



COUNTERPARTS

TƯƠNG HỮU ĐÔNG NAM Á

SITREP

Volume XXII

Issue 1

Summer 2023

Schedule of events for 2024 Counterparts Reunion at Fort Moore

Wednesday 24 April 2024

Arrival, check-in at hotel

Hospitality room opens from 1200 until 2200

Thursday 24 April 2024

Hospitality room available from 0800 – 2200

0900: Depart for the Infantry Museum

0930 - 1100: Guided tour of museum

1100: Depart for Mess Hall 11:30 Lunch at Mess Hall

1300: Return to Hotel

1400 - 1600: Presentations at Hotel

1730: Depart for Vietnamese Restaurant

1800 - 2000: Supper at VN restaurant

2000: Return to Hotel

Friday 25 April 2024

Hospitality room available from 0800 – 2200

0830: Depart for MATA & SFAB meetings.

0900 - 1130: MATA SFAB meetings & presentations

1130: Depart for hotel.

1200: Lunch on your own.

1400: Depart hotel for tour of uptown.

1530 - 1830: On your own in Uptown and Riverwalk.

1700: Supper on your own

1830: Free concert (Details to follow) 2100 Return to hotel

Saturday 26 April 2024

Hospitality room available from 0800 – 2200

0900 – 1200 COUNTERPARTS Business Meeting. 0900 Spouse Breakfast with Speaker

1200 – 1300 lunch on your own

1400 – 1600 presentations.

1800 – 1900 reception

1900: Annual Banquet with keynote speaker.

Sunday 27 April 2024

Breakfast, Farewells. See you in 2025!



COUNTERPARTS SITREP

The Official publication of COUNTERPARTS/Thương Hữu Đông Nam Á

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Commander's Corner

It was certainly most regrettable that personal health matters preempted my ability to attend a very notable reunion this year, but it was gratifying to pass the gavel into the very capable hands of our XO Hank Choy. Steve King is to be lauded for the fantastic, detailed effort he undertook at organizing one of the most memorable and well-attended get togethers in Counterpart's 35-year history. I am most grateful to Jim O'Malley, John Haseman, Jim Alkek, Ken Jacobsen, and Rich Webster for their sterling support of the effort. To be sure...much welcomed cross-collaboration and sharing with Delta Advisors added much to the spirit of fellowship among Co Van comrades-in-arms at this event.

Len Ganz has taken the lead to host the 2024 reunion in Ft. Moore and has proactively formed a planning committee that has already met once thus far via Zoom to develop what appears to be a very well-formulated itinerary. More details will be forthcoming.

The old adage is true, "We've come a long way baby," as it applies to our lesson's learned each year with important feedback from our members that lead us to important takeaways and continuing opportunities for improvement in logistics, communications, and value-added activities to enhance the level of engagement of each member. Reunions just keep getting better and better as we go along. It is most gratifying to observe these positive developments.

.....Grant McClure, CO

DUES NOTICE

Counterparts annual dues for 2023 became payable on 1 January 2023. Dues are still \$35.00 per year. Please make your check out to "Counterparts" and mail to Membership Officer **John Haseman, 555 West Saddle Drive, Grand Junction CO 81507**. Your dues fund all of the programs through which Counterparts makes contributions to support our former counterparts in Southeast Asia. If you have questions about your dues status, email: jhaseman@earthlink.net.

COUNTERPARTS/THDNA is an IRS 501 (c)(3) Veterans organization Chartered in the State of Illinois. Registered Agent is Richard Webster, 1019 W Lafayette Ave Jacksonville IL

***XO Report.
From
Hank Choy***

I would like to first thank our Rapid City Reunion Committee for setting up our Reunion this past April. Steve King and his committee, if he had any, did an outstanding job. Steve went to work in selecting the hotel soon after our last reunion. Talk about rapid fire! He expended all of his ammo during his mad minute and we had a Hotel to hold our reunion. From the attendance count according to Steve it was one of the largest reunions we have ever had. Members and their spouses surely enjoyed themselves. The Hotel Staff was very friendly and helpful whenever we needed to “adjust fire” when we needed a bigger room to hold our mini breakout sessions and the staff moved us to our break/meeting room. The trip to Mt Rushmore was very inspiring in seeing some of our greatest Presidents carved in Granite.

The mini breakout sessions were well attended, and I had that OMG moment in what some of our members went through when they were out in the boonies. I had to compose myself several times during some of the presentations. I was a far cry from extended tour with the Navy’s psyops program in Saigon and Cam Ranh Bay. I am surely looking forward to next year’s presentation. We have so much to tell and only our group would understand the sacrifices many of our members made during their tour(s) in country.

The Banquet was well attended, and our guest speaker Col. Knapp told it like it was. He mentioned that we kind of wrote new doctrine at the schoolhouse that he attended, and many examples were from lessons learned from Vietnam. Short story is that I knew of Col. Knapp when he was our sister BN in Baghdad which was part of the Hawaii National Guards 29th BDE. I was up north as part of an embedded team at FOB O’Ryan. It’s only when we sat down on the head table did we make the connection.

I filled in as the acting Commander as Commander Grant was not able to attend. The business session went well. I would like to personally thank all of our officers and other supporting staff members for making our organization run like a well-oiled machine. We did vote to continue support of Cambodia Corps. The body decided to increase the funding by \$1000.00 to The Vietnam Healing Foundation. We also got the 2024 and 2025 reunion locations dialed in, 2024 will be at Ft.

Moore (Benning) and 2025 will be in the LA area, actual site is being worked on. Len Ganz has set up a tentative date, but the agenda has been posted on our website yet. Although we have the next two years planned. We still must think about beyond those years. The earlier we plan it makes it easier for our members to think about attending.

In closing I hope to see you all at next year's reunion. Be well and safe.

Aloha

Hank Choy, XO

COUNTERPARTS/THDNA BUSINESS MEETING 2023.

The 2023 Business Meeting was held on May 8 at the Rushmore Hotel, Rapid City SD, in conjunction with the 2023 COUNTERPARTS Reunion.

Commander Grant McClure could not attend the reunion because of illness. Executive Officer Hank Choy called the meeting to order and proceeded with an agenda directed by Grant.

Membership

John Haseman gave the update on membership. There are 138 lifetime members, 92 active yearly dues-paying members, and three charter members for a total of 233. There are 784 on the roster with 376 active members. Once a member the name is never deleted. John reported that he has boxes full of historical data-DD 214s, pictures, medals certificates, etc. which could be digitalized and posted on web site. To access the data base on our web site, one must have a 10- digit password. Contact John with a password and he will set it up for you. Over one third of members do not have passwords. John also encouraged members to keep him updated on email/address changes. Individual dues are \$35 yearly and \$350 lifetime.

Dr. Ron Milan, from Texas Tech University, and a member of COUNTERPARTS, reminded us that Texas Tech is the repository/archives of the Vietnam War. He encouraged members to arrange for an oral interview with Texas Tech. Contact oral historian Kelly E Crager, Ph.D. at Kelly.crager@ttu.edu or Joseph H. Carpenter, MA at joseph.carpenter@ttu.edu. All three were attendees at the reunion. Also, see www.vietnam.ttu.edu. Dr Milan, a member from Tm 36, also requested an authorization from COUNTERPARTS to archive 4 large boxes of documents/papers that he took back to Texas Tech from the 2020 reunion. Permission was granted by executive officer Hank Choy.

XO Comments

Hank Choy commented on the Village Market and the cost of shipping the materials to reunions and looking for ways to expedite it. The new Co Van My patch hat that he designed (a collaborated effort between Commander Grant and XO Hank) received favorable comments. Hank led the design and production our new COUNTERPARTS coin. In addition to this we are looking into a vest and a survey will be coming out in our next SITREP to look into the idea of a vest as a Village Market item or an individual item.

SITREP

Editor Ken Jacobsen reported that he hopes to put out two editions of the newsletter every year but it depends on material received. He encouraged members to send in stories about their experiences. Ken has been putting out the SITREP for 30 years now since the beginning of COUNTERPARTS. He was also the commander for 6 years. The SITREP used to be printed free by Bui Lam, former ARVN officer, who had his own printing business. Since he has died, it now costs \$800 to print. Discussion was held to eliminate the mailed copies and go 100% digital-no decision was made. Once the SITREP is published, it is put on our website and that makes it available for anyone to read. It also means that the articles have become part of the history of the Vietnam war and can be searched via Google by title/author.

Rich Webster

Gave an update on The Vietnam Healing Foundation. For the last six years COUNTERPARTS has donated \$2500 to this worthwhile organization which distributes small sums of money to our fallen comrades in Vietnam who receive nothing from the present government. The VHF is run by R J Del Vecchio, a Vietnam Marine Corps vet, with a Board of Directors from the Vietnamese community in the Raleigh, NC area. Small grants of \$100 to \$200 are distributed to 300 former RVN soldiers several times a year. Pictures of former RVN soldiers, many without limbs were on display. See www.thevhf.org for more info. Members present voted to continue supporting this worthwhile organization. Hank Choy contributed and additional \$100. Membership voted to continue the funding with \$2500. See www.thevhf.org for more info. Terry Turner questioned the accountability of the funds being distributed in Vietnam. Rich said he would follow up with Director of the VHF for a detailed report.

Historian

Carol Lund, our Historian, reported on efforts to digitalize our reunion photos for the web site. Carol takes pictures of those attending the reunion and has individual albums for each year's reunions on display.

Cambodia Corps

Max Lund, Director of Cambodia Corps which COUNTERPARTS has contributed to since 2007 reported on new happenings in Cambodia with the organization. CCI provides college scholarships to 16 Montagnard girls from the two eastern provinces of Monduliri and Ratanakiri. CCI has a student-center house in Phnom Penh where 16 college-age girls live and travel with bicycles or motorbikes out to the various colleges. Approximate cost to educate a student is \$2000 to include room, board, and tuition. To date, CCI has provided a college education to 60 Montagnard girls and boys. CCI also supports 19 high school girls in a house in Ban Lung, Cambodia, so they can finish their high school education. Applicants are carefully screened via our Cambodia director *Siramaren* who visits their homes for personal interviews. CCI just received a grant from the World Conservation Society to support 5 additional girls from Monduliri Province. One student presented a program at a UN conference in Paris recently. Tom Green made a motion to increase COUNTERPARTS funding to \$5000. Rex Lathan seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously by members present. See www.cambodiacorps.org for more info. Member Lou Rothenstein suggested that Max send an article to the special force's organization regarding CCI.

Treasurers Report

Jim O'Malley reported that COUNTERPARTS has \$16,635 in the bank after this year's Reunion expenses and our yearly donations to charities. At last year's reunion there was a profit made of \$1306. The extra profit made from the reunions goes to fund the charities we support. Terry Turner commented on the newly installed MACV memorial plaque on the "Path of Remembrance" at the National Museum of the US Army. Donations have been received for the cost which was \$5000. Donations can still be made in memory of adviser teams or individuals. Members can check www.armyhistory.causevox.com to donate.

Reunion Coordinator

Steve King reported that this was the biggest reunion ever with 93 total attendees. The breakdown of attendees: 5 advisors from the Sa Dec Province group, 48 Counterpart members, 25 wives, 7 guests, and eleven family members attending the banquet. Michael Ellsworth, tm 55, MAT 102 reported that he would host guest Sue Richardson, at the Banquet. She is the daughter of an advisor who was killed on his 3rd tour of duty. She never knew her father but wanted to meet someone on his team. Michael was on her father's team.

2024 Reunion

COUNTERPART member Len Ganz volunteered to host the reunion at Fort Benning, {newly named Fort Moore), next year from April 24th to April 27 on what the Vietnamese community in America refer to as Black April. Dave Priddy announced that he persuaded COUNTERPARTS member Tom Vo, former *Trung Uy* and pilot, to put off his bid to host next year's reunion until April 20-25, 2025, which will be the 50th anniversary of the fall of Saigon. Tom will host this reunion in Westminster, California, and liaison with many of the South Vietnamese organizations who will be participating in the solemn event.

There being no new business, the meeting was then adjourned.

Submitted:

Rich Webster PAO

Reviewed:

Hank Choy, XO

Additions to the Minutes...

Subsequent to the Reunion Treasurers Report, Treasurer Jim Malley submitted this additional information:

All

I hope that I didn't give a wrong picture of our cash position. The one I stated at the reunion was before reunion expenses and the donations we made. After all that our remaining balance is \$16,635 which is about where we stand every year, the reunion made around \$4,000 so that helped. As I have said before at some point we will probably have to scale back but as of now we are fine, we will get dues income throughout the year and probably several life memberships so my guess is if the next reunion makes a small profit we will have about \$20,000 available for donations, still enough to fund at our present level or we might consider cutting back to extend our ability to continue to pay. I would recommend that the SITREP state our cash position as \$16,635 which is the actual position after all expenses for the reunion and donations.

Jim O Malley

Webmaster Jim Alkek provided the following update on additional improvements to the Website

Website Fixes & Improvements:

The problem with the "Book Reports" will be reprogrammed and fixed during August 2023.

Currently the following improvements are in process or planned:

1. Pictures of the Village Market Memorabilia for Sale will be added under the Village Market webpage.
2. Pictures from Prior Reunions will be added under the "Meetings" webpage.
3. Dues & Dues Tickler Email system will be added to Membership area to assist in the notification and collection of annual dues.
4. Create separate Tours/Teams table to eliminate duplicates in the Members & Advisors tables. This will allow us to get more accurate searches by Teams. It will also allow us a more accurate count of individuals listed in the database.

Advisor Roster Table (includes 13,017 Records) including:

MAAG & MACV Advisors Total 6,444/102 KIA

MACV SOG Total 33 / 2 KIA

CAG/CACO/CAP Total 2,011 / 419 KIA

Naval Advisory Group Total 325/ 20 KIA

Special Forces Total 107/ 7 KIA

Australia Army Training Team Total 906 / 20 KIA

New Zealand Army Training Team Total 131 / 0 KIA

Jim Alkek

Web Master

Cambodia Corps Update Summer 2023

We begin our update with sad and frustrating news. There was an attack on 11 June 23 by an unknown group in Viet Nam, Dak Lak province at two commune offices. Communist officials immediately responded with overwhelming force, arresting at least eighty-four Montagnards on suspicion of involvement. Christian Montagnards are fearing government reprisals will soon be directed at them.

It continues to be a frustrating situation to see our loyal allies subjected to communist oppression while our government seemingly stands by. They are being denied basic human rights simply because of their past loyalty to the US. Our mission remains as important today as when we began in 1999. "To help the Montagnard help themselves through education".

On a much more positive note, our first trip back since the pandemic was the best yet. Our two, star students, Munny and Leap, who have parlayed their volunteer work into representing the Indigenous People of northeast Cambodia in two international conferences, continue to set the pace for our other students. To begin with, all your students are motivated and hardworking thanks to our careful screening and selection, but these students, seeing one of their own accomplish even more has set a new standard for the kids. We look for more volunteerism to soon follow. As we were departing for

home, Leap was notified that she had been selected to join the United States Ambassador's Youth Advisory Council. Yet another accolade. To top that off, last week Leap was notified she was being sponsored to attend the Asian Undergraduate Symposium in Singapore. This program, your program, of scholarship education to help our Montagnard friends that you all have so generously supported is making a real difference. Thank you. And last, but not least, CCI was contacted by Wildlife Conservation Society, a worldwide organization. They are involved in administering and protecting a huge sanctuary in eastern Cambodia (660,000 ha or 1,452,000 acres) Keo Seima Wildlife Sanctuary, on the border, opposite Tay Nin province in Viet Nam. There are some twenty Montagnard hamlets and villages within the sanctuary. WCS is experiencing problems of illegal logging, poaching and mining. Often the criminals recruit the Indigenous People as laborers to help them. To counteract this, WCS has decided upon a program of education for the sanctuary inhabitants, to teach them to help protect the forest they live in and depend upon.



Max, Carol, and Munny Rochom

Due to CCI's success in educating and placing our students in jobs which benefit their community, WCS approached us seeking a proposal for a similar program tailored to their situation. We have agreed on a partnership in which we will use our format of screening and selection as well as written commitments from poor but capable students who will then return to their communities and use their education to benefit their people.



Leap Roman and Amb. W Patrick Murphy

We will continue to emphasize the fields of education and health care for the WCS students, but also promote ecology, environmental studies, forest management, sustained development, and ecotourism. WCS will directly support the students from the sanctuary. There will be no cost to CCI, but rather our manager will now have a paid part-time student assistant to help administer the additional workload.

This is a win-win situation. Our program gains five more college level students who will pledge to return to their community upon graduation, our effective reach will extend into new territory creating more role models for the Montagnard people and we continue to give back to our loyal friends who supported us so long ago (although it still seems like yesterday).

Remember Mike Benge's words, "If it were not for the Montagnard supporting us there would be many more names on that black granite wall in DC"

On behalf of your students, myself, Carol, Rich and Lewis, thank you.

Michael "Max" Lund
President, CCI

Late-Breaking news about the Reunion.

1. I am negotiating with two possible hotel and should have that finalized soon.
2. Transportation from the Columbus Airport to the hotel will be provided by the hotel.
3. Transportation from Atlanta is available from Groome Bus Co. to downtown Columbus for \$70, I believe I can get a group discount. The hotel will pick up from the bus terminal.
4. Afternoon presentations will be from our members and will include one or more of the Texas Tech folks as well. I will send a call for papers out to all attendees. Presentations will be 30 minutes and will mostly be about personal experiences with photos (hopefully some Counterpart photos as well). No gore.
5. Lunch at the mess hall (DFAC) is \$6.00 (cash only) and there are more choices than you can imagine. I plan to build that cost into the registration so I can just pay for everyone to save time.
6. Base access should not be an issue. One person per bus or POV needs either a military ID (Retired is fine) or a VA card. A VA card gets you into the commissary and PX, not sure there is time for either. We will likely use the commissary to stock the hospitality suite.
7. I am working on the keynote speaker and have several folks in mind.

Suggestions for any and all of the above are welcome.

...Len Ganz, Reunion Coordinator

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 In Their Words: A Bearable Likeness of Truth. Jim Barker (Self-published. Contact Jim Barker by email erodemango@yahoo.com) or telephone: (669)-216-9667. \$15.00.

COUNTERPARTS Charter Member Jim Barker has written and published a booklet that showcases his remarkable fluency in the Vietnamese language. Entitled "*Vietnam in Their Words: A Bearable Likeness of Truth*," Jim collected verbal vignettes of his conversations -- in Vietnamese, both Northern and Southern dialects -- with a wide range of Vietnamese people. Ranging from his arrival as a young radio intercept operator and analyst through his many post-war return trips to Vietnam, each short vignette reveals the importance of true inter-personal communication and the ideas and revelations that come from people-to-people contacts.

His contacts covered every aspect of Vietnam in those early wartime years as a young soldier to the many people he met in his work across a variety of NGO and private programs to improve knowledge and peoples' lives. Whether interrogating captured enemy POWs, working on behalf of Amerasian children, or working to receive and resettle boat people and political refugees, or running post-war marathon races in Saigon and Hanoi, Jim had an amazing ability to go one-on-one with a full range of Vietnamese people.

A heartwarming addition at the end of the booklet are several of Jim's poetry compositions, which, in Jim's words, ". . . illustrates some of the deep personal connection beyond words many of us have with the Vietnam Experience."

I thoroughly enjoyed reading through Jim's variety of personal experiences. Jim's booklet is short in length (less than 70 pages) but full of a range of American-Vietnamese people-to-people experiences made possible by his fluency in the Vietnamese language. Jim's booklet is self-produced and family-published and available only by contacting Jim Barker by email (erodemango@yahoo.com) or telephone: (669)-216-9667. The price: \$15.00.

... John Haseman

Books noted but not Reviewed:

The Green Berets in the Land of a Million Elephants. Joseph Celeski's book on Green Berets in Laos, from the early days. 313 pages. Casemate publishing. With photos. Author Col. (Ret.) Joseph Celeski is a 30-year veteran of Special Forces though he did not serve in Laos during time period examined. The book is amply documented with many footnotes and photos. This is one of the only books to thoroughly examine the *White Start* program in Laos in early 60s prior to the Laotian Neutrality Agreements of '62.

"Shadow Commander: The Epic Story of Donald D. Blackburn -- Guerrilla Leader and Special Forces

Hero." Blackburn fought on Luzon during WWII, in Laos and Vietnam more recently, and was Special Assistant for Counterinsurgency and Special Activities when he oversaw prep and operations for the Son Tay Raid. Both available on Amazon

John Haseman has had another article accepted for publication. Co-authored with retired CWO-5 John Harris, at his retirement the longest-serving helicopter pilot from the Vietnam War era, the article describes the importance of a single medevac of an RF soldier to both Haseman and Harris. The article will be in the Autumn issue of Vietnam Magazine.



CWO-5 (retiree) John Harris (l) and COL (retired) John Haseman (r) meet (March 2023) for the first time since a medevac in November 1972.

A POEM

The following Poem was submitted by COUNTERPARTS member Doug Highfield.

Forever Young

I stood before that somber black granite wall
I grow older, less years left than more
Cheeks wet --- a clear blue sky
Names of friends and brothers before me
Just graduated from high school or out of college
We stood up and answered our country's Call
We were Young

Many new friends — Strange new country
The heat, the humidity, and the mud
And oh — the many shades of green
Sudden noise — mass confusion
A yell for a Medic
A cry for Mom
He will be, Forever Young

I recall my friends from 'years' ago
Our children — and their sons and daughters
Are fighting the wars of their generation
By the Grace of God
May they NEVER have to stand in a hallowed Shrine
To recall their Brothers and Sisters in Arms
And remember them as always being
Forever Young

*Doug Highfield
12 Feb 2012*



White T-shirts all sizes (M, L, and XL. \$12.00 for XXL)	\$10.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Patch (3x 4.75" Oval 7 Color Logogram)	\$6.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Decal (3x 4.75" Oval 7 Color Logogram)	\$2.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Lapel Pin (.75x 1.06" Oval, Bronze over Pewter)	\$12.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Challenge Coin (1.5" dia. solid bronze, Counterparts Logo one side Map of Southeast Asia other side)	\$10.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Baseball style Cap (direct embroidery logogram)	\$15.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Coffee Mug (Counterparts color logo).....	\$11.00
COUNTERPARTS Knit Polo shirt with collar Black. (Embroidered Counterparts Logo, Medium, Large, 2XL).....	\$20.00
MACV Shoulder Patch (full color mfg. 1968).....	\$3.00
COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Jacket, black, Logo. (Large only).....	\$35.00

Shipping and handling fee is \$6.00

Please send prepaid orders (including Shipping & Handling Fee) with US bank check or US money order payable to:

**Mike McMunn
Counterparts Quartermaster
2310 Newberry St, Williamsport, PA 17701 USA**

**For information, call 570-220-8156.
covan2@verizon.net**

**GET READY!
COUNTERPARTS REUNION 2024
AT
FORT MOORE (BENNING)
GEORGIA**



**COUNTERPARTS/THDNA
607 WAMPLER DRIVE
CHARLESTON SC 29412**