fine.

It ticked Little Margie when I got back to her sister's we were visiting. I didn't tell her until I got back. Oh, well, after half a Century of marriage, I've ticked her off more than once.

It seems that everyone enjoyed our Montagnard friends. Some of us have fought with them in Vietnam.

We owe them much.

Pappy

Note: We're presently thinking of a 2005 Reunion in Phoenix, AZ in conjunction with the ARVN BDQ (Ranger) and BDQ CoVan Reunion, sometime in late April, 2005. We need comments on this suggestion and a volunteer who lives in or near Phoenix to coordinate logistics.

(Continued from page 1)

thousand or so Montagnards and their families at the picnic. Over 30 years ago, I and the other Co Vans at the convention had gone to Vietnam to fight for the freedom of the South Vietnamese people. The Montagnards were here today because their former Special Forces comrades never abandoned them and finally went back to get them out of the refugee camps in Thailand, and to lobby the politicians to allow them to come to America.

I talked to several of these brave warriors of the "Forgotten Army" who survived this ordeal.

60-year Ha Doi's experience was typical. "I fight for Special Forces for many years," Ha told me, "then fight from 1975 to 1985, then cross Cambodia to Thailand to refugee camp. There was no food, salt, or medicine in the jungle all those years."

By 1986 there were only 212 of the leaders and their families left in this camp. They were granted political asylum and resettlement in North Carolina. Ha Doi was in this first group to arrive in America. Ha Doi is a member of the Ko Ho tribe whose ancestral home was in the Central Highlands, near Dalat.

"People from North Vietnam come and take my land. They cut trees, take gold from our streams," he said. "No more animals, tigers, or monkeys. Now communists make my people mine for gold and work for free."

The North Vietnamese Army and their families are continuing to arrive from the North, invading the highlands, and settling their families on the Montagnards' land. It's really an army takeover, because there is a very fine line between the present army and government of Vietnam.

According to a series of articles in *World Net Daily* the Vietnamese armed forces are carrying out an ambitious plan to set up 13 special "economic free-trade zones" near Vietnam's borders with the communist countries of China, Laos, and Cambodia. There the Vietnamese army will seek to establish its own set of military fiefdoms to control the valuable natural resources of the area.

And the Montagnards are in the way. Ha Doi continues, "Montagnard people have to report to local police to be able to eat one chicken or pig. If you don't report, you go to jail."

I bought a Montagnard bracelet from Koho. He and his wife were selling traditional Montagnard crafts at the picnic. I also met one of his friends who spent

10 years in prison camp near Hanoi from 1975 to 1985.

"I work ten years in this camp. No rice, no medicine. We get one bowl of hard corn a day that was food for animals. We boil so we can eat, but get no rice."

"My friend use psychology on camp security", Koho added. "You have to have good attitude to be released from communist prison camp. Guard ask him if he hungry. He say no, he isn't hungry after working all day in the fields with only a bowl of cracked corn to eat. Guard ask him if he is thirsty. No, he say, he not thirsty, even though there is little water to drink. Finally, after 10 years, the guard say you can go home now."

This former soldier of "The Forgotten Army" had learned to use reverse psychology to be released from the slave labor camps (referred to in Orwellian double-speak terms as "re-education" camps). And like the hundreds of thousands of our former Counterparts in the South Vietnamese Army who spent time in the slave labor camps after the war, a good attitude and repentance of past deeds were required to survive and to be released.

The Montagnards have three strikes against them in the eyes of the communist government in Vietnam. They fought with the Americans, they have converted to Christianity, and they have valuable land that the communist party wants.

Earlier this year, over Easter weekend the Montagnards attempted a peaceful demonstration in the Central Highlands; they were attacked, beaten, and many killed by the Vietnamese Army. All the mountain peoples asked for was their land and the freedom to worship. But the Vietnamese government keeps all religious institutions in control under the umbrella of the Communist Party's "Fatherland Front". The religion of the Montagnard people is considered illegal.

Kevin Schoonmaker, VP of STMP, related to me how one of the Montagnard women, now an American citizen, went back for a visit during the Easter weekend. All Montagnards who were American citizens had to purchase a jacket with a green emblem, so that the communist thugs would know who not to beat or shoot.

She barely escaped the carnage near Ban Me Thuot by fleeing to a Red Cross hospital, and pulling an injured friend behind. Her arm was severely injured.

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

Now back in the US seeking treatment, she witnessed the carnage from a second story window. The BBC news reported 200 were killed.

I was in Vietnam during the Easter weekend uprising. In the large hotels in Vietnam now, one can watch international cable news programs, but the news is blacked out for locals as they receive only local programming, with the main channel putting the government spin on things.

Official word was that the "Central Highlands" was off limits. While on tour near Lai Kei, a former location of a military base of the Big Red One. Nothing exists now except the crumbling airstrip, another Vietnam veteran and I were stopped by the local police. We had traveled barely 100 yards off highway 13, when we were pulled over by policeman on a motorbike. He called another policeman who soon arrived, and we were taken to the police compound. Our Vietnamese

guide and interpreter were given a severe grilling, and they took our guide's tour guide license. He had to return to district court and explain himself at a later date.

Since the Montagnards have settled in North Carolina, not too far from Fort Bragg, and have been assisted by retired Special Forces' officers in forming STMP, the communists are paranoid that the Montagnard leadership is plotting a revolution in the Highlands. Nothing is further from the truth. They want only rights to their land and the freedom to worship.

Hanoi believes FULRO (a French term for The United Front For The Liberation of Oppressed Races) is alive and well. Deputy Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung in an interview in the Cambodia Daily on May 12, accused a US exile group of organizing the demonstrations that drew thousands of ethnic minority Christians over April 10 and April 11.



From the XO

There are some issues that we need to address concerning policy on release of individual *Counterparts* Personal information.. I recently received the following question from the Historian: "*Due to privacy issues, I have some questions about with whom some of the personal information within the records can be shared, other than with the individual subjects (or their families?). On the other hand, I think COUNTERPARTS ought to be as obliging as possible in sharing information to any legitimate researcher or other proper person, so long as subjects' legal rights are respected.*"

Our applications state that all information submitted is confidential.

Have I overlooked something in our bylaws?

Jim Davis is currently our Historian: Jim's email address is k4aaf@charter.net. I urge all members to express their views and preferences on the above subject. The Historian would also welcome anything that members would like to add to our *Counterparts* history.

Anyone interested in becoming *Counterparts* Quartermaster and running our village store? Don't be bashful, step right up, and get involved. We need more volunteers for several items.

While I am on the subject would the locator please contact me by email? dezi@clarksville.com, would like to get some information on a couple of items. I sent you an email to you but it can back undeliverable.

Anyone got any ideas for Reunion sites? I understand that San Antonio, TX has been mentioned as a possibility for 2006, anyone on the ground there want to check it out and make a report at the 2005 Reunion? Anyone interested just say so. I am sure that any of a half dozen folks will more than happy to provide advice and maybe some assistance.

Everyone have a safe summer.

.....**Darryl Nelson**

MINUTES OF COUNTERPARTS MEETING-2004 ASHEVILLE, NC

Commander Hicks called the meeting to order with 16 *Counterparts* members present. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

Rich Webster read the minutes of the 2003 convention.

Discussion was held to amend several of the by laws of the Constitution. One change proposed was to allow decisions to be made at the annual meeting by a majority vote of those present. Another change was to create a separate entity for the Quartermaster position currently held by Jack De Boer. Tom Manion agreed to work on the wording of the new-by laws and submit it to the group in the next *Counterparts* SITREP for approval. (See p. 13)

Thanks and praise was given to member Jack Simmons for the creation, making, and distribution (at his own expense) of the new professional- looking ID cards.

Thanks also was extended to member Jack De Boer for bringing the store, setting up shop so members can buy memorabilia, and for displaying the flags and the special *Counterparts* flag.

SITREP Editor Ken Jacobsen set up the Banquet Saturday evening, and requested those present to submit articles about their experiences as advisors for the SITREP. He needs material from members to continue publishing in a timely matter. He encourages members to write. We all have something unique to offer. He mentioned that Rich Webster's article in the last SITREP regarding Counterinsurgency and John Paul Vann caught the eye of a Washington think tank (WWW-SIRI-US.com) and was forwarded on to G3 HQ in IRAQ.

Ken stressed that we need to keep the membership addresses updated, as he has had problems of many returned SITREPS, and even a bigger problem of having to explain to widows of deceased members, why they are still on the mailing list when they have requested name removal. The problem still exists with the membership database being current.

A plaque featuring a commendation letter, put together by Commander Hicks, will be presented to member Bui Quang Lam, who prints the SITREP for free.

Bill Ridley volunteered to work on setting up sending of the SITREP via email, and also making it accessible via a web site. After military retirement, he now runs a travel agency and offered members a discount of three hundred dollars, returned to Counterparts, if they wish to return to Vietnam with him.

Approval was given by those present to give \$300 to the Save The Montagnard Foundation, Inc. (STMP). The reason for choosing Asheboro as a convention site was that the annual Montagnard picnic was being held at the same time nearby. also, our Commander, Pappy Hicks, is directly involved with the association.

LTC Dave Tooker, probably the last Co Van still on active duty, gave a slide presentation. Tooker, a retired school teacher, and still active in the reserves, is an instructor for the Army and presented the same program that he gives to Captains for their Career Course. The presentation, accompanied by color slides, chronicled his exploits as an advisor in the Delta and lessons learned as an advisor while working with the Regional Forces/Popular Forces.

The meeting was adjourned. Following the meeting, COUNTERPARTS' members moved via (not-very-military) convoy to the site of the Montagnard picnic area- 130 acres owned by the STMP in the forest near Asheboro.

Rich Webster



Rich Webster and Montagnard Friends



The Counterparts' Ladies



*L to R: Dave Tooker, Darryl Nelson, Tjm Laflan,
Ken Jacobsen Jack De Boer, Rich Webster*



*Counterparts' Col. Dale Prieser, with Col.
David "Bulldog" Smith..*



Counterparts at the Asheboro Banquet

BOOK REVIEWS

Reviews of Books, new and old, relating to the Southeast Asia experience. Members are encouraged to submit reviews. All reviews will be published as space permits.

The Battle for Tan Loi: A Vietnamization Success Story by Member John Haseman.

In the summer 1972 Offensive, a largely NVA-manned contingent attacked Tan Loi Village in Ham Long District, Kien Hoa Province. Most US advisors had been pulled out and Tan Loi was protected by RF, PF and other elements of RVNAF who showed they could dish out more than the NVA could deliver. This article is a blow-by-blow account of the Tan Loi battle and puts to rest arguments that RF and PF "would not fight." The NVA 261B Bn. found out, to its dismay, that the RF, PF and National Police were more than a match. Good story.

Combined Action Program: Marines' Alternative to Search and Destroy, James Donovan.

Good overview of USMC Combined Action Platoons and role played in securing villages and rural areas without calling in heavy firepower and inflicting excessive collateral damage. Good story, but doesn't address fact that CAPs, which were VERY effective in their assigned role, were not expected to be capable of dealing with NVA regiments or divisions.



SITREP Editorial Policy and Procedures

Copy:

- Articles, letters and other news items are welcomed from all members and other subscribers. Copy should be typed double spaced using standard manuscript fonts like Courier, Times New Roman or other "plain vanilla" fonts that can be easily OCR scanned. If you don't have a typewriter, legible handwritten copy is OK.
- Electronic submissions via email or on disc are also welcome. Microsoft Word or Word Perfect is preferred.
- Submissions should not exceed "Column length" pieces, i.e.: no longer than 600-1200 words. Members shouldn't hesitate to send short (50-100) word contributions. Remember, brevity is the soul of wit.
- Photos or pictures can be submitted by mail or on the internet. For Internet material use one of the standard graphic formats like JPEG, TIFF, MIX, or GIF.

Editorial Policy:

- We will edit for grammar, spelling and clarity. If we feel the need to edit for length or content we'll contact the author whenever possible. We will NOT edit for political or philosophical content unless it's obscene, illegal, or libelous.
- SITREP will be published three times a year. Manuscripts and photos are welcome at any time. We will normally publish material in the first issue after it is received, space permitting. Photos and manuscripts will be returned to the sender if requested.

• Send Submissions To:

Ken Jacobsen
607 Wampler Drive
Charleston, SC 29412
Tel. 843 795 7519
kjacobsen@knology.net

Bill Laurie
1462 West University Drive
Mesa, AZ 85201
Tel. 480 962 4347
bill_laurie@yahoo.com

COUNTERPARTS ORAL HISTORY

COUNTERPARTS members are invited to share their own in-country experience. Your work doesn't need to be a literary masterpiece; we will edit for grammar, spelling and clarity. Your submissions can be handwritten, typed, or sent via email. Each issue, we will publish as many items as space permits.

The Jane Fonda Sweatshirt

By

Charles Thurmond, as told to Rich Webster

All Vietnam veterans know that Jane Fonda, a leading activist in the anti-war movement in America, gave aid and comfort to the North Vietnamese government by visiting Hanoi during the war while brave American soldiers were dying in the south. *Counterparts* member, Lt. Charles Thurmond, was assigned to MACV, Team 3, sub-team 65, in I CORPS and witnessed first hand the results of Fonda's efforts.

Thurmond remembers, "We were in a battle on November 25th, 1968, 18 miles south of Hue and captured a large number of enemy supplies and weapons at a NVA headquarters with 10 huts and bunkers. We found fuses for 82mm mortar rounds, shotgun charges for B-40 rockets, various medical supplies, cooking utensils, and one Geneva convention card belonging to Lance Corporal William Charles Vance, USMC DOB 12-01-46. The other American advisor with me at the time was SSgt Herman Wiggins, USMC."

"The next day we found two huts a short distance away at map coordinates 782-004, We interrogated an NVA sergeant we captured who was wearing a black sweatshirt and found out that his unit had been given 27 sweatshirts before they left Hanoi by Jane Fonda herself, because it was cold at night where they would be going in the South. We found three sweatshirts that day, and later 24 sweatshirts were discovered by one of my patrols. She may have brought them from the states or bought them in Hanoi. The NVA prisoner did say Fonda handed them out personally to them before they departed for the South."

Thurmond continues, "This same NVA prisoner also said an American prisoner was traveling with the Headquarters unit but he could not identify him. I gave military intelligence the Geneva Convention card belonging to Lance Corporal Vance and never heard anything about it one way or another".

So there you have it... a little bit of never-before-published history about Hanoi Jane's giving aid and comfort to our enemy. Enemy soldiers were wearing Fonda's sweatshirts in the South so they wouldn't get cold at night.

Thurmond still has the sweatshirt and brought it to the convention. His advisor team at the time was attached to the 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Regiment, 1st ARVN Division, commanded by General Truong. Truong's US Counterpart was General Stilwell.

Thurmond went back to Vietnam in 1994 and relates this incident about POW's left behind. "We were in Can Tho visiting a friend at a Vietnamese engagement party in an old French villa overlooking the river there. I walked out on the patio and a Vietnamese approached me and shook hands with me. He placed the name of an American POW in my hand on a small piece of paper. No one could recognize what he was doing."

I turned it over to a representative from the state department when I returned to the States and that's the last I ever heard of it."

Last Advisor in Long An Province

By

Bob Lockridge

In the Winter/Spring edition of the COUNTERPARTS' SITREP, there was an article Rich Webster wrote titled Counterinsurgency. In that article, I noticed that he was at one time, a member of Advisory team 86, Long An Province.

(Continued from page 8)

I was the last PSA of Team 86 and turned out the lights in 1973. The compound for Team 86 was named Mansfield Compound. At the entrance was a brass plaque dedicated to Captain Mansfield, KIA. I brought this plaque back with me in hopes of finding Mansfield's next of kin and giving the plaque to them.

However, I have never found any relatives. Of course, the DA will not release this information. I'm hoping that maybe members of your organization can lead me to someone who may help in my search.

I was on a special program of two years as the last PSA of Long An. There were 34 of us working directly for William Colby. In exchange for serving two years, my 3rd Vietnam tour, we moved our family to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. We had the use of the Ambassador's plane and could periodically spend a weekend at Clark.

In my first 6 months, I pulled all the district teams back to Tan An. My team was beefed up with the CIA reps, police advisors, USAID, military intel, and sophisticated military commo personnel-about 54 or 55 personnel total. Our primary mission was to gather intel for the area south of Saigon to the Cambodian border. We had no ARVN units, and all military operations were conducted with Province and/or District troops backed up with US chopper and tac air. In 1971-73, Long An was very prosperous with little VC activity. The NVA kept trying to move through, but the grass roots intel from the villages was very good. They didn't want the NVA and wanted to get on with their lives.

In March 1973, we got a message from Saigon that we were to leave in 24 hours. So, we packed up and left and basically left our Vietnamese friends high and dry. I spent 3 days in Saigon, then on to the Philippines. I stayed at Clark for two months waiting for orders.

(Note: Bob's email address: www.RLockridge@aol.com. Anyone having information please forward to Bob. SITREP would also welcome a short article about Captain Mansfield and how the Advisor Compound Team 86 was named after him.)

Rich Webster returned to Vietnam in April of this year and visited Tan An and his old area of operations at Tan Tru District. It is forbidden to take pictures in Vietnam of any military or police related buildings or activities. However, the picture of the compound as it now looks appears below. The Vietnamese Police now occupy the old French built red tile roof building and a red flag with a yellow star is flying overhead.



TRIBUTE TO SP/4 ROBERT SHERMAN PRIESER

Counterparts member Colonel Dale Prieser has written a moving tribute to his son who was killed in Vietnam on 8 September 1968. Colonel Prieser had the unique privilege of serving at the same time as his son in Vietnam, and at the same Special Forces camp. His son, Robert, was a O5 delta Morse code operator. By regulation, a father and son could not go out on missions at the same time.

Colonel Prieser's son extended his tour for an early release from the Army when his death occurred.

Visit the website www.freedomberd.us/prieser and you will find the following with background music of "*The Ballad of The Green Berets*". It will bring tears to your eyes.

"Military service as a family tradition has been handed down from regiments forever. There is no greater pride enjoyed by a father and mother, nor a higher calling to patriotism, than to have a son answer the summons to serve his countrymen in time of war. Conversely, no pain, no anguish, and no suffering can be as great, as deep nor as long lasting, as to have that son lost in combat.

Colonel Dale E. Prieser, U.S. Army (RET), composed the following as tribute to his fallen warrior son, Specialist Fourth Class Robert Sherman Prieser, U.S. Army.

Robert, born in Sidney, Ohio, on Aug. 6, 1948, entered active service on June 20, 1966. After completing Airborne and Special Forces Training, he was assigned to the Army's Elite 5th Special Forces Group Airborne, 1st Special Forces, Republic of Vietnam. On Sept. 8, 1968, Robert was killed in action while leading a reinforcing element of Strike Force soldiers on the beleaguered Ha Thanh Special Forces Camp, I Corps, Republic of Vietnam. "

Robert's father, Dale, composed the poem and mailed it to his grieving wife, Barbara, while he was serving his second tour in country, in the Que Son Mountain region of Vietnam.

*He was tall and handsome,
And very straight
He kidded the girls,
On every date.*

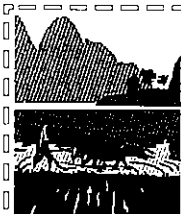
*And then he was grown,
Yet only a teen,
He went to Vietnam
To help fulfill a dream.*

*He wore his beret
And wings so proud,
The patch on his shoulder
He was even more proud.*

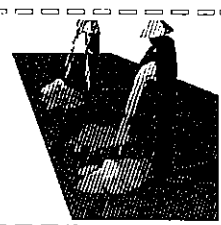
*He fought in the valleys
And mountains so high,
And walked the trails,
That many had died.*

*And when Ha Thanh
Was under siege,
He led the fight
For what he believed.*

*And when he died
That September day,
God said, "Give me your hand,
I will show you the way."*



BULLETIN BOARD



Vietnam Human Rights Bill (H.R. 1587)

The US Commission for International Religious Freedom stated in its 2003 report on Viet Nam that religious oppression has increased since Bilateral Trade Agreements were signed with Hanoi in 2001. (See uscirf.gov or call 202 523-3240 for free copy.) Also, Human Rights Watch spokesmen have stated Hanoi's relations with the Montagnards have hit a new low following large disturbances in the Highlands, April 2004, with scores being killed, and many others jailed and missing. (See HRW.org, and type in Viet Nam on search button. See also www.montagnard-foundation.org, crfvn.org, and gb4hr.net, and fva.org)

Spread the word around. In past years Sen. John Kerry prevented the last VN Human Rights Bill from even being discussed on the Senate floor, after it had passed 410-1 in the House. Former Hanoi prisoner, Nguyen Chi Thien, who spent 27 years in Hanoi prisons for writing anti-communist poetry, stated before Congress that aid to Hanoi simply discourages human rights activists in Viet Nam, while convincing Hanoi's ideologues they have a free pass to do anything they want. Do something. Tell other people to do something.

SUGGESTED DRAFT LETTER TO SENATOR:

Note: Due to security requirements in Washington, US mail is VERY slow to arrive. We recommend you send your letter via email or FAX.

The Honorable (Your Senator's Name)
U.S. Senate Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

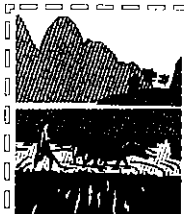
Please cosponsor the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2004, (HR 1587) which seeks to ensure that trade and expanded relations with Vietnam will promote political reforms, freedom, civil society, and democracy in that country. Repeatedly passed by the House with overwhelming bipartisan support (410-1 in 2001 and again, 323-45 in 2003), this legislation links further increases in U.S. non-humanitarian assistance to progress on human rights in Vietnam and provides assistance to pro-democracy groups.

The Human rights and religious freedom situation in Vietnam has deteriorated significantly since 2001. The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has repeatedly urged Congress to pass the Vietnam Human Rights Act.

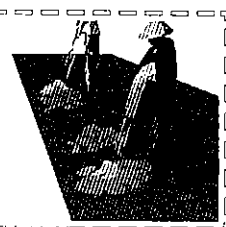
If passed, this legislation would reinforce a balanced approach of trade and human rights in U.S. foreign policy. The persistence of human rights violations in Vietnam shows that our current policy toward Vietnam has failed; we have simply focused on trade and economic assistance as the only solution in this complex relationship. Although the U.S has provided growing economic assistance to Vietnam, there is no benchmark or monitoring system in place to measure progress in human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam.

It was to correct this situation that the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a previous version of the bill 410-1 when it, at the same time, ratified the US-Vietnam bilateral trade agreement in 2001.

I wholeheartedly urge you to strongly support this bill. It will encourage a relationship between the two countries that is based on international standards of human rights and religious freedom, a relationship that will help the development of a civil society for 80 million Vietnamese. Please support the Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2004.



BULLETIN BOARD



Bylaws Change

Please note the proposed changes to *Counterparts*' Bylaws, shown on page 13. Anyone with comments on this proposed change please contact one of *Counterparts*' Officers.

Journey back to Vietnam

Member Bill Ridley's travel agency is leading a tour back to Vietnam 8-21 November 2004. The cost is \$3500 to include round trip air from San Francisco to Vietnam and 13 nights in deluxe (4 star) hotels, plus more. Visit his web site at www.bktravel.com, or email: info@bktravel.com for more information. He will offer a \$300 return to the *Counterparts* organization for members who go on the trip. (See ad on p. 15.)

Vets With A Mission (VWAM)

Some members may be familiar with this organization, which has done a lot of good humanitarian work in Vietnam, including building schools, clinics, and helping various religious groups which are constantly being harassed by the Vietnamese government. Based in Newberry, SC, VWAM is struggling to survive and continue its mission. Funds are short and there is, as always, a need for volunteers and donations of money and equipment. To find out more about how to assist this worthwhile organization, members are urged to contact: **Vets With A Mission, P.O. Box 202, Newberry, SC 29108-0202, Tel. 803-405-9926, email www.vwam.com**

Locator Request

The Following request has been received from Chris Smith, zvezdah1@knology.net .
"HI, seeking info on my dad who was an advisor in 64-65. I've gotten his service records and know a bit more now. He was a member of Team 43 in Duc Hue District, Hau Nghia Province. Would be interested in hearing from other members of this team and time period. From his records, I see two officers he served with, names LTC Lloyd Webb and LTC Donald Seibert. Any info appreciated. Thanks Chris Smith"

Hmong Settle in US

America is now welcoming about 15,000 Hmong who have been languishing in a Thai refugee camp for the past 10-15 years. Return to Laos is not an option due to the political oppression and "ethnic leveling" policies of communist Lao government. Approximately 160,000 Hmong already live in the US and are preparing to welcome fellow Hmong and assist them in getting started in a new life. Most new arrivals will be going to areas where Hmong are already concentrated: such as the Minnesota Twin Cities, western Wisconsin and California. Anyone living near one of these centers encouraged to help new arrivals in any ways available. It's only fair. The American government left these people high and dry and tens of thousands of them died after 1975.

Hmong-American Soldier Killed in Iraq

: US Army Spc. Thai Vue followed in family and Hmong tradition by enlisting in the U.S. Army. His father and grandfather fought against the Viet Minh, then the Pathet Lao and NVA, and later escaped from Laos after the communist takeover. Thai was born 22 years ago in a refugee camp and came to the U.S. two years later. He did well in the military and had an excellent record. On 18 June, 2004, Spc Vue was serving his last week in Iraq when he was killed by a mortar round. Thai's older brother, Thor, also served in the military and issued this statement at his brother's funeral: "He was a great soldier. He had a great sense of duty to his country and to his fellow man."

Change to By-Laws Proposed

The following is the text of the proposed change to the Counterparts By-Laws.

Proposed amendments to the current Counterparts By Laws

Thomas Manion, a. plenary member in good standing with the organization, drafts the following amendments. These amendments are submitted at the request of the Commander D. L. Hicks USA Ret. And in accordance with Article VI, Amendments, of the current By Laws:

Change Article V. Meetings

Purpose: To make changes in the number of members constituting a quorum

Reason: The small number of attendees at some Reunions has made it impossible to vote under the existing By-Laws

Remove the following text entirety: " Ten –present of those members authorized to vote must be present or proxied to constitute a valid quorum able to transact business."

Replace with the following:

"Five or more members present and in good standing will constitute a valid quorum able to transact business. Four or less members will be allowed to adjourn the meeting until such time as a valid quorum is present."

Changes to Article II: Officers

Purpose: To make changes to the By Laws in order to establish the position of Quartermaster.

Reason: To establish the position of Quartermaster and modify the duties of the Adjutant.

Delete the following text from Section A: Enumeration

"The interests and affairs of this organization shall be governed by three elected officers: Commander/CO, Executive Officer/XO, and Adjutant/Adj."

Replace with the following text:

"The interests and affairs of this organization shall be governed by four elected officers: Commander/CO, Executive Officer/XO, and Adjutant/Adj. and Quartermaster."

Delete from Article II, 3) the last sentence. " The Adj. shall act as Quartermaster for the organizational tokens and seal.

Replace with the following sentence.

" The Adj. shall act keep and maintain the seal."

Add the following paragraph

"4) The Quartermaster shall act as the Quartermaster for the organizational tokens. The Quartermaster shall also be responsible for the materials and funds of the Village Store. The Quartermaster shall be elected in the same manner as the other officers, defined in Article II Section A: of these By Laws.

Article IV

Change the first sentence to reflect the added position of Quartermaster

Delete the first part of the first sentence " Government is vested in three Officers" and replace with the following text. " Government is vested in four Officers"

***Respectfully submitted ,
Tom Manion***

MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

Gen. Nguyen Van Hieu. Gen. Hieu was a highly respected and capable man who died under mysterious circumstances in April of 1975. Abundant info on this man and his accomplishments from website generalhieu.com.

Trung Ta (LTC) Le Hanh Minh. Minh was battalion commander of the 2nd TQLC (Marine Bn.), otherwise known as the "Trau Dien," or Crazy (water)Buffalos. Symbolism of name has special meaning to anyone who's seen an angry water buffalo. LTC Minh was a 1954 graduate of Thu Duc Officer School and was an accomplished musician and writer. He was killed in action, at 31 years of age, in Phong Dien District, Thua Thien Province, leading a counterattack against a VC ambush.

Thieu Ta (Major) Truong Phung, Khong Quan (Air Force), A1-H Skyraider pilot, 518th fighter squadron. On 29 May, 1975, the day before Saigon fell, Major Phung and a number of other VNAF pilots flew desperate missions to somehow stop NVA divisions surging around Saigon.

Betty Ann Olson. Nurse with Christian Missionary Alliance. Abducted during Tet 1968 attacks, she and other POWs, all civilian, were forced to march long distances. Her health deteriorated and she died on September 26, 1968 in an NVA camp in Cambodia

Father Nguyen Hoac Hoa. Father Hoa was a Catholic priest from China who fought the Japanese and Communists, and who eventually ended up with his parish in the remote reaches of Ca Mau province. Under his leadership, a zone of security was established in and around Binh Hung village. Members of American advisory elements held Father Hoa in the highest regard. Father Hoa died in a Taiwan monastery in 1989.

Dr. Eleanor Ardel Vietti, Archie Mitchell and Dan Gerber. All three were Christian missionaries working at the Ban Me Thuot Leprosarium in 1962. They were abducted at gunpoint and never seen again, remaining MIA to this day. Available evidence suggests they were thought to be American "spies" and were shot.

1st. Lt. Bernard J. Lovett, Adv. Tm 47, MAT 107, KIA 16 Oct, 1970. Hau Nghia Province.

Col. Jack Isler. Col. Isler worked with Col. Ngo The Linh. He died of natural causes recently; no other details available.

SFC Leslie Karnes. KIA, Kien Giang Province, 16 Feb 1971.

SSGT Karl L. Phillips. Sgt. Phillips served first in Laos working on White Star teams with the Hmong. He later served in RVN, Can Gio Dist., Gia Dinh Province. Date and circumstances of death unknown. His son, Paul Phillips, would like to contact anyone who served with his father. pPhillips206@insightbb.com

Sgt. Hugh G. Willard. KIA Dec 1967. Adv. Tm 91, Binh Duong Province, RVN.

Col. Ray Couch. Co Van to 5th ARVN Inf. Div. KIA 10 Feb 1970. Info: see website genhieu.com.

Col. Rex Russell Sage, Co Van to 23rd ARVN Inf. Div., Darlac Prov. Col. Sage was killed on 8 September 1968 when his helicopter malfunctioned and crashed. See website arlingtoncemetery.net/rrsage.htm

MSG Thomas Walter Barnard, 23rd ARVN Inf. Div. Adv. Tm. killed on 8 September 1968 while flying with Sr. Adv. Col. Rex Russel Sage. See website arlingtoncemetery.net/rrsage.htm

Major Anthony R. Bellamy, KIA 5 May, 1968. Co Van, 2/6 Cav.