



# COUNTERPARTS<sup># 36</sup>

## Tương Hữu Đông Nam Á

### SITREP

Volume IV

Issue 1

Summer, 2001

## Vietnam Conference Focuses on Role of Advisors and Counterparts

By

Ken Jacobsen

"*The Advisory Effort and the Armed Forces of The Republic of Vietnam*" was the theme of this year's Annual Conference held by the Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University in Lubbock Texas.

The three day event began with a Reception on Thursday, April 19 featuring the dedication of the new Zumwalt Collection recently given to the Center's Vietnam Archives by the late Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt's family. The former Chief of Naval Operations also distinguished himself as Commander Naval Forces Vietnam (COMNAVFORV) and was one of the Vietnam Center's founding Board of Directors.

On Friday, *Counterparts* member Dr. James D. Reckner, Director of The Vietnam Center, formally opened the conference. Dr. Reckner recalled his own experience as a Naval Advisor and cited the unique role that Advisors had played in the war. His remarks were followed by a panel discussion on "*Early Advisory Experiences.*"

Participants in this and subsequent panels included representatives of the civilian academic community, The US Military Academy, The Army Command and Staff College, and the American Military University, as well as many former Advisors and *Counterparts* members, both US and Vietnamese.

Saturday's Luncheon that day was highlighted by the presence of Guest Speaker Colonel Roger Donlon, USA (Ret.), the first Congressional Medal of Honor recipient of the Vietnam War. His inspiring account of his own Vietnam experience reminded us again that regardless of domestic politics, the war produced many men like Colonel Donlon, who showed America that courage and the principle "Duty, Honor, Country" was a way of life.

At the Conference Banquet that evening, LTC James G. Zumwalt spoke of his father's continuing commitment to the men and women who had served with him in Southeast Asia and recalled Admiral Zumwalt's enthusiasm for the work being done by the Vietnam Center. LTC Zumwalt also discussed his father's long fight for Vietnam Veterans exposed to Agent ORANGE.

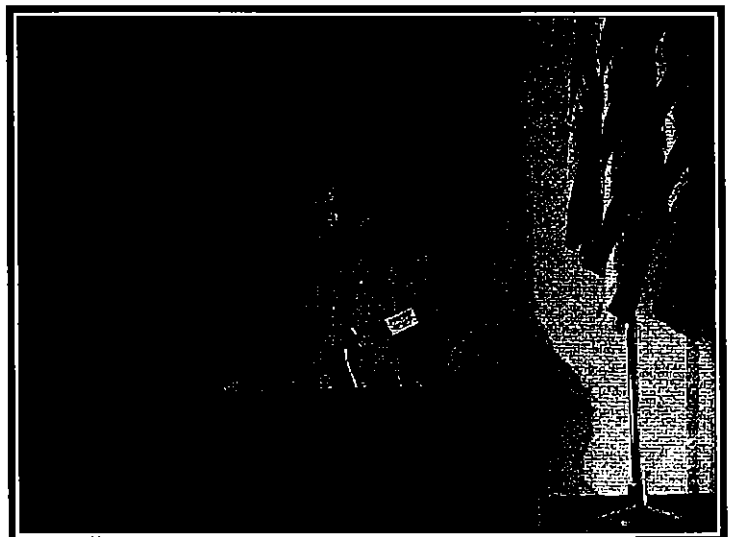
The next day's panel discussions centered on the relationships between US Advisors and their Vietnamese Counterparts.

Notable in these discussions was the broad range of perspective offered by the panelists. Advisors, officer and enlisted, from all the uniformed services, former RVNAF members, Nurse Advisors, Vietnamese émigrés and scholars of Vietnam history were all represented. Their collective experience spanned a period from the early '60s to the end of the war in '75 and beyond.

The Luncheon meeting featured a speech by Michael Do of the Vietnam Veterans Association, titled "*Give Back the Dignity of Those Who Fought the Vietnam War.*" Mr. Do commented on the continued lack of support for Vietnam veterans shown by American society, particularly representatives of the news media and the academic world. He went on to describe the efforts of the Vietnam Veterans association to correct misinformation about the war and urged conference attendees to contribute to that effort in their own communities.

The final Session of the conference was chaired by *Counterparts* member Dr. Carl Nelson who led a group discussion of relations between Americans who served as Advisors and those who did not.

The diverse mix of Conference participants provided some interesting contrasts. To this writer, whose year as an Advisor seems to have ended only yesterday, it was something of a shock (continued on page 3)



*Counterparts* member Dr. Carl Nelson Leads Discussion At April Vietnam Conference

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# COUNTERPARTS SITREP

The Official Publication of Counterparts/Tướng Hữu Đồng Nam Á

Published quarterly

Volume IV

Issue 1

Spring/Summer 2001

## Commander's Corner

I have spent a number of years begging off a tour of duty as Commander of *Counterparts*. It is one of the top two of the number of veterans organizations I belong to. Here I am.

A special thanks to Tai-Pan for his past tour as Commander. He's truly an original founder of *Counterparts*, although, he will quickly tell you, there are many others who assisted in keeping this thing rolling. I'm sure of only one thing now that I've taken over from him, and that's the fact that I cannot match his dedication and leadership in this outfit. I've already done good as Commander just by being the CO at a convention that had been set up and running before I entered the fray. Good people did their job, as per usual. All had a great time at Texas Tech and those who didn't go missed out on a great one.

I'm old, I've got brain damage, and I'm tired. (Some say I entered the Army with brain damage, being how I was a bull rider and a sky diver.) At Schofield Barracks in Hawaii before I went to the Korean War, I started having a hard time with leaders. I forgot my M-1 Garand rifle number and the Field First Sergeant ordered my squad leader, Thurston, WW II, CBI, to teach me the value of remembering my rifle number. We were standing in the rain, me with my rifle over my head spouting off my rifle number, when I spotted our 2nd LT peeking out from under the cover of a porch. At the time, I stated, "Hell, anybody can be a lieutenant."

In 1960, as I came out of the Head Shed at Ft. Bragg, a 1st LT at the time, I was saluted by a sergeant, who stopped. "Sergeant Thurston," I said, recognizing him. A short conversation followed and he asked if I remember the day at Schofield when I said anybody could be a lieutenant. I said I did.

He said, "Sir, you've just proved it."

So, give me some slack.

Comrades, I've been lucky to have people like Thurston in every outfit I've served in. We've got some fine people in this outfit, some in position to keep me straight and on the right path. For you guys who don't think this outfit is run right and things are not remembered and/or done on time, I have to tell you something. Every one of these guys gets the same pay I do. Zero. They just work hard and do their best, because that's what good people do when they accept a position of responsibility. And I have a suggestion. If you don't like our efforts, get off your duff and take over! Some of us would be grateful. Otherwise, it's an honor to be among such as you, advisors and *Counterparts* all.

Hang Tuff.

Pappy

## FROM THE EDITORS...

Apologies to all for the long drought since the last issue of SITREP. Hopefully our performance will improve in the future....We STILL need more material from COUNTERPARTS members. Letters to the Editor, oral history, photos, Bulletin Board Items, are all welcome. For those who have already sent material, Thanks much. It will be published in a coming issue.

(continued from page 1)

to be reminded that "only yesterday" was over thirty years ago, and that events that seemed so recently to be the stuff of my particular memory are now a small fragment of history.

Attending the Conference also made me realize that as time passes, the duty of preserving and recording our little pieces of this war's history becomes ever more urgent. The history of the Vietnam War is so permeated with emotion that future historians will have a difficult time winnowing out historical truth from the chaff of misinformation, propaganda and error. We must insure that they have access to a wider spectrum of facts than are now available.

The historical record presented at the Conference, added to the growing collection of information being gathered by Dr. Reckner's Vietnam Center is already an important historical resource. Its value will only increase with time.



*Conference attendees at Reception. Samples of the Zumwalt Collection are on wall in the background*

## 2002 REUNION PLANS

The 2002 *Counterparts* Reunion will be held In Charleston, SC 8,9, and 10 February, 2002. We will be mailing a Special Reunion Flyer within the next few weeks and will post details on the *Counterparts* website as they become available.

**Accommodations:** The Holiday Inn Riverview is giving us a group rate of \$79.00 for a standard room and \$89.00 for a "Best View" room. (Actually , all rooms in this hotel have a view of Charleston's harbor and rivers.) These rooms will be held until 1 Jan, 2002. Charleston is a major tourist destination and February is a busy month. Get your reservation now.

Reservation forms and more information will be in the Special Reunion Flyer. For those who wish to make early reservations, the hotel number is:

**Holiday Inn Central Reservations: (800) 465 4329 Hotel: (843) 556 7100, FAX (843) 556 6175**  
To obtain the Special Rate tell the hotel you are with the Counterparts Reunion, Group Code CPR

Here are some of the possible activities we're working on:

◇ **Tour Options: Harbor/Ft. Sumter Boat Tour**

Private tour of recently excavated CSS HUNLEY, the First submarine.

USS YORKTOWN Museum tour

Ft. Moultrie Tour

Tours of Historic Charleston, Plantations and Gardens

◇ **Guest Visit by Gen William C. Westmoreland**

◇ **Dinner at local Vietnamese Restaurant**

◇ **Guest Speaker at Banquet**

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON CHARLESTON ATTRACTIONS, GO TO [www.charlestoncvb.com](http://www.charlestoncvb.com)**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE NEW XO

By  
Darryl Nelson

31 August 2001

Greetings One and All:

I am Darryl Nelson, your Executive Officer, and I would like to thank all the folks who took time to vote in our elections.

I feel that when an individual from an organization does something, that person should be recognized; with that I would like to thank JC Fischer for his outstanding support and assistance with the Village Store while at the Vietnam Symposium in April at Texas Tech. Along with JC, my wife Jo Anne also helped with the Market. Thank you both on behalf of *Counterparts* for a job superbly done.

Next I would like to recognize *Counterparts* member Don Slesnick who took over the reins of Coral Gables, FL as Mayor. Mayor Slesnick has suggested that we consider Coral Gables as a site for a Reunion, and I think we ought to honor that request with the 2003 Reunion. I would like to hear what the members think of that idea.

I would like to see some changes take place in our organization:

First, I would like to see Reunions planned two to three years ahead of time with the location planned and the point of contact listed. Please don't take me wrong; all the Reunions that I have attended have been great, and the folks who set them up did a wonderful job, but I am sure that these individuals were pressed for time and resources to make the Reunions work as well as they did.

Second, I would like to increase the number of members. Please understand I am not asking to lower the standards. There are numerous Former Advisors out there and many of them would love to join us. The problem is that we don't get enough exposure. I encourage each member to carry three or four applications with you at all times and if a person states that he was an Advisor, a quick check is in order, then hand him the application. I go one step further; I also hand them a stamped, self addressed envelope.

Third: I would encourage all *Counterparts* members consider assisting the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University. This is a history of our commitment and dedication in Vietnam and believe me, they are doing it right. I would encourage everyone to take a look at this effort. To use a word that I am not fond of but fits the bill so well— it is awesome. Check it out on line or in person.

Fourth, Please consider items for the SITREP. It is supposed to be published quarterly and our Editors do a great job, but they need assistance. Contact Ken or Bill and ask them how you can help, maybe a picture, maybe a short article about some book or item in a newspaper.

In my mind there is only one way for *Counterparts* to go and that is up, we can do it but it will take assistance from everyone.

Sincerely,

Darryl Nelson



COUNTERPARTS REUNION  
8-10 FEBRUARY, 2002

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTURE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM TYPE:

\$79.00 +12% tax rooms  
\$89.00 + 12% tax rooms

2 Double bed room \_\_\_\_\_ King Bed Room \_\_\_\_\_  
SMOKING \_\_\_\_\_ NON-SMOKING \_\_\_\_\_

ENCLOSED IS A CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR THE FIRST NIGHT'S ROOM AND TAX, OR A CREDIT CARD NUMBER TO GUARANTEE MY RESERVATION

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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IF YOU CALL IN YOUR RESERVATION, PLEASE MENTION YOU ARE WITH THE COUNTERPARTS REUNION GROUP CODE "CPR", TO INSURE YOU RECEIVE THE CORRECT RATE

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*The following is the text of a speech delivered by Counterparts member Dr. Jim Reckner, Director of the Vietnam Center, during the April Conference*

*...The Editors*

## **Approaching Vietnam**

**By**

**James R. Reckner**

It had been nearly thirty years since my first "visit" to Vietnam, when I spent two years with South Vietnamese river patrol boats of the "brown water navy" during the war. Thus, when I landed in Hanoi, the capital of our former enemy, I was rather apprehensive. What I encountered there truly surprised me: I was treated with the utmost friendliness, not just by official Hanoi, but also by the average individual on the street. And everywhere there was a tremendous drive to learn English. American English.

Later in my visit I traveled to Ho Chi Minh City [which ever will be Saigon to me] and from there visited a number of places where I had spent time during the war. At the first, the former river patrol base on the Saigon River where I served as Senior Advisor to a Vietnamese Navy river patrol group, I discovered that the facility which had been my home for nearly a year simply no longer existed. The piers had disappeared and the once-bustling riverfront had been reclaimed by rich tropical plants.

Of course I should not have anticipated anything else. After 1975 there was no further need for naval bases on Vietnam's internal waterways. But somehow the discovery was very unsettling. What had I really expected after nearly thirty years? I suppose I hadn't given that any thought.

Later, walking in Saigon, down near the former headquarters of the South Vietnamese Navy that I had visited regularly during my two years of service in South Vietnam, I passed a familiar French restaurant. I remember well seeing an elderly French *colon* sitting at a sidewalk table at that restaurant in 1969. At that time, with the American presence in Vietnam at its peak, the Frenchman looked completely displaced, overtaken by events, pitiful.

As I wandered the streets of Saigon, from time to time I encountered other American men of approximately my age, some with wives; a few with younger Vietnamese women, but most, like me, alone. Like me, they seemed to be seeking something. Perhaps they had discovered, as I had at my former base, that that which they sought is ir retrievable; gone forever. I realized then that I had become a future generation's equivalent of that old Frenchman. I also had been overtaken by the course of the tumultuous events that have enveloped Vietnam.

The truth, I realized, is that I was not actually seeking the old base. Rather, subconsciously I was searching for my youthful years in Vietnam — that time of danger and often fear; that time, also, of hope, and optimism not yet tempered by the cynicism bred of future revelations; that time, most of all, when I harbored the delusion of immortality far too common to youth.

All of that is long gone now for all of us who served in Vietnam. And no matter how long we wander the streets of Saigon, no matter how earnestly we seek our old Saigon, it cannot be resurrected. And that is a great pity.

If we Vietnam vets cannot go back to the Vietnam of our youth, what can we do? Of course, we must work to preserve the records of the war; to preserve and honor the memory of our comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice there; and we must encourage younger generations to study the American Vietnam experience. There is much to be learned from our failures there. And our successes, too. In the end, I suspect younger generations of Americans will judge those who served in Vietnam much more favorably than have our peers who for various reasons did not serve.

But now, what can we Vietnam vets do? We might continue to nurture feelings of hatred toward the Vietnamese. This would serve no constructive purpose, and would demean the reasons for and nature of our original service in Vietnam. We might continue to isolate Vietnam, but this would ignore an opportunity to engage and educate the younger generation of Vietnamese who are exceedingly interested in America.

*(Continued on page 7)*

(Continued from page 6)

We veterans should play a much more active and positive role. We must approach Vietnam with some vision of the future. First and foremost, we should support our Ambassador, Douglas "Pete" Peterson, as he continues his efforts to gain a full accounting for our servicemen still missing in Southeast Asia. And we should encourage him, too, in his continuing efforts to ensure the preservation of human rights in Vietnam.

More than that, though, I am convinced that we should take positive steps in the field of education, to reach out to the more than 65% of the Vietnamese population born since the end of the war. They played no role in the struggle in which we took part. A great many of them are exceedingly interested in learning more about American culture. They want to be able to speak American English—and they want to be our friends. Mightn't we who served leave a truly lasting legacy if we could provide the bridge whereby the younger generation of Americans and Vietnamese—those not directly touched by the fire of the Vietnam War—came to know each other better?

I am not suggesting that we condone the Vietnamese political system or the abridgment of individual liberties that routinely occurs in Vietnam. What I do propose, though, is that we provide the opportunity for our youngsters, American and Vietnamese alike, to learn about each other through academic exchanges devoid of political content. Toward this end, Texas Tech University has initiated a dialog with various Vietnamese universities. Toward this end, too, we are providing American textbooks that will assist Vietnamese students in their quest for knowledge. Through such measures, we, the former warriors, can ensure that no future generation of Americans will have to repeat our experiences. In the process, too, we will have created a legacy worthy of our high ideals.

*Dr. James R. Reckner, a retired naval officer, is an associate professor of history and director of The Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University. He served as Senior Advisor to River Assault Group 26, VNN, 1968-69 and Senior Advisor to River Patrol Group 52, VNN, 1971-72.*

### **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, Cobb, 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 600-1000 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 quarterly, in January, April, July, and October. Deadlines for manuscripts and photos are the first of the month before each publication date, but we can be flexible if there's late breaking news.
- Send Submissions To:

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## 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 REAL GENUINE VIETNAMESE JUNGLE WILDCAT

By  
Rod Hinsch

In the summer of 1967 I was in Vietnam, stationed at a Special Forces base camp near the Cambodian border. Our main mission was special reconnaissance and intelligence gathering "across the fence" inside Cambodia, which was top secret at the time. It was also in our mission description that our Camp Commander submit a weekly classified report to the Special Operations Group Commander at MACVSOG Headquarters in Saigon. This job required the services of two sergeants, and as luck would have it, my buddy Sgt. Raferty and I drew the duty.

Now please understand that classified information courier duty for a Special Forces base camp is a plum assignment. First of all, you get to wear a clean new set of clothes, and yes, they were camouflaged jungle fatigues but they were clean and new. Next, we were flown by a special armed helicopter to Saigon where a jeep was assigned to us for the next six hours. Our immediate duty and responsibility was to deliver the classified documents we carried to MACVSOG HQ at 137 Rue Pasteur in the Cholon sector of Saigon. After that we were on our own until reporting back to MACVSOG for any orders or information to be taken back to our base camp.

So many things to do and so little time. Well first things first, our stomachs. With the food we had been eating lately anything would be great but we hunted up one of Saigon's best restaurants and proceeded to order and eat almost everything on the menu. After our adventure in gluttony we decided to leave our jeep and see some sights on foot. It wasn't long before we found ourselves down by the Saigon Zoo with two little kids along with six or seven other people trying their best to sell us things we didn't need or want.

We were successful in ridding ourselves of all the street salesmen except for the two little kids; they just wouldn't go away. Finally we gave in and asked to see whatever it was they wanted us to buy. In an instant one of the kids disappeared then returned holding a small bamboo cage containing something with orange fur and black spots.

Sgt. Raferty took one look, then whispered out of the side of his mouth, "This is really gonna be good!", then asked the kid, "what is it?" The kid looked Raferty square in the eye and said "Hey G.I., this real genuine Vietnamese Jungle Wildcat, very valuable, very rare, very lucky you buy, I give good price, you buy, OK?"

Well, it didn't take a rocket scientist to realize just what these kids were trying to sell. It was a poor little orange, malnourished house cat. Someone, probably these kids, had spray painted it with black spots and shaved the top of the poor thing's head flat to give it a more ferocious look. The kids probably thought they did a wonderful job creating this real genuine Wildcat because we wound up buying it. The truth was that this poor little creature was the most pathetic living thing either Sgt. Raferty or myself had ever seen. After talking it over, Raferty and I decided to name the little guy "Killer", take him back to our base camp and make him a team member.

Back in camp we took "Killer" to our "hooch", otherwise known as living quarters, and placed him on my cot. Sgt. Raferty thought our new bunkie should have something to play with so I picked up a roll of toilet paper and placed it on the cot next to Killer. Maybe there was a bit of wildcat in him because he immediately stalked and attacked the roll. Just about the time Killer was really getting into the attack with all four feet our C.I.A. Field Operations Officer walked thru the door looking for another sergeant who shared our hooch. In an instant he spotted our new team member enjoying himself on my cot and after a few seconds asked "What the hell is that thing?" I didn't have an answer readily available but Sgt. Raferty did. He looked the Agency man straight in the eye and with sincerity in his voice proclaimed "Sir, this is a real genuine Vietnamese Jungle Wildcat, very valuable, very rare, very lucky, and he is a team member." I was literally biting my tongue trying hard not to laugh.

The C.I.A. Officer looked sideways at me, then Raferty, and finally Killer. Turning on his heel he moved quickly thru the door. When he was outside we clearly heard him mumble to himself; "Good God, I hate working with the Special Forces." That, of course, was what was left of his statement AFTER all the colorful language was removed. And what became of Killer? Well, he went on to become a great team member and the nemesis of all V.C. (Viet Cong) mice or rats that dared attack our camp.



## From the Past...

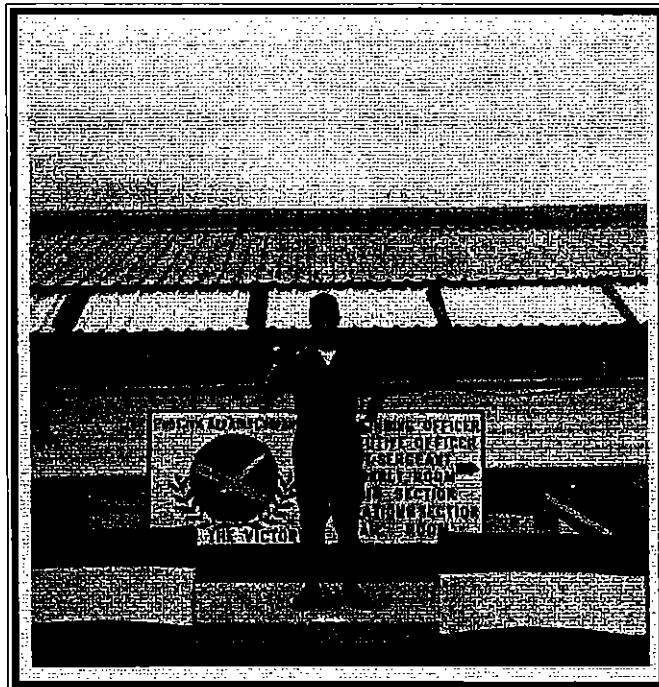
The 2d Civil Affairs Detachment was activated on 25 July 1962, redesignated the 2d Civil Affairs Company on 1 April 1964, and deployed to the Republic of Vietnam on 6 December 1966. Unit awards include the Meritorious Unit Commendation for the period 19 November 1966 to 29 February 1968, the Civic Action Honor Medal First Class and the Meritorious Unit Commendation, First Oak Leaf Cluster, both for the period 1 March 1968 to 31 May 1969.

### COMMANDERS IN VIETNAM

LTC James S. Conklin	30 Jun 66 - 22 Feb 67
MAJ William B. Bowers	22 Feb 67 - 10 Apr 67
LTC David E. Wade	10 Apr 67 - 22 Mar 68
MAJ Charles R. Kelly	22 Mar 68 - 9 Sep 68
LTC Daniel H. Wardrop	9 Sep 68 - 1 Mar 69
LTC Joseph K. Griffith	1 Mar 69 - 4 Jun 69
LTC John F. Shannon	4 Jun 69 - 2 Jan 70
LTC Harold V. Madden	2 Jan 70 - 4 Jul 70
LTC Curtis Brewer	4 Jul 70 -

Lieutenant Colonel Harold V. Madden  
Requests the Pleasure of Your Company  
for the Presentation of the  
Meritorious Unit Commendation  
First Oak Leaf Cluster  
and the  
Change of Command  
at the  
2d Civil Affairs Company  
on Saturday, 4 July 1970, at 1100 Hours

RSVP  
Pltn 5355/5716



COUNTERPART Ed Thompson, 2nd Civil Affairs Company, 1970



Do You Remember These?

Invitation to Awards and Change of Command Ceremony,  
2nd Civil Affairs company



Recent Photos of Rod Hinsch with some of his former Ranger and Special Forces Counterparts

## 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.

**Vietnam Military Lore: Legends, Shadows & Heroes** . Ray Bows; Christopher Publishing  
ISBN: 0815805276 USA/Canada: US\$63.90

Review by Carl Bernard \*

Each of us brings our individual intellectual baggage with us wherever we go. This and what we see when we get to particular scenes is why soldiers need the best vantage points available to see and understand what is actually happening to and about them, and what it may mean.

The author of this very useful work, retired Army Master Sergeant Ray Bows, has done every veteran and every serving soldier a yeoman service. He has chronicled the lives, the operations, and the passing of some of the hundreds of men who served in the early days of the war we undertook so awkwardly in Vietnam. (The word "awkwardly" in this case describes the inappropriate use of our military in a "People's War" that we failed to understand.) This failure is illustrated in depth by the striking stories Bows has assembled.

Our ignorance of "People's War" in general virtually guaranteed that we would lose the specific war in which we were involved, without ever realizing what was actually happening. The innocence, pervasive among all ranks involved in the war makes this grim appreciation very credible. We soldiers did what we knew how to do, not very much of which was relevant. The intellectual baggage we had acquired from our focus on a NATO war with the Soviet Union left other relevant military concerns out of our consciousness.

Bows' use of the Vietnam soldiers' own words and impressions, drawn from their letters home, survivors' accounts and official reports, creates a powerful collection. Those readers who served in-country will have a far better understanding of this regrettable folly in which they were involved after they read Bows' collection than they would if they relied only on the conclusions they

individually brought away with them. Each veteran of our failed effort will understand much more completely his own contribution after he shares these striking and convincing accounts.

The author uses a chronological structure to describe the life and deaths of the 50+ men who had locations named for them. The photographs he uses throughout the book go far toward humanizing the stories recounted.

It is painful to see again how slowly military and political leaders learned what was happening in Vietnam. While they sometimes approached an understanding it was never adequate. Evidence of our enduring and near total ignorance of the culture of Vietnam permeates the book and makes the classic question: "why do their Vietnamese fight and ours don't?" impossible for us to answer.

Conflicts between the American "advisory" teams' responsibilities and the duties of commanders of the Vietnamese units to whom they were posted, were unavoidable. Each group often had widely different views of their mission and how accomplish it. The tendency of some Vietnamese officials to enrich themselves and their chiefs from the monies we were providing was unthinkable to our young Army officers. The very human conflicts that arose from these "disconnects" furthered the Viet Cong's cause as much as our enormous difficulty in communicating our appreciation of how to fight their war to the Vietnamese. While some early Special Forces advisory teams became cohesive groupings, Bows contends that short tours, casualties, and other routine transfers kept many teams from reaching the effectiveness their roles required.

The internal conflicts of competing elements of our defense establishment, particularly the animosity generated by the burgeoning presence and efforts of the Special Forces, wasted much energy, time and effort. The Army's efforts to get more immediate close air support by arming

its helicopters instead of accepting established Air Force doctrine was badly received. The short tours of Americans assured few would understand the elements of Peoples' War that was causing our defeat. Our natural solution to our frustration was to conclude we needed American combat units to do the fighting at which our Vietnamese allies were faltering. Our indomitable belief in the efficacy of air power helped make its commitment inevitable. Ground units were subsequently dispatched to protect the airfields and our growth toward a half million man force was underway. This distressing situation is where Bows ends this work.

*\*Carl Bernard served in Laos with a Special Forces team (1961), taught Insurgency Case Studies at the Special Warfare School at Fort Bragg (61-63), attended the French Ecole d'Etat Major with veterans of their Indochina and Algerian Wars (1964-65,) and served in a NATO headquarters with older French Indochina veterans (1965-67). He was a Province Senior Advisor for John Paul Vann in III and IV Corps (1967-69) and liaison with the French Army in Germany (1969-72).*



Out of Courage  
By  
Rod Hinsch

Out of loyalty, we said Yes when many others were saying "Hell No."  
Out of duty, we sweat and bled while many others called us killers.  
Out of honor, we died while many cursed our existence.  
Out of pride, we came home, tired but unbeaten, assured our actions were just.  
Out of disillusionment, we each in our own way, dealt with the pain of misunderstanding and rejection from our own generation.  
Out of anger, we fought, bled and died once again trying to fit into the New America.  
Out of courage, we continued to believe in the righteousness of our sacrifice and our fraternal  
brotherhood.  
Out of experience, we alone can claim the honor, glory and virtue of our efforts.  
Out of survival, only we the veterans, history and God will ever know the real truth

**Warriors of the Sea: Marines of the Second Indochina War.** Mike Martin. Turner Publishing, PO box 3101, Paducah, KY 42002. \$37.97

*Warriors of the Sea* is the book that finally tells the true story of the Vietnamese Marines and provides an insight into the courage, leadership, dedication and tenacity of another skilled group of Marines—the US Marine Advisors—who lived with, advised and trained their Vietnamese counterparts. It is through them that you are shown at close quarters the action, heartbreak and humor, violence and terror of combat alone. The heat, monsoon rains, smells and sounds, the strangeness of the Orient, come alive on each page. For Marines of all eras, it is a must for your library; for the historian, hobbyist and military enthusiast it is a collector's item. There are rare photographs, like the French Marine Advisors, original color plates of the Marine medals, patches, flags and uniforms. Anyone interested in Vietnam and the elite forces that fought there will relish viewing and reading about the honorable heroics of the Sea Tigers and their American Advisors.

*(Review by Mike Martin, Author)*

## Do You Want to Make a Difference?

Shown below is the text of HCON 178 IH concerning the treatment of the Montagnard

Peoples by the present government of Vietnam. The Bill was referred to Committee on June 28. As of July 25th the committee had Agreed, by Unanimous Consent, to Seek Consideration Under Suspension of the Rules.

As most of us know, the plight of the Montagnard people has gone largely unnoticed by the news media, and with some exceptions, by our elected representatives. You can change this by making your voice heard. All it takes is a postage stamp and a few minutes of your time. Write to your Representative and

HCON 178 IH 107th CONGRESS 1st Session

### Concerning persecution of Montagnard peoples in Vietnam.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 28, 2001

Mr. BALLENGER (for himself and Mr. BURR of North Carolina) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

#### CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Concerning persecution of Montagnard peoples in Vietnam.

Whereas the Montagnards are indigenous peoples of the Central Highlands of Vietnam who have long suffered discrimination and mistreatment at the hands of successive Vietnamese governments;

Whereas during the 1960's and 1970's Montagnard freedom fighters were the first line in the defense of South Vietnam against invasion from the North, fighting courageously beside members of the Special Forces of the United States Army, suffering disproportionately heavy casualties, and saving the lives of many of their American and Vietnamese comrades in arms;

Whereas since 1975 the Montagnard peoples have been singled out for particularly harsh treatment by the communist government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, in part because of their past association with the United States and in part because their strong commitment to their traditional way of life and to their Christian religion is regarded as inconsistent with the absolute loyalty and control demanded by the communist system;

Whereas many Montagnards belong to independent evangelical Protestant churches which the Vietnamese Government regards as illegal and which the Government has persecuted by measures including closing and destruction of church buildings, harassment and discrimination against believers, and in some cases imprisonment and physical abuse

Whereas the Vietnamese Government has long pursued a systematic policy of encouraging migration by ethnic Vietnamese to the Central Highlands, resulting in encroachments on and confiscation of Montagnard communal lands

Whereas in recent years more and more Montagnard lands have been confiscated as a result of Government programs aimed at the cultivation of coffee and other products for export;

Whereas the Montagnards have far higher rates of poverty and disease than other residents of Vietnam, including one of the highest rates of Hansen's disease (leprosy) in the world, in part due to Government policies and practices that prevent nongovernmental organizations from working directly with Montagnards and divert in-kind humanitarian assistance provided by international and nongovernmental organizations;

Whereas many thousands of Montagnards were eligible for the Orderly Departure Program and other United States in-country refugee programs on account of their wartime associations with the United States, postwar persecution on account of these associations, and other persecution on account of race, religion, and political opinion;

Whereas only a handful of eligible Montagnards have ever been able to gain access to these United States refugee programs, in part because few Montagnards could afford to pay bribes demanded by communist officials in exchange for permitting such access, and in part because of unreasonably restrictive policies imposed at times by United States officials charged with administering these refugee programs;

Whereas in February 2001 several thousand Montagnards participated in a series of peaceful demonstrations throughout the Central Highlands, demanding religious freedom and restoration of their confiscated lands;

Whereas the Government responded to these peaceful demonstrations by closing off the Central Highlands and sending in military forces, tanks, and helicopter gunships; Whereas for the last 4 months the Government has refused to allow any meaningful access to the Central Highlands by diplomats, journalists, or other observers, so that it is impossible to be certain of the extent of the current repression;

Whereas credible reports by refugees who have escaped from the Central Highlands indicate that the Government has executed some participants in the demonstrations and has subjected others to imprisonment, torture, and other forms of physical abuse;

Whereas since February several hundred Montagnard refugees, and perhaps more, have succeeded in escaping from Vietnam into Cambodia;

Whereas approximately 250 of these refugees are under the care and protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at sites in the northeastern Cambodian provinces of Monduliri and Ratanakiri, and another 38 have been resettled in the United States;

Whereas the Royal Government of Cambodia has announced that Montagnards found in Cambodia who express a fear of return to Vietnam will be placed under the protection of UNHCR rather than forcibly repatriated to Vietnam;

Whereas despite this announcement by the central government, local and provincial police and military officials in Monduliri province, and perhaps some officials of the central government, appear to be pursuing a policy of systematic forcible repatriation of Montagnard asylum seekers to Vietnam;

Whereas, according to international observers Cambodian military and police officials have yet to deliver a single Montagnard into the care of UNHCR and have forcibly repatriated at least 100 to 200 Montagnards to Vietnam;

Whereas there are credible reports that Vietnamese security forces are operating openly in Monduliri and Ratanakiri provinces, harassing and intimidating local residents who have been helpful to Montagnard asylum seekers and offering bounties for the surrender of asylum seekers, including one instance in which Vietnamese security forces paid \$3,200 in gold to local Cambodian officials in exchange for 33 asylum seekers who were then repatriated to Vietnam;

Whereas there are credible reports that the Governments of Cambodia and Vietnam have taken extraordinary measures to secure the border against further escapes into Cambodia by Montagnard asylum seekers; and Whereas although the information blackout imposed by the Vietnamese Government makes it impossible to predict with certainty the fate of Montagnards who are refused entry into Cambodia or forcibly repatriated to Vietnam, there is reason to believe that those who participated in the February demonstrations or who actively profess Christianity may be subjected to severe persecution:

Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) urges the Government of Vietnam to allow freedom of religious belief and practice to all Montagnards including those who are evangelical Christians belonging to denominations not recognized by the Government; to return all traditional Montagnard lands that have been confiscated or encroached upon; to allow nongovernmental and international humanitarian organizations to deliver humanitarian assistance directly to Montagnards in their villages, without interference or involvement by Government officials; to open up all parts of the Central Highlands to foreign and domestic journalists, human rights organizations, diplomats, and other observers; and to withdraw its security forces from Cambodia and stop hunting down refugees;

(2) commends the Royal Cambodian Government for its official policy of guaranteeing temporary asylum for Montagnards fleeing Vietnam;

(3) urges the Royal Cambodian Government to take all necessary measures to ensure that all officials and employees of the local, provincial, and central governments fully obey the policy of providing temporary asylum; to make clear that such protection will be extended not only to Montagnards found within Cambodia but also to those apprehended at the border; to insist that the Government of Vietnam withdraw its officials and employees from Cambodian territory and discontinue its efforts to secure forcible repatriation of Montagnards; and to provide security at sites where refugees are sheltered;

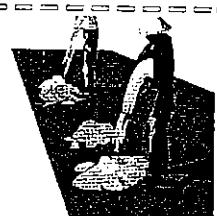
(4) commends the officials and employees in Cambodia of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Human Rights Center for their assistance to and advocacy on behalf of Montagnard asylum seekers and refugees, and urges them to continue and intensify these efforts;

(5) commends the Department of State for the assistance to and advocacy of Montagnard asylum seekers that have been provided by officials and employees of the United States Embassy in Phnom Penh and urges that such efforts be continued and intensified; and

(6) urges the Department of State to make clear to the Government of Vietnam that continued mistreatment of Montagnards and efforts to seek forcible repatriation of refugees and asylum seekers from Cambodia represent a grave threat to the process of normalization of relations between the Governments of the United States and Vietnam and, in particular, a serious obstacle to any prospects for the future provision of United States assistance to the Government of Vietnam and to United States support of such assistance by international financial institutions.



# BULLETIN BOARD



## ***Counterparts member elected Mayor of Coral Gables, FL.***

How about joining me in congratulating Donald Slesnick, *Counterparts* member and the new Mayor of Coral Gables, FL, Don was elected on April the 10th and becomes the 24th Mayor of that city. Mayor Slesnick and I go back a day or three; he was my Admin. Officer when I worked for CORDS PSD MR1 in Da Nang. He was also my professor when I took Business Law from the University of Maryland.

Darryl Nelson

## ***Counterparts Knife Raffle Winner***

Congratulations to Richard L. Clark who held the winning ticket #726003 for the knife. Ben Myers with ticket # 726023 won the MACV sweat shirt. Thanks to all who participated in this year's raffle. Your participation enables us to help our former allies, counterparts and their families.

Jim Alkek, Adjutant

## ***Virtual Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech***

The federal government has allocated \$461,000 to the Vietnam Archive to create the Virtual Vietnam Archive. With this project, Texas Tech University will significantly expand the research support offered by making available its non-copyright materials in electronic format to all with an Internet connection.

The Virtual Vietnam Archive will enable scholars, students and all interested in this remarkable period to conduct primary research directly from their universities, schools, libraries, and homes. Of equal importance, it will enable Vietnam veterans - those who actually served - to access records of importance to them in their continuing efforts to understand their own experiences. It will facilitate the research and writing of participants' memoirs and will give high school and college students an important and authoritative source resource on the Vietnam War.

Internet access to Texas Tech's Vietnam Center is at <http://www.lib.ttu.edu/vietnam>

## ***COUNTERPARTS Member seeks VN Anecdotes***

WANTED: One of your most "comic-to-bizarre" experiences during your Vietnam tour for possible publication. Full credit provided. Confidentiality assured if requested; equal distribution of proceeds. Please call collect for an interview or write to: Jim Barker, 4941 Dickinson Dr., San Jose, CA, 95111. Tel. (408) 226 9938

## ***Library of Congress launches Veterans' Oral History Project***

The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress is looking for participants for its Veterans' Oral History Project. The project was created by the U.S. Congress and signed into law by President Clinton on Oct. 27, 2000.

Public Law 106-380 calls for the American Folklife Center to collect and preserve audio and video recorded histories of America's war veterans, as well as other selected documentary materials such as photographs, letters, and diaries. The American Folklife Center is also authorized to develop online presentations of the collection as an accessible resource for the American people.

"Collecting the oral histories of American veterans is a critical task in preserving our history and an urgent need as we enter the 21st century, "These histories will be an invaluable resource for future generations and will become part of the nation's vast historical record that the Library of Congress has preserved for 200 years," said librarian of Congress, James H. Billington.

The American Folklife Center was created by Congress in 1976 and placed at the Library of Congress to preserve and present American folk life through programs of research, documentation, archival preservation, reference service, live performance, exhibition, public programs, and training

At this time, the project is in its preliminary planning stage. For further information, individuals may contact: Veterans' Oral History Project, Library of Congress, American Folklife Center, 101 Independence Avenue S.E., Washington, DC 20540-4610 (888) 371-5848; or fax at (202) 707-2076.

## ***Counterparts Member Awarded Soldier's Medal***

Karen Offut, one of *Counterparts* woman members, was awarded the Soldier's Medal in a ceremony in Tampa, FL on April 21st. The presentation was made as a surprise to Offut, who was a scheduled speaker at a Tampa Women's Museum event.

The Citation read , in part :"*For heroism not involving actual conflict with the enemy:*"  
"*Karen Offut, Specialist 5, Women's Army Corps, US Army, assigned to Headquarters US Military Assistance Command Vietnam, J47, distinguished herself by heroic action on 24 January, 1970, while in an off-duty status. Observing a fire in Vietnamese dwellings near her quarters, she hurried to the scene to provide assistance. Without regard for her personal safety and in great danger of serious injury or death from smoke, flames, and falling debris, she assisted in rescuing several adults and children from the burning structures. Without protective clothing or shoes, she repeatedly entered the buildings to lead children to safety. She continued to assist the Vietnamese residents in removing personal property and livestock, although danger increased until firefighting personnel and equipment arrived. Specialist Five Offut's heroic action reflects great credit on herself, the United States Army, and the United States mission in Vietnam.*"



### **MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM**

#### ***Captain Ralph Oscar Bray, Jr., U.S. Army***

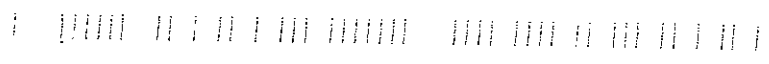
Advisor with 1st ARVN Division in the Battle at the Hue Citadel during the 1968 TET Offensive. CAPT Bray was Killed in Action during a second tour in Vietnam.

#### ***Sergeant First Class John Leonard Church, U.S. Army***

Killed in Action 31 January, 1968 in Quang Tri City while serving as Advisor with the ARVN 9th Airborne Battalion. His position was attacked and overrun the first night of the TET Offensive.

#### ***Colonel Frederick H. Quist, U.S. Army***

Died in Phoenix, Arizona, November 28, 2000. COL Quist served 25 years in the Army, including Airborne, Ranger, and Special Forces service. He Served with the Third Infantry Division in Korea in 1952, the ARVN Airborne Brigade in 1962 and the Fifth Special Forces in 1968. His Decorations include two Bronze Stars for Valor, two Purple Hearts, and the Korean and Vietnamese Medal of Honor.



**2002 REUNION NEWS**  
**2002 REUNION WILL BE IN CHARLESTON, S.C.**  
**ON 8,9,10 FEBRUARY 2002.**  
**FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE PAGE 3.**



**COUNTERPARTS**  
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