

#29  
Autumn, 1996  
Mùa Thu  
Năm Bình Tý



# 29

Above: Member Joe West (5th from left), his CO Ursula (far left) and members of ARVN Armor Assn./Hội Thiết Giáp QLVNCH following Hội Thiết Giáp presentation of a memorial wreath at Việt Nam Veteran Memorial in Merced, California.

KLEI MRĂW MRANG *វង្សា ឌី ឌី*      XOV XWM TSHAM  
SITREP      BAO CĂO TÌNH HÌNH *ប្រយោជន៍ វង្សា ឌី ឌី*

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The SITREP is the quarterly publication of COUNTERPARTS/TƯỜNG HỮU ĐÔNG NAM Á, an association of those serving in any counterpart role, as part of their assigned duties, during the Indochina Wars of 1954-1975, and beyond. Full membership available to anyone serving in this capacity, in a military or civilian role, in what was perceived as an effort to halt militarist expansion in SE Asia. Associate memberships also available. Membership inquiries and correspondence: Ben Myers; P.O. Box 6019; Lake Worth, Florida; 33466-6019.

Happy Thanksgiving and Veterans' Day to all, and may those of the Jewish Faith have enjoyed a meaningful Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur.

Your Association rolls along, hitting some speed bumps now and then yet still signing on new members, and helping lost counterparts find each other. Negative developments came in the form of failure to stop forced repatriation from refugee camps, and congressional reluctance to pass HR 179, a non-binding resolution asking Hanoi to release religious leaders from prison.

Reunion, held in conjunction with ARVN Armor Assn., was written up in LA Times and San Jose Mercury News; both articles on following pages. 1997 reunion scheduled for weekend of 25-27 April, at Ft. Benning, Georgia, with Bob Gilbert offering to ramrod the event, with our appreciation and gratitude.

Finance Officer Bob Cunningham's annual report summary included herein. Thx to Bob for keeping our Kip, Riel, Dollars, and Dong counted.

Circumstances force resignation of three officers, and we are in need of people to fill XO, Adjutant and PIO slots. Help with Locator section also needed. Please give it some thought.

New Associate Member James Elliot is working on a documentary film on former Mobile Advisory Teams (MATs) and seeks more info from those who have been there/done that. Details on following pages.

Fire up the coffee pot and read on.....

LA TIMES  
3 JUL 96  
METRO  
SECTION

**WARRIORS TO REUNITE:** At a reunion in the county this week, more than 1,000 former U.S. military advisors will meet with the Vietnamese counterparts whom they advised during fighting that ended in 1975. B1

## Ex-Comrades in Arms Will Meet Again

By H.G. REZA  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

IRVINE—Over the last 28 years, Frank Norwood had often wondered about the South Vietnamese Army captain he advised during his 1968 combat tour.

He assumed that his counterpart, Capt. Le Tan Lao, did not survive the war and perished either on the battlefield or in a Communist prison camp after South Vietnam's defeat in 1975.

Earlier this year, Norwood was "shocked" to learn that Lao was alive and living in Minnesota. He obtained Lao's address and telephone number from a veterans' group and renewed their bond over the telephone.

The two former professional soldiers will be reunited this weekend when more than 1,000 former U.S. military advisors and their Vietnamese counterparts, also known by the military term "X-Rays," meet during a reunion at the Orange County Airport Hilton.

Please see ADVISORS on CONTINUED FROM A1

The annual meeting, which begins today and ends Saturday, marks the first time that South Vietnamese veterans have participated in the event, organized by Counterparts, a group of U.S. veterans who served as advisors with Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, or MACV, from 1964 to 1973.

"This is going to be the most emotional convention we've ever had," said Norwood, 56, of Katy, Texas.

"This time, the guys we fought with will be with us. This war is real, again."

In a telephone interview from his Minneapolis home, Lao, 57, said he arrived in the United States earlier this year after serving more than 20 years in a Communist prison camp.

"I won't get there until Friday, but I am excited about seeing Mr. Norwood again," Lao said. "It has

been a long time, and I never forgot about him."

Although the Army advisors' role in Vietnam is not as well known as that of the combat units like the 1st Cavalry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade, field advisors played a key role in the ground war, particularly at the "subsector," or district, level. A district was roughly equivalent to a U.S. county.

Working in teams of three or four enlisted men, usually commanded by a captain or major, U.S. advisors led, trained and lived in isolated camps with local South Vietnamese units called Popular and Regional Forces that were not part of the army. Those Vietnamese units seldom numbered more than 100, and it was not uncommon for Viet Cong and Communist sympathizers to infiltrate the ranks.

"The U.S. Army advisors served with great distinction in the dangerous and hostile circumstances to which they were constantly exposed . . . and often rallied their South Vietnamese units, saving them from destruction on the battlefield," wrote Shelby L. Stanton, a military historian in the Vietnam Order of Battle.

Because most field advisory teams were intimately familiar with their districts and many times knew the local Viet Cong by name, some teams were inevitably drawn into CIA-sponsored operations that even now remain classified.

The unique nature of the advisors' role—many Americans were also known by name to local Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army units—was illustrated in a chilling experience recalled by Norwood.

The troop of 22 armored personnel carriers commanded by Lao—part of the South Vietnamese Army's 4th Cavalry Regiment—had operated successfully around Tam Ky in numerous engagements with the Viet Cong. Too successfully, as it turned out.

"At some point, the VC told five

of the South Vietnamese soldiers they had to kill Lao and me, or they would kill [the soldiers'] families," said Norwood, who retired as a major in 1978 after 20 years in the Army. "They were supposed to lob grenades or shoot us during an enemy mortar attack, but Lao found out about it and prevented it."

While Norwood and Lao will have an opportunity to renew old acquaintances, others will never see their "X-Rays," many of whom died in the war or in Communist prison camps afterward.

Some South Vietnamese veterans like Cong Vo of Garden Grove also are looking forward to seeing their U.S. counterparts again.

But Vo, 54, will have to wait for another time because his advisor, John Ozaki of El Paso, Texas, will

not be able to attend. The two men have not seen each other since 1967 but began renewing old ties two months ago through letters.

In a letter to the veterans' group earlier this year, Vo asked for help in locating Ozaki. He noted that Ozaki, who retired from the Army as a lieutenant colonel and now lives in El Paso, was his advisor in I Corps for the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program—a propaganda effort by the U.S. military to get enemy soldiers to defect.

Vo, a former officer, arrived in the United States in 1990 after escaping a prison camp.

"I'm so sorry that I can't make the reunion," said Ozaki in a telephone interview. "Vo is a good man and was a good soldier. I'm so happy he came here. He had to destroy all of his photos when the war ended, so, I'm going to be

sending him photos from my album."

There is huge local interest among Vietnamese veterans in the reunion, and the Vietnamese media have reported a number of stories about the conference. A large number of Vietnamese veterans are expected to attend the conference.

U.S. advisors served with all branches of the South Vietnamese armed forces, but it was the Army field advisors, including those who served with Vietnamese infantry, airborne, armored and marine units, who experienced most of the combat.

U.S. veterans expected at the weekend reunion also served with other South Vietnamese units, including artillery, engineers, signal and support.

\*This subject ignited some interesting dialogue and conversation.

# A bond beyond time and war

## ■ Reunion: Former Vietnamese soldiers and their American advisers hold an emotional gathering in Irvine.

BY K. OANH HA  
Mercury News Staff Writer

7/7/96

IRVINE — For 23 years, Ben Myers was sure the Vietnamese major he had fought with and trained was dead.

When Myers learned in 1991 that his old friend was alive and living in Texas, he phoned immediately. But Nguyen Huu Ly hung up on him — not once, but three times in a row.

"The fourth time I tried, (Nguyen) finally said, 'I'll talk to you later. My heart hurts too much now,'" Myers, 66, recalled.

The pair finally met Tuesday — 28 years after Myers exchanged farewells with Nguyen on a dirt

airfield at Quang Ngai. Emotions so overwhelmed the two men that they simply shook hands, hugged and immediately retreated to their own rooms.

Many such reunions took place Saturday in Irvine between former American military advisers and the Vietnamese officers they had worked with. The reunions were sponsored by the San Jose-based Federation of Vietnamese Armor Cavalry Veterans Association, and the Counterparts Association, a group of former American advisers to Vietnam.

More than 200 men from around the country — and some coming from as far as France and Canada — gathered in Orange County to see friends they hadn't seen since the Vietnam War. Many American military advisers came hoping to learn the fate of Vietnamese men they sometimes depended on for survival. Still others came because they say it's the only time they are surrounded by people who truly understand them.

"Even though the war is over, the friendship is still there," said Hang Phong Cao, president of the See REUNION, Page 2B



Hang Phong Cao of San Jose, president of the Federation of Vietnamese Armor Cavalry Veteran Association, greets Phan Nguyen of Ohio. The pair had lost touch in 1974.

**'Even though the war is over, the friendship is still there.'**

— Hang Phong Cao

## Ex-Vietnamese soldiers, American advisers hold emotional gathering

### ■ REUNION

from Page 1B

San Jose-based group. Hang and 25 other San Jose residents drove to Irvine on Thursday for the reunion. It was the first time the San Jose group and the Counterparts Association coordinated a joint reunion to help people from the war meet.

"On the battlefield, we were always side by side," Hang, now 69, said. "We ate together, slept together and fought together. We're like brothers."

### Second emotional meeting

Van Han, an armor cavalry captain during the Vietnam War, escaped Vietnam by boat in 1979. The San Jose resident was reunited with his American adviser, Ray Battreal, for the second time Saturday. The two had a first emotional meeting four years ago at the last federation reunion.

"I never thought I'd see him again after the war," Van, 69, said. The pair worked together in 1965-66 in Tu Duc, outside of Saigon. "It's a very emotional and happy day for me."

### Intense experiences shared

The men say their friendships are still so strong, despite years of separation, because they shared such intense experiences.

"If he makes a mistake, you die. If you make a mistake, he dies. You depend on each other so much," Myers said, likening the relationship to those of Siamese twins. "We shared the same thing that nobody shared with me. He's the only one that knows what I've been through."

### False perceptions smashed

Military advisers who were sent to the war usually found themselves the only American among large

**'If he makes a mistake, you die. If you make a mistake, he dies. You depend on each other so much. We shared the same thing that nobody shared with me. He's the only one that knows what I've been through.'**

— Former military adviser Ben Myers

troops of South Vietnamese soldiers. Many said they came to Vietnam with false perceptions of the men they were sent to train and advise.

"I was told that the Vietnamese would not fight, that they were cowards," recalled Myers, who now lives in Palm Beach and helps track down American and Vietnamese pairs who worked together. "The first time I was out in combat, I found out somebody was lying. They were so brave, I was sure they'd get me killed."

Nguyen, Myers' Vietnamese counterpart, had been wounded 17 times by the time Saigon, the South Vietnamese capital, fell on April 30, 1975.

### Advisers often on other end

Often, the advisers were the ones who received training.

"He had more fighting experience than I did," Myers said. "He was the one who was keeping me alive."

Though there were happy reunions of old comrades Saturday, disappointment and uncertainty also lingered. Many of the men are still unable to establish contact with those they had worked with.

Many came hoping to end the years of wondering — even if it meant verifying a death.

### 'I want to know'

Jerry Van Wagner, now 64 and living in Medford, Ore., made the trip down to see if anyone knew what happened to Capt. Bui The Minh. Wagner was sent to train a Vietnamese infantry battalion in

Vietnam's central highlands in 1963. The men developed a close relationship, buying presents for one another's children that Christmas. Wagner's tour of duty ended the following year, and he has not heard from Bui since.

"Even if he's dead, I want to know," Wagner said, eyeing an old black-and-white snapshot of Bui in uniform. "I've been wondering for a long time now."

SUSIE CHU — MERCURY NEWS

DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECT New Associate Member James Elliot now laying ground work for film project titled 'Cố Vấn', with intent of taking a more objective look at Việt Nam, the war, and the people who served together. Primary focus will be on Mobile Advisory Teams (MATs) though contributions from non-MAT folks, and Counterparts, is eagerly sought. Members such as Terry Turner, Mike Martin, Ed Abraham, Joe West, Ben Myers, and no small number of others, have corresponded with Jim, and/or met him at the reunion, discussing the subject at length, and in depth, endorsing the project. Jim's primary need at the moment is to interview former MAT people, former MAT Counterparts, as well as non-MAT advisors, all of whom would like to have their story told as a welcome counterpoint to what Jim calls the seemingly 'permanently misunderstood history' of Viet Nam. Those expressing an interest and willing to support Jim's effort receive an update newsletter, which includes a list of others aiding the cause.

All who met Jim are convinced of his sincerity, and responded accordingly, sitting down for on-camera interviews, providing names of others who may be interested, and submitting letters of endorsement. Pitch in, and lend support to this worthy effort. It is highly unlikely that Dan Rather or Peter Jennings will attempt such an honest depiction of Viet Nam, and of you. Write/call Jim at:

James Elliot  
Night Train Films  
285 East California Blvd., #108  
Pasadena, California 91106  
818 578-0622 (Phone and Fax).

Additional thanks to Jim for including COUNTERPARTS/TƯỚNG HỮU ĐÔNG NAM A information and membership form in his newsletter.

FINANCE REPORT Reunion, with lower attendance than expected, cost us \$3,615.34, partially offset by receipts of \$2,812.25, leaving a net cost of \$803.09. Additional receipts are expected from hotel refund. As of 16 Oct 96, our account stands at \$4,760.54. Thanks to Bob Cunningham for his arduous work in counting the beans, and thanks to all members who have kept current with dues, and to those who have sent in donations along with their dues. Your timeliness and reliability, and generosity, are greatly appreciated, enabling this Association to continue its work.

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NEW MEMBERS/MỚI NHẬP NGŨ:

\*Le Ba Khiêu  
CORDS/Quảng Ngãi  
1030 Bayside Cove E.  
Newport Beach, California 92660

Lawrence F. Sagi  
USN, Coastal Grp 12, '70-'71  
65 E. Palomar St.  
Chula Vista, California 91911

\*James M. Elliot  
285 E. California Blvd., #108  
Pasadena, California 91106  
Associate/Film Producer

Maj. Richard Webster, USA<sup>Ret.</sup>, Ret.  
Tm 49/MAT III-87; '68-'69  
1019 W. Lafayette Ave.  
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

Gregory G. Lutes  
CAG #2, '70  
13921 Tustin E. Dr., #74  
Tustin, California 92680

Howard C.H. Feng  
Associate/Archivist, VN War Data  
8102 Lakecrest Dr.  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20770

New Members/Mới Nhập Ngủ(cont.)

Col. Steven M. Butler, Ret  
Tm 90/Intel '68-'69  
2531 Crestline Ct.  
Lawrence, Kansas 66047

John K. 'Jack' Francis  
SA, 4th Cav, Tm 1 '66-'67  
235 Christian Woods Dr., SE  
Conyers, Georgia 30208

William M. Perkins  
SF/'66-'67, Tm 21 '71-'72  
785 N. 200 E.  
Tremonton, Utah 84337

Richard D. Payne  
USMC CAP  
#63360, P.O. Box 1000  
Crowley, Colorado 81034

Herbert J. Horton  
Tm 22, '65  
1 Larry Lane  
Riverside, Rhode Island 02915

John R. Edwards Jr.  
Tm 36, MAT-II-37  
16900 S. Tamiami Trl.  
Fort Myers, Florida 33908

Tran Phuoc Du  
CO, Naval Log Spt Cmd, Đà Nẵng  
500 SW 148th St., #124  
Seattle, Washington 98166

Mary E. (Meyer) Nguyen  
Nurse Adv  
6202 Glenmoor Dr.  
Garland, Texas 75043

Michael W. 'Bick' Bickford  
1/7 Marine Regt, Civil Affairs(S-5)  
4414 A W. Rio Grande Ave  
Kennewick, Washington 99336

Patrick W. Naughton  
Tm 99, 1/49th  
94-063 Anania Dr., #127  
Miliani, Hawaii 96789

Robert C. Holm  
USMC CAG 1-3-6, 1-3-9  
29862 White Otter Lane  
Laguna Niguel, California 92677

Welcome aboard Ladies and Gentlemen. Your memberships are welcome and appreciated.

From MACV OBSERVER, 7 Jan 72:



Once armed only with battered weapons of World War II vintage, RF/PF trainees are now equipped with the most modern small arms and automatic weapons. Here a team works with the M-60 machinegun.

## ARVN NCO Academy turns out professionals

NHA TRANG - Since the Vietnam War involves essentially small-unit operations, the importance of training confident, aggressive and capable Vietnamese NCOs can't be overemphasized.

Since 1958 the training of effective South Vietnamese NCOs has been handled by the RVNAF National NCO Academy located here along the white-sand beaches of the South China Sea. The school conducts two courses: an eight-week course for experienced NCOs who have never attended school and a 12-week course for high school graduates who have completed advanced training. Currently the school, with the help of a handful of American advisers, is training approximately 2,500 to 4,000 NCOs per month.

In addition to classroom leadership training, students receive practical leadership experience on a daily basis. Through a system of rotating the students with the chain of command, each student serves as a squad and platoon leader.

According to Colonel Joe W. Finley, American senior adviser to the school, the NCOs are trained to appreciate the problems faced by lower-ranking enlisted men. For example, after a rigorous training day, NCO candidates pull guard duty and seldom do NCOs sleep in barracks, living instead under field conditions. The training is designed to make the NCOs more sensitive to the problems and needs of lower-ranking enlisted men.

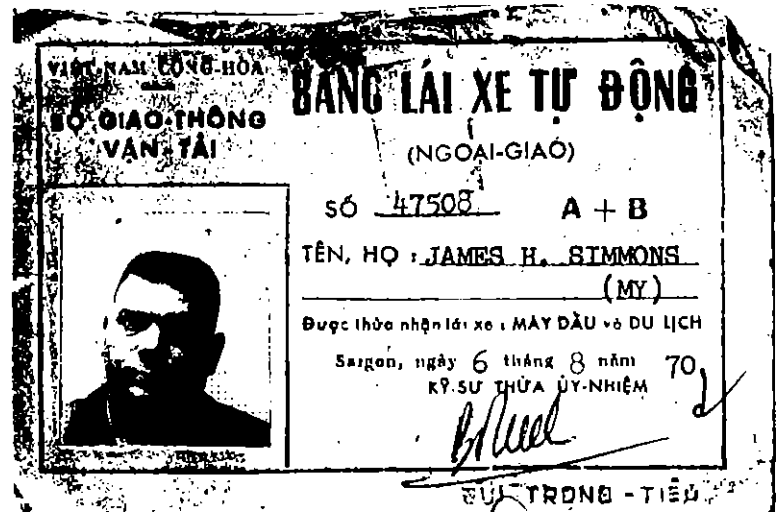
Currently, American advisers play a role in the operation of the school, but the ultimate goal is to transfer the entire responsibility for the operation of the academy to the Vietnamese.

Công văn đến/In the Letter Box....

From Jim Simmons ...

'Anyone remember these? Maybe someone might remember me from SEAL Tm, Base Ops, at Monkey Mtn, attached to MACSOG, with OP-35 and OP-36 as communicator.'

At right is Jim's VN driver's license. If you remember Jim, who goes by the handle 'Dick', he's at 106 Huron Ave.; Egg Harbor TWP; New Jersey; 08234



From Gary Cummings: 'For the life of me I don't know why I found myself thinking about the 'Charlie Nation Cookbook' published by the 'Tabasco' people in 1966, and available in VN in 1966. I remember eating a lot more rice than C-rations, but once in a while the helicopter guys would kick out a spare case. Anyway, the booklet had recipes for improving C-rations with Tabasco. On a whim, I wrote the McIlhenny Company to see if any old booklets were laying around. They are. For anyone who fondly remembers Battlefield Tufu(chicken with peanut butter sauce) or Pork Mandarin(or not so fondly, Creamed Turkey on Toast), they invite you to request a copy from:

McIlhenny Company  
Dept. CRB  
Avery Island, Louisiana 70513.

No charge. They may include their Unofficial MRE recipe Booklet, even if you don't ask.'

Ed.-No one yet knows if Tabasco Sauce, or anything, could ever improve the taste(?) of that fine selection affectionately known as 'ham and mothers'. GI/Marine humor insists that MRE(Officially: Meals, ready to eat) really stands for 'Meals rejected by Ethiopians'. Today's equivalent to ham and mothers, from an authoritative source, is corned beef. This gustatory delight is called 'Alpo' by troops today. Thanks for the info Gary, and for reviving some old memories.

From Tom Pentecost: 'Please print the accompanying notice, describing an effort by former POW and CMH recipient to initiate a class action suit on behalf of retired military over 65 who feel the government is renegeing on promises.' Mail to Tom. Here it is:

**NOTICE TO MILITARY RETIRED**

Medal of Honor recipient George E. 'Bud' Day, an attorney, has filed a Class Action law suit with the Federal Court in Pensacola, Florida, stating the government is guilty of breach of contract to Military Retired over 65 years by placing them in Medicare. The Court is also asked to reimburse us for the money deducted from our retired pay to pay for Medicare.

This suit was filed on behalf of all veterans over age 65 who served at least 20 years. To join this Class Action, please send a copy of your DD-214 and a check for \$100.00. Contact point is Counterparts Member Tom Pentecost(Adv Tm 15/Hoi An

Penecost letter(cont.)..

Quang Nam, '69-'70). You are invited to join us. For more info:

George E. Day, P.A.  
32 Beal Parkway SW  
Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32548  
\*lawsuit@emeraldcoast.com\*  
904 664-6327  
904 664-5139

Ed.-Interested members invited to spread the word and contact Tom, at George Day address above, for more info and to support the effort.

From Jim Sardone: 'Enclosed is copy of my letter to local newspaper; the wording should sound familiar.' Thanks to Jim for taking initiative and writing. We all need to do more of it. Jim also sent in information on a prospective new member who was featured in a magazine article(thx again Jim), as well as excerpted text from a book on Albert Speer, which essentially equates Hitler's putrid Nazis with US involvement in VN(from ALBERT SPEER, HIS BATTLE WITH TRUTH, by Gitta Sereny..see p. 244). This is all too common, with too many authors failing to realize that there are great parallels between Ho Chi Minh and Hitler. Many of them. Were either the former Saigon government or the US involvement perfect? No. Yet a thorough examination, using common criteria, will show that our side was, one way or another, superior in all respects-positive ones that is. Of course, this applies to the people doing the job, and not to the druids and shamans in Washington, whose mismanagement constitutes the worst case of military/political malpractice in recorded history. It behooves all of us to examine our children's and grandchildren's textbooks, and offer to present a reasoned rebuttal to the absurd conventional wisdom which seems to have hypnotized everyone. Hats off to Jim for writing his letter.

### **U.S. should keep promise to Vietnamese fighters**

As a Vietnam veteran and advisor to the Vietnamese military, I want to thank you for publishing the L.A. Times editorial, "Vietnamese ex-commandos deserve compensation." These commandos were hired, trained, supplied and functioned as U.S. employees, and were not part of the Republic of Vietnam military per se. They operated at the behest and discretion of the United States government. The U.S. Department of Justice says these people are owed nothing by the U.S. government and are not special cases for emigration. The issue is a simple one: Are we going to keep our word?

— JAMES H. SARDONE  
Harrison  
NEW YORK

Peter Scott sent long letter describing his attendance at a Khmer Krom(Cambodians living in Mekong Delta) convention in Toronto, along with a hundred or so others. John Strait, another US advisor, was also there, and was reunited with his old friend Chau Riep. Peter said the convention was followed by late night discussions, the content of which was amplified by beer and cognac. Peter also sent the text of a speech he presented, citing his admiration for Khmer Krom tenacity and bravery in the face of NVA infiltration into the lower Delta from 1969 and on, a judgement shared by John Strait:

'I would put those Khmer Krom companies up against any light infantry companies in the world. They are loyal, brave, disciplined, and motivated.'

Peter closed out his speech by mentioning his upcoming book on the Khmer Krom(DON'T SPILL THE MASTER'S TEA, Naval Institute Press), expressing the hope that other Americans can learn the lessons of courage, compassion, loyalty and dignity, much as he and other CỎ Vâns learned firsthand decades ago. (Send SASE for copy of Pete's

speech: Bill Laurie; 1462 W. University; Mesa, Arizona; 85201)

Good show Peter.

Col. H.W. 'Bill' Lange writes of his continuing search for info on RF/PF (Dia Phuong Quan/Nghia Quan) and book-in-progress. Bill intends to track RF/PF development from their inception, tracing their numbers, weapons, extent of air/artillery support, and detailed information on RF/PF combat role and capability. Anyone who had anything to do w/RF and PF urged to contact Bill:

Col. H.W. 'Bill' Lange  
USA Ret.  
9000 Belvoir Woods Parkway, #302  
Fort Belvoir, Virginia 22060.

Please help Bill out w/this project.

Darryl Nelson sends thanks to all who responded to his petition request for an Audie Murphy commemorative stamp, adding he received more support from COUNTERPARTS/TUONG HUU ĐONG NAM A members than any other group.

Mike Peterson sent note to reunion attendees, expressing his regrets at not being there, along with a case of Oregon wine, which was enjoyed by all who partook of same. Thanks Mike, the wine was good, but next time bring it in person: it'd have been better had you been there.

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D.C. LIAISON After his term as commander, Grant McClure volunteered to stay on as D.C. Liaison Officer, a de facto role he had assumed, dealing with the Việt Nam Veterans Coalition, The Montagnard Foundation, Lao-Hmong Human Rights groups, the Coalition for a Free Viet Nam, Boat People Rescue Committee, and other similar associations HQed in the D.C. area. Grant also initiated what we hope will become an annual COUNTERPARTS/TUONG HUU ĐONG NAM A tradition: a Memorial Day ceremony, at the Wall, commemorating all Counterparts who paid the supreme sacrifice. Grant's annual report is summarized as follows:

1. Attended dedication ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery of memorial plaque for RVN Rangers and US Cố Vấn, November 1995.
2. December, 1995: Attended Montagnard discussion regarding organizational matters and mission objectives.
3. April, 1996: Invited to attend Conference of Việt Nameese leaders in D.C., in conjunction with International Committee for a Free Việt Nam. Primary objective was to create a formal document listing economic and democratic changes which would help Việt Nam emerge as a functioning nation with respect for basic democratic principles.
4. May, 1996: Joined with Mr. Chuck Printz, a UN-based Human Rights attorney (with whom Grant has worked before) in a memorial tribute to the late William Colby, whom Grant had previously met at an ICFVN conference in 1992, and who was the keynote speaker at our 1995 30 April anniversary salute to our SE Asian allies.
5. 1995-1996: Yearlong involvement with Boat People Rescue Committee, to include meetings and discussion with State Department people



D.C. LIAISON (cont.) and Human Rights advocates.

- 6. Sept 96: Attended, along with member Roy Russell, Montagnard Cultural Festival in Charlotte, N.C.
- 7. Began preliminary plans for dedication of a commemorative plaque and tree to be installed in Arlington National Cemetery, honoring Hmong Counterparts, who are virtually unknown to the U.S. public. Early discussion of this subject well received by Gen. Vang Pao, Gen. Long Le, and COUNTERPARTS/TUONG HUU ĐONG NAM A Distinguished member and author, Dr. Jane Hamilton-Merritt. Proposal would involve paperwork battle w/Federal authorities, and the usual logistical obstacles. Cost remains another factor, w/ARVN Ranger-Co Van event coming in at about \$2,000.00, indicating a probable expense range for this proposal. Discussion and prelim planning continue. Possible ceremony date: Memorial Day, 1997.
- 8. November, 1996: Attended National Việt Nam Veterans Coalition meeting and breakfast in D.C. The Coalition is an umbrella group of VN Vet organizations.

We are grateful to Grant for the considerable time, effort, and pocket change he has expended in his role as D.C. Liaison Officer.

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Left: QLVNCH HẢI QUÂN/RVN Navy Patch, OK IV/IV Corps Riverine Forces.  
 Right: Patch in need of ID. Red, bordered in black, yellow letters and numbers. Panther has green eyes, red nose/mouth, white fangs/claws. 'Beo Đen' is 'Black Panther'. Thanks to Clement V. Kelly Jr., once again, for use of reproductions from his Việt Nam Insignia Collectors' Newsletter, an excellent bi-monthly publication w/abundance of info. Subscriptions(statside) \$15.00/year, from Clem at 501 West 5th Avenue; Covington, Louisiana; 70433. Checks payable to Clem, not VNICN. \$20.00 airmail for overseas. If patch can be IDed, please forward info to Clem.

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Addresses for Any Service Member, Operation Joint Endeavor/Bosnia:

Land Forces: Any Service Member	Shipboard: -Same-
Operation Joint Endeavor	-Same-
APO AE 09397	FPO AE 09398

Write. Looks like they'll be there longer than first suggested.

'Politics is the gentle art of getting votes from the poor and campaign funds from the rich, by promising to protect each from the other.'

-Oscar Ameringer

'There are worse crimes than burning books. One is them is not reading them.'

-Joseph Brodsky

'An infallible method of conciliating a tiger is to allow oneself to be devoured.'

-Konrad Adenauer

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LOCATOR As mentioned, we need some more staffing in a reorganized Locator section. Workload divided up so perhaps no more than ten hours a month would be required. This is one of our MOST important functions. Please contact Ben Myers (address on masthead) and advise of your interest.

Locator requests:

Vu Van Giai	looking for	Col. _____ Landrud 2nd Regt, <del>D</del> ông Hà, 1967; I Corps, G-1, 1968. Col. Landrud was POW in WW II
	and,	Deputy Province Senior Advisor, under the late Warren Parker, Quảng Nam, 1965. a Mr. _____ Sheibaum, later believed to have served w/USEMB, Italy
Hoang Van Tuyen	looking for	Col. Robert E. Ley, Armor Officer serving as PSA, Quảng Nam Prov.
Huynh Khue	looking for	Sgt. Donald Rabbit, Tm 37, Phan Thiết, 1970
Mrs. Nguyen Thi Hoa	looking for	Col. _____ Gillette and Sgt. Jason Holme, SF camps B-13/Ban Mê Thuột and Pleiku.

Mrs./Ba Hoa's request forwarded to Special Forces Assn., while our own efforts continue. Once again Ladies and Gentlemen, we need some help w/Locator work. A few hours a month ought to do it. Think about it. Ooops, one more...

Le Minh Thanh	looking for	Capt. Campbell and Lt. _____ Tucker, C <sup>o</sup> V <sup>ũ</sup> n in H <sup>ội</sup> An, Quảng Nam, '66-'68.
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Someday we'd like to set up an in-country Locator office, political conditions permitting.

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'Now...they resolved to go back to their own land; because the years have had a kind of emptiness when we spend too many of them on a foreign shore. But... if we do return, we find that the native air has lost its invigorating quality, and that life has shifted its reality to the spot where we have deemed ourselves only temporary residents. ...Thus, between two countries, we have none at all... It is wise, therefore, to come back betimes...or never.'

-Nathaniel Hawthorne in THE MARBLE FAUN

MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

Kit Carson Scout \_\_\_\_\_ Thiet

Hmong 'Backseaters' U Va Lee  
known only as 'Moonface'  
known only as 'Scar'

Post-war:

Sgt. Major Thomas W. Tobin  
LTG Samuel L. Myers

'I think I will be killed someday, but before I am, perhaps I can do some things to help my country become a place where people do not live in fear.'

\_\_\_\_\_ Thiet

(As quoted in STRANGE WAR, STRANGE STRATEGY, by USMC Gen. Lewis Walt, p. 59.)

Note to new members: Our Members in Memoriam Roster lists all Counterparts who were KIA, died in 'reeducation' camps, or have passed on from natural causes. Mike McMunn is Archivist for this roster, and is going above and beyond in assembling any and all information on as many individuals as possible, to include personal recollections, book citations, photos, etc. All members are urged to send all pertinent info to Mike at:

2310 Newberry St.  
Williamsport, Pennsylvania  
17701 ...or:  
mike@pennet.net

Please help Mike make sure our Members in Memoriam Roster is more than a simple list of names. In addition, we have our own 'traveling wall', an expandable foldout wood paneled 'wall' with brass name plates for each Member In Memoriam. We'll try to have this at our next reunion.

REMEMBER THEM

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POW/MIA Beneath apparent calm of minimal news coverage, and a 19 September widely ignored POW/MIA Recognition Day, there was no shortage of continued dispute and the familiar levying of accusations regarding malfeasance or worse. The National League of Families condemned Clinton in a press release, saying he showed a 'total lack of integrity' in stating POW accountability is the 'guiding principle' of US dealings with Hanoi. Controversy continues over the case of Baron 52, an EC-47 aircraft shot down over Laos on 5 Feb 73, nine days after the Paris Peace Accords(Sic) were signed. The case was 'unresolved' until 27 Mar 96, when 23 bone fragments were deemed proof that the entire crew had been KIA, which 'resolved' the investigation. Others were not happy, citing an abundance of information, to include voice intercepts, that crew members had been captured. A petition to reopen the Baron 52 investigation is being circulated by : Our Forgotten Brothers; c/o Sharon R. Barnett; 7025 Horton; Overland Park, Kansas; 66204 (913 432-3059). Call/write for more info and/or copy of the petition.

Meanwhile, former POW Michael Benge circulated a letter describing the activities of Cuban 'advisors', who beat and tortured US, and presumably other allied, POWs. Benge cites a statement by other OIAF Col.

POW/MIA(cont.) Donald 'Digger' Odell that two US POWs were not returned because they were too badly beaten by Cuban interrogators, nicknamed 'Fidel', 'Chico', and 'Pancho'. POW Jack Pomar also saw a POW who had been literally beaten to shreds, was taken away and never seen again.

Benge says these individuals violated accepted international standards for treatment of POWs, and should therefore be tried before an international tribunal, and that Hanoi should divulge their true identities or otherwise be considered as not 'fully cooperating' and subject to suspension of further diplomatic/economic ties with the US.

Elsewhere, former Congressman Robert K. Dornan requested a GAO study of misused US funding for POW/MIA search efforts in VN, citing information that as much as one-third of the \$11.2 million spent could not be accounted for, or had been blatantly wasted. An earlier research effort by the San Jose Mercury News asserted US-owned vehicles, maintained at US expense, are rented to tourists, that billable \$30.00/day wages paid for labor greatly exceed the market rate of \$2.00, that US funds paid to reimburse farmers for crop interruption are siphoned off by cadre, and that the US pays an exorbitant rate to rent Hanoi Defense Ministry helicopters. Total US spending in VN, from 1992-1995: \$33.7 million. No public word if any investigation has been initiated, or with what results.

Possible policy inbreeding comes in form of dual roles played by a number of people involved with POW/MIA matters, and/or conflicting roles played by spouses/friends. Senator John Kerry's staff assistant on POW/MIA questions is/was Frances Zwenig, formerly an active 'anti-war' organizer at Duke University in the early 1970s. Zwenig served as Chief of Staff of the Select Committee on POWs, and also met with Hanoi leaders. Later, she 'associated' herself with the US/Viet Nam Trade Council, along with Deborah DeYoung, another former Select Committee staffer. Also, the wife of Senator Tom Harkin, himself an advocate of expanded US/VN relations, is President of the Overseas Private Investment Insurance Corporation, whose primary mission is guaranteeing US investments overseas, which of course includes VN. VN does not yet meet criteria for OPIC coverage, being in violation of some international labor laws, yet a waiver can be granted by the President. As would be expected, some have raised conflict of interest questions.

More than 400 documents, totaling 1,400 pages, have been posted on Internet by the P.O.W. Network of Skidmore, Missouri; all are declassified US Govt. documents. Site is accessible at:

<http://client.msc-net.com/pownet/pownet.htm>.

A thorough compendium of POW/MIA info and press clippings is available from:

Heart of Illinois POW/MIA Assn.  
Joe Schott, Membership Chairman  
2507 Cherry Lane  
Pekin, Illinois 61554.

A typical 70 pp. newsletter is received 5-6 times/year, for the very reasonable cost of \$6.00/year.

Most recent news from Hanoi is find of 'newly declassified' documents which are aiding in ongoing search for remains. No mention as to why these documents were only recently found and made available to US agencies operating in VN.

CAPTIVE WARRIORS

# CAPTIVE WARRIORS

A VIETNAM POW'S STORY



POW/MIA(cont.)...POW memoir, CAPTIVE WARRIORS, BY Col. Sam Johnson(USAF, Ret.) and Jan Winebrenner, recounts Col. Johnson's 7 years as a guest of Hanoi's hospitality suites. Deemed lacking in 'progressiveness', Col. Johnson and several others were accorded special treatment, stuffed into tiny cubicles, and subjected to the now familiar treatments of leg irons, malnutrition, and torture. Story tells not only of Col. Johnson's ordeal, but also of the war of wills waged against Hanoi captors. Price is probably in \$30.00 neighborhood, available from Texas A & M Press, College Station Texas; 77843-4354, or call: 1-800-826-8911. They have several other VN books in print: CROSS-WINDS, the Air Force's Setup in VN, by Earl H. Tilford; SAPPERS IN THE WIRE, The Life and Death of Firebase Mary Ann, by Keith William Nolan; THE UNDETECTED ENEMY, French and US Miscalculations at Dien Bien Phu, by John R. Nordell; A VERY SHORT WAR, the Mayaguez and the Battle of Koh Tang, by John F. Guilmartin; SINGING THE VIET NAM BLUES,

Songs of the Air Force in Viet Nam; and MORE THAN A SOLDIER'S WAR, Pacification in Viet Nam, by our own Edward P. Metzner. Texas A & M Press is to be commended for publishing these titles. Thx to J.C. Fischer for this info.

Additional POW/MIA questions: Does anyone know anything about the more than 200,000 Hoi Chanh who presumably were recaptured by Hanoi after 1975? Little has been written on this subject, and few have any knowledge of surviving Hoi Chanh either here in US or still in VN. It is certain some survived, yet paucity of evidence suggests that few did. 200,000 is a lot of people. It may be easier for native Southern Hoi Chanh to blend back into the hamlets and urban woodwork, as opposed to Northern Hoi Chanh who would have no family, no home hamlet/city, etc. This subject needs to be examined. Anyone having any information on this invited to submit same to Editor Bill Laurie (1462 W. University; Mesa, Arizona; 85201) for publication in future SITREPs.

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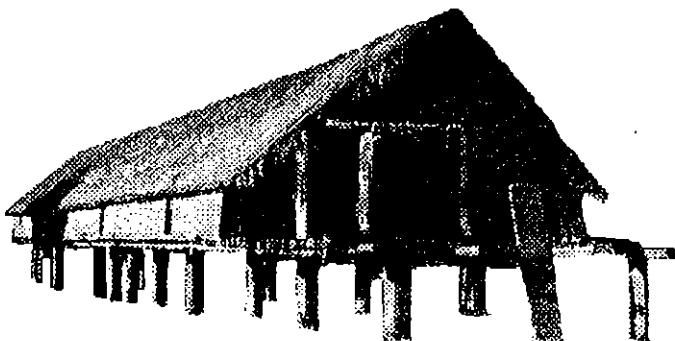
'War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse.

A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing he cares about more than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.'

-John Stuart Mill

(Thx to Ed Metzner for sending in this quote.)

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MONTAGNARD/DEGA Reunion attendees enjoyed, and extend thanks for, Mike Little's slide show of the VN/Central Highlands trip undertaken by Mike and his CO Marion last year. Mike and Marion's presentation was impressive and inspirational, given their unremitting determination to help out friends, in the face of bureaucratic and public indifference, both in US and VN. Mike and Marion

co-authored a 95 pp. book, w/color photos, titled TWO WOMEN...ONE DUCK, recounting their experiences, in the Highlands as well as in Saigon and Qui Nhon. Cover page has mesmerizing and enchanting color photo of Qui Nhon harbor at dawn, capturing the seemingly only-in-VN mystical and spellbinding beauty. Copies of TWO WOMEN can be obtained from

Montagnard Foundation  
P.O. Box 17064  
Spartanburg, S.C., 29301

or:

Mike and Marion Little  
18 Argente Dr.  
Mission Viejo, California 92692

Asking price is \$3.00 for postage only, but it would be a nice and appropriate gesture to send \$10.00, to cover publishing/printing costs as well as make a small donation to the Montagnard Foundation. If ordering from Mike, make checks payable to Mike and Marion; if from Montagnard Foundation, payable to MFI. Good book. Good cause.

Hats off to General Coactive Montagnard Assn. (GCMA) for coming to aid of Hip Ksor, a Dega cultural and literary figure, and ten-year inmate of 'reeducation' camps, who arrived in US in late 1995. Bureaucrats being what and who they are, Ksor was settled in Memphis, with a Dega population of zero, as opposed to the Carolinas, where most Dega live and are able to assist each other in making the transition to US life. GCMA and Lutheran Family Services stepped in, and were able to move Hip Ksor and his family to Raleigh, N.C., this past summer. No word as to whether Robert McNamara is now running Immigration and Naturalization Office.

Highland Assistance Project's Kay Reibold made two VN trips in 1996, attempting to coordinate and organize efforts to help the Highland people. Some progress made. Kay reports a leprosy clinic will be built in Gia Lai (formerly Quảng Đức and parts of adjoining provs.), a clinic in Khánh Hòa, establishment of scholarships for Dega at the University of Ban Mê Thuột, and continuation of clothing/medical/educational programs in the Highlands. Discussions also took place w/US Charge d'Affairs Desaix Anderson regarding obstructions confronted by HAP, Human Rights, and immigration problems to reunite separated Dega families. Anderson is quoted as saying that US govt. is now (Now????... now??) aware of these issues. Hey, what's twenty years in the grand scheme of things huh?

While media folks and other ill-informed people applaud progressiveness of Hanoi's cooperation w/HAP and other groups, they might first consider these words from a Bahnar now working w/leprosy patients:

'Before 1975, the Protestant church in the Highlands had leprosy clinics in Pleiku, Kontum and Ban Mê Thuột. But after 1975, the centers were closed, and all leprosy patients went back to their old villages.'

In sum, the leprosy program has been set back more than twenty years, and is only now being reestablished. Looks like 'People's Peace(sic) is about as deceitful as People's War.

MFI newsletter, 'The Longhouse' reports a Hanoi English language publication, ETHNIC MINORITIES OF VIET NAM can be obtained for \$15.00 from:

Global Directions  
58 Genebern Way  
San Francisco, California 94112  
Landline/SDT: 415 333-3800

Being an 'official' publication, it is no doubt larded with subliminal propaganda, as all such documents are, but it should be interesting nonetheless. Member review desired/welcome. Send to Editor.

MONTAGNARD/DEGA(cont.)

Addresses you may want to keep on hand for more info:

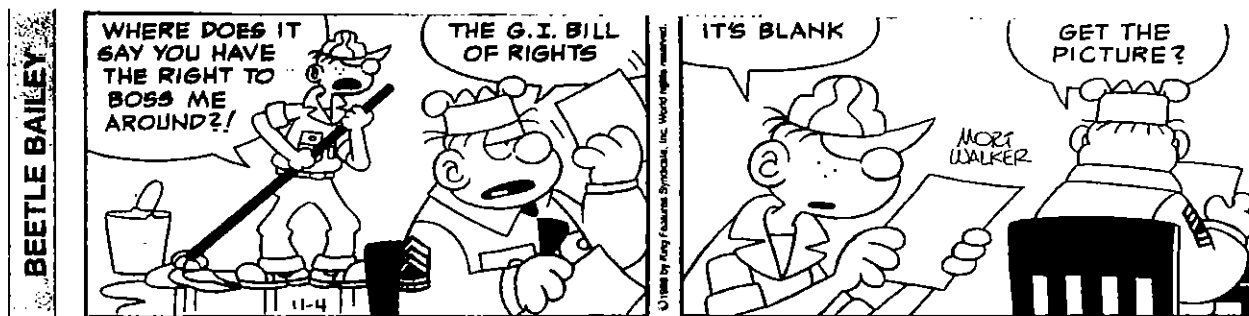
GCMA  
Rt. 1, Box 296-B  
Brevard, N.C. 28712

Highlands Assistance Project  
Attn: Kay Reibold  
Lutheran Family Services  
505 Oberline Road  
Raleigh, N.C. 27605  
Landline/SDT: 919 832-2620

And...Montagnard Foundation t-shirts available. Front has two longhouses w/young Dega girl in foreground. MFI logo over heart. \$20.00 from:

Montagnard Foundation; P.O. Box 17064; Spartanburg, S.C.; 29301.

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MEMBERSHIP INFO: Our preaddressed dues mailers worked extremely well last February, yet some have still failed to renew. We would like to be able to continue mailing to everyone, but cannot, in fairness to dues paying members, continue to carry those who have not stayed current. IF your copy of this SITREP has a colored dot on it, please remit dues so that we may continue to have the privilege of keeping you as an active member. Please stay current. Your dues have enabled us to bring many long-lost friends together, and put together an association of people who may not fit in anywhere else. If in doubt on amount, check w/Ben Myers(address on letterhead). Your membership is valued. Your membership is important. Many thx to all staying current, and advising Ben of address and/or area code changes. To those with a colored dot/behind in dues: we want you to stay with us; we appreciate and all benefit from your membership. Please send in dues and stay on board.

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AUTHOR ASSISTANCE REQUEST: Michael Lee Lanning, author of THE ONLY WAR WE HAVE, COMPANY COMMANDER, INSIDE THE LRRPs, INSIDE FORCE RECON, and VIET NAM IN FILM, is writing another book on snipers. Lee is asking for any/all help with: 'war stories, training memories, operations reports, related documents of U.S. ARVN, VC, NVA snipers'. Anything/everything. Mike's books have helped set the record straight(to extent the wall of goo of ignorance can be dissolved) on VN. We all owe him a debt, and can help pay part of it here. Anyone w/info, experiences, etc.:

Michael Lee Lanning; 350 Monte Vista Rd.; Phoenix, Arizona; 85004.

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PREVIEW Next SITREP has info on reprint of THE ADVISOR, by member John Cook; heartwarming tsele of reunited counterparts; full shopping list of COUNTERPARTS/TUONG HUU ĐÔNG NAM Á Village Market goodies/books; updated/expanded reunion plans; blueprint for upgrading our Humanitarian Projects; and more. Stay tuned.

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