



COUNTERPARTS

TƯƠNG HỮU ĐÔNG NAM Á

SITREP

Volume XIX

Issue 3

Summer 2019

In Memoriam

D. L. “Pappy” Hicks; 1933- 2019

Lament for a great warrior lost...remembering Captain D.L. “Pappy” Hicks and a life of honor and service

With great sadness we announce that Captain D.L Hicks, US Army, died June 20, 2019 in Troup, Texas. We have lost our long time serving Life Member and former COUNTERPARTS Commander, held in high esteem by us all through the decades simply as “Pappy.”

From the savage battle of the Punchbowl in Korea as an 18-year old infantryman, to deep covert operations with Army Special Forces in Vietnam and Laos in the early to late 1960’s, Pappy was the quintessential “cold war” warrior. I first met Pappy at the March 1991 reunion in Houston, Texas. From that time on, he and I were inextricably interlinked in helping Montagnards and Hmong in the expatriate communities in the US. He served as Commanding Officer from 2001 to 2006 at a time when his leadership was pivotal. Pappy introduced COUNTERPARTS to two of his fellow SF warriors whom the association extended distinguished membership: Charlie Beckwith and Roger Donlon.

As a Native American hailing from Troup, Texas, Pappy developed a particular affinity for the indigenous hill people with whom he advised and fought with in the Central Highlands of Vietnam and the remote hinterlands of Laos. From the time Pappy left Southeast Asia to his passing, he was forever committed to carrying on the fight as a staunch human rights advocate for the Montagnards and the Hmong.

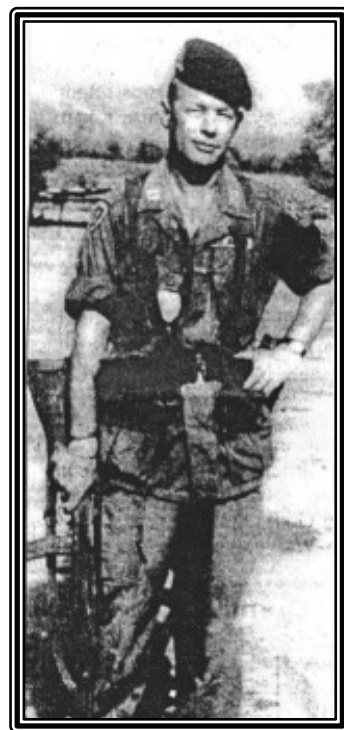
In 1986, Pappy was influential in helping the very first group of Montagnard refugees, who had miraculously survived a combat trek across Cambodia to a Thai camp, to get safe passage to the US where they were resettled in the Carolinas. Not long after I joined Counterparts, several members joined together in an effort to help another group of Montagnards that had been hiding in a jungle redoubt in Mondulkiri Province, Cambodia from 1975 to 1991. At that time, the combined high level back-channel efforts by Mike Benge and Pappy Hicks were pivotal in enabling the swift exodus of that group of refugees to safe resettlement in the US. Pappy was always ready to undertake the impossible for the sake of his friends.

Pappy remained closely rooted to his friendships, joining in every major special commemorative salute sponsored by COUNTERPARTS to give honor and tribute to former battlefield allies. His life-long friendship with Major General Vang Pao brought the two together in May 1997 with 2,000 Hmong veterans to dedicate a living memorial at Arlington National Cemetery in honor of the Hmong and their American Advisors.

Communicating with Pappy over the years invariably found him ensconced in his beloved, “War Room” at his home in Troup. Those close to Pappy remember he ended every email and letter with the same closing refrain as he did at the end of a reunion or veterans event ...extending a firm handshake with a farewell message to “Hang tough!”

...A precept to remember him by.

...Grant McClure
COUNTERPARTS Commander





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Commander's Corner

Recent news: On behalf of the membership of *Counterparts*, on Friday, May 9, 2019, Mike Benge and I joined in with representatives from Vietnamese-American Communities from across the US to attend the 25th annual commemoration event of ***Vietnam Human Rights Day*** at the Hart Senate Office Building in Washington, DC. Vietnam Human Rights Day came about in May 1994 by joint resolutions of the Senate and House of Representatives, becoming Public Law on May 25, 1994. The primary theme of this year's event was on the SRV's continuing harsh suppression on freedom of expression and pernicious crackdown on Social Media and Internet freedom.

Houston...now that was one heck of a great reunion, and one of the best turnouts ever! The After Action Report of the event is included in this issue of SITREP courtesy of our PIO, Rich Webster. Terrific coordinating effort by Ray Robison, Henry Newin and Lewis Grissaffi. It was wonderful to meet so many members who have recently joined as well as those who were attending their first reunion. We were all heartened by the warm welcome we received by the Vietnamese-American community in *Little Saigon* which led us to the ***Vietnam War Memorial*** for a profoundly moving and memorable shared commemorative tribute with our fellow RVNAF comrades-in arms. Going forward beginning with the planned 2020 San Diego reunion, I hope we will endeavor to connect this way with our battlefield allies in the local community as a regular feature of our get togethers. My suggestion as a group of Co Van's assembling at such an event, we should plan to stand in unison at some point during the program and deliver a formal salute to our allies.

Following Dr. Ron Milam's enlightening keynote address we had another reunion first; the banquet event led to a delightful evening of entertainment by the remarkable musical & vocal talents of member Henry Newinn and his son John who delivered a marvelous impersonation of Elvis. Mixing that with the fun of an open dance floor was yet another aspect of our get together that I would encourage us to continue with in future reunion planning.

See y'all in San Diego!

.....Dr. Grant McClure

Commander, Counterparts/THDNA

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 62650-1860

2019 COUNTERPARTS REUNION, HOUSTON, TEXAS

HIGHLIGHTS

By

Rich Webster, PAO

The 2019 *Counterparts* Reunion was held April 3-7 At the Crowne Plaza Hotel Southwest Freeway, Houston Texas.

There were 15 new members attending the Reunion first time. MSG Sam Diamond, 66-67, 4th Infantry; MACV'CORDS 68-69, Tm 42; 70-71, 1LT Jim Mahoney, 68/69, 32nd Rangers, 11th recon, 7th ARVN, 1LT John Halas 1968/69 MAT 37, Vinh Long and 501st Infantry, Dr. Bob Worthington, District Senior Advisor Tm 43, 1968; ARVN Infantry, 1966/67; province RF/PF advisor. Michael L Walker, 62nd Aviation Company, 72/73, John Putthoff, MACV Radar Detachment, Tm 1, 72/7, 1LT Bob Lee, MACV team 75, Sr advisor, 7th Division recon, Kathleen (Kathy) Levinger wife of deceased member Bruce W Levinger, Mary Nguyen, nurse advisor/Tm 25 with MILPHAP 19, (training Montagnard nurses), Glade Presnal Tm 31, 1970-71, Don Stader, Tm 43, Steve Cunnion, Tm 18, 29th Civil Affairs, SP/5 Paul Giannone, army medic, 29th Civil Affairs, Hue, 1970, Dr. James B Wells, son of Major Jack J Wells, civilian advisor, killed in Hau Nghia Province, 1965, Gary Tellier, Tm 22.

First Time attendee Paul Giannone, an army medic, brought his recently published book, *A Life in Dark Places*, which he offered for sale. Paul spent his career working with refugees around the world in Africa, Serbia, Sudan, Cambodia, plus his two years in Vietnam.

Special guest attending was Uyen H. (Carie) Nguyen, Ph. D. Candidate from the Department of History at Texas Tech University. Daughter of an ARVN soldier, Carie is doing her doctoral thesis on Mobile Advisory Teams. She interviewed a number of members who served on MAT teams.

Associate member, Dr. James B Wells was looking forward to corresponding or meeting with anyone who may have any direct or indirect knowledge of his father's death, or the national policemen that died with him, as a result of crash under mysterious circumstances of the of an *Air America* plane he was in. His father, Major Jack J Wells, was a civilian advisor, killed in Hau Nghia Province, Sept 27, 1965. Paul distributed a two-page summary of the event. He can be contacted at James.wells@eku.edu or 859-806-5784.

Steve Sherman had a table for his "Indo China Series" of books on the Vietnam War published by his RADIX foundation. Contact, Sherman1@flash.net Steve's other websites include www.VIET-MYTHS.net and a 5-day seminar dispelling the myths of the Vietnam War. (I attended in 2004 and it was excellent. Also see www.SPECIALFORCESBOOK.com

Member Owen S Haddock had a display of articles he wrote for MAGAZINE ESCAPES in Kentucky honoring the service of Vietnam Veterans. See his web site www.valuesvirtuesandoutcomes.net Local Vietnamese television stations interviewed Grant McClure, Ray Robison, Jim Barker, and Henry Newinn.

CEREMONY AT VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL

On Friday morning, COUNTERPARTS members attended a joint ceremony with the South Vietnamese community at the Vietnam Veterans memorial Houston to honor our fellow comrades in arms. The several hundred in attendance included former ARVN soldiers/ leaders/families in the South Vietnamese community/ a Buddhist monk/ Catholic Priest, and bugler to play *taps*.

COUNTERPARTS members are honored and proud to be here today in recognizing the great sacrifice you made in your fight for freedom. We have formed strong bonds and you have sacrificed so much in your fight against communism. The Vietnam Veteran did not get a welcome home, but unlike you, we had a home to come back to. We will never forget the special friendship/trust we formed in combat."

Dressed in camouflage fatigues, the ARVN representative of Houston added these remarks. "Welcome home to Little Saigon. Freedom is not free. We shall return home one day and liberate Vietnam." He was referring to the fact that there is no freedom of the press, religion, or human rights in Vietnam today, where independent writers/ bloggers are imprisoned.

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In his remarks the Buddhist monk encouraged those present to contribute to the making of the future film, “The Vietnam War through our eyes”, under development that counters the Burns/Novick documentary that has infuriated the South Vietnamese community here in America. A two-hour documentary from the South Vietnamese perspective is under development by the producer/directive of “RIDE THE THUNDER”. The Burns film spent \$30 million dollars and is a dishonest distortion of the South Vietnamese military/civilian government during the War.

Max Lund and his former Vietnamese counterpart presented a wreath at the ceremony. A giant urn rested in front of the memorial. COUNTERPARTS and fellow South Vietnamese veterans lit *joss* sticks to plant in the urn to honor our fallen and forgotten comrades.

COUNTERPART Jim Barker, fluent in Vietnamese and a former Army Linguist in Vietnam and survivor of the Battle of Kontum, added a few remarks in Vietnamese detailing the strong bonds between Advisors and their Vietnamese Counterparts.

BUSINESS MEETING

The annual Business meeting was held on Saturday Morning, April 7. Commander Grant McClure called the meeting to order with member introductions. The 54 members present comprised the largest group of former advisors to ever attend a COUNTERPARTS reunion. Grant gave a brief overview of his activities as COUNTERPARTS Commander during 2018 to further our mission.

Living close to Washington, DC, Grant supported the Boat People SOS, “Lend a Hand” fundraising event in Falls Church, VA; attended the Vietnam Human Rights Day; attended, with member Mike Bengé, events to support the HR 5621 Vietnam Human Rights Act and met with congressman; attended, along with Mike Bengé, the Vietnam War Symposium at the National Archives; and was in attendance at the Wounded Vietnamese Ranger fundraising event at Falls Church.

Grant presented “Certificates of Appreciation” to Henry Newinn, Lewis Grissaffi, and Ray Robison for their efforts in planning, organizing and hosting the reunion in Houston.

COUNTERPARTS has honored recently Deceased Life Member Jim Reckner as “Distinguished Member.” A former Naval Officer, Jim became a professor at Texas Tech University, and the first director of what became the Vietnam Center and Archives at Texas Tech. Jim passed away Nov 30th in Lubbock.

Life member Bob Worthington who was in attendance for the first time was recognized for his book and documentary film, “Under Fire with the ARVN Infantry.” The one-hour film was shown Friday evening in the hospitality room.

New member, Dr. Ron Milam, Professor and history professor at Texas Tech University, was introduced. A former lieutenant and author, Milam was an advisor on a MAT team and was recently inducted into the OCS Hall of Fame at Fort Benning, Georgia. Dr Milam was the guest speaker at the banquet.

MEMBERSHIP:

John Haseman reported that he had been chairman for 10 years. Since 2009, there have been 120 new members. There are 110 annual paying dues members and 155 lifetime members. There are 316 inactive members and if there is no contact after two years, they are moved off the mailing list. Each member receives 4 dues notices and two emails from John before this happens. There are 113 known deceased members. Mike McMunn who was not present handles the members in memoriam.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Jim O’Malley reported total income for 2019 was \$20,299 broken down as: reunion income--\$14,393; 2019 dues income \$2,900; life membership-\$1070; member donations-\$545; and village market \$1,431. The reunion made about \$1200 thanks to Ray, Lewis, and Henry. After paying expenses for the reunion and the \$7000 members voted to donate to three charities described further in report, COUNTERPARTS has \$128.38 in the bank.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Rich Webster encouraged members to send in their stories about their experiences in the Vietnam War to either Rich or Ken Jacobsen, the SITREP editor. Don't let your experience die with you. Articles in the SITREP are sent to the Texas Tech Archives where they become part of the official history of the Vietnam War. Ken and Rich's email addresses are on the inside cover of the SITREP. Rich or Ken will assist members with their story if requested.

SITREP:

Ken Jacobsen has been editor of the SITREP since 1993. The Newsletter is published 2 or 3 times a year. The SITREPs are posted on our web site-unfortunately at this time that last one posted was 2016. Jim Alkek who runs the COUNTERPARTS web site will correct this. Ken encouraged members to write up their Vietnam experiences. Ken reminded members that they must have a password set up with John Haseman when joining COUNTERPARTS that allows them to get into the membership files on the web site. If you have forgotten yours, you need to contact John or Jim Alkek for a new password.

QUARTERMASTER/XO:

Hank Choy displayed a new CO VAN MY scroll patch and also a new MACV/CO VAN MY hat that he will have made and they will be offered for sale by the village market. Hank also had for sale our newly designed COUNTERPARTS/THDNA Challenge coin. Hank also presented his research on a reunion in Hawaii which is not feasible because of cost.

HISTORIAN:

Carol Lund provides a photo history of the members and guests at each reunion. She received three large boxes of historical COUNTERPARTS material from former historian Jim Davis that will be given to Texas Tech Archives. Dr Jim Milan explained that all material will be digitalized within a year and be available under the COUNTERPARTS collection.

ANNUAL CHARITABLE GIVING:

Max Lund reported on CAMBODIA CORPS Inc., an organization that provides college scholarships to young Montagnard girls from the provinces of Monduliri and Ratanakiri in Eastern Cambodia. CAMBODIA CORPS presently supports 18 Montagnard girls in a residence house in Ban Lung so they can finish high school, and 12 girls in their Indigenous Student Center who attend colleges in Phnom Penh. Max is the new president of CCI taking over from member Tommy Daniels, the founder. Max and Carol just returned from Cambodia where they spent two months supervising the program. See www.cambodiakorps.org if you are interested in contributing personally.

Rich Webster reported on the VIETNAM HEALING FOUNDATION, that sends small grants of money to Vietnam to be distributed to former ARVN/COUNTERPARTS, many without legs or arms, who are living in poverty, because they receive no aid from the present government. Last year VHF distributed \$80 to 110 former Vietnamese soldiers twice a year. A short "you tube" video from the VHF was shown during Friday evening. See www.thevhf.org

Members voted to continue funding these two organizations plus the VETS WITH A MISSION that has been active providing medical care. CAMBODIA CORP-\$3500, Vietnam Healing Foundation-\$2500, and Vets with a Mission, \$1000.

Steve Leighton gave a moving testimony about his former Vietnamese ranger counterpart, Lt Col Le Than Long, who died recently, explaining that relationships forged in combat are hard to put into words and last forever.

Grant described Counterparts relationship with deceased member, Stu Beckley, the creator and founder of the famous, SOLDIERS STONE, which is located in an undesignated remote area in a National Forest in Colorado. The stones with engraved captions from multiple languages are laid out in the pattern of a Special Forces A camp to honor those who gave their lives fighting for freedom in the Indochina Wars.

Steven Sherman, founder of Vietnam Vets for Factual History, gave a short presentation on his RADIX foundation and his efforts to present and preserve the history of the Vietnam War from the soldier's viewpoint.

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Sherman, a former Green Beret who has documented the history of Special Forces in Vietnam, reported that historian, Bob Sorley's next book will be about Advisors in Vietnam. There is a free PDF down load of his magazine at www.vvfh.org Steve had a table with his books for sale.

NEXT YEAR's REUNION San Diego will be the site of the 2020 reunion-hosted by Lewis Grissaffi, Jim O'Malley, and Andrew Martinez. The Reunion will be April 15-18 2020.

BANQUET DINNER

Over 100 attendees (former ARVN soldiers, Co Vans and wives) were treated to a grand buffet and a presentation by Dr Ron Milam from Texas Tech University. Dr Milam, a former CO VAN himself, who served with the Montagnards in the Central Highlands has authored two books on the Vietnam War, his latest being, *The Vietnam War in Popular Culture (2 volumes): The influence of America's Most Controversial War on Everyday Life*. Dr. Milam's official title at Texas Tech is, Associate Professor & Executive Director of the Institute for Peace and Conflict (IPAC).

His presentation revolved around this book and also his teaching of the Vietnam War to Vietnamese students in Saigon in 2010. Dr Milam observed that, "The Vietnamese students in Saigon were very interested in how Vietnam is taught in America. When I showed them a picture of the old South Vietnamese flag, they gasped. That's illegal here they said. I left it up for a while. When I showed them the American flag, they clapped?" (One of his students in that class in Vietnam was a guest at the banquet, Uyen H. (Carie) Nguyen, daughter of an ARVN officer and now at Texas Tech working on her PhD thesis).

Former Lieutenant Milam, has also authored, *Not a Gentleman's War: An inside View of Junior Officers in the Vietnam War*. In that book based on extensive research, Milan concludes that, "The Lieutenants who served in combat performed their duties with efficiency and aplomb, unlike the criticism afforded them after the war."

Henry Newinn and his son John provided the entertainment after the meal; Elvis Presley himself showed up in the person of John, and we rocked and rolled with the music of the 60's. Later, several Vietnamese singers sang poignant songs depicting long ago thoughts/sadness about the Vietnam War.

The reunions keep getting better. Don't miss the next one

Rich Webster

PAO COUNTERPARTS

From the XO

An Open Challenge to COUNTERPARTS members.

At this past Reunion in Houston I was greatly impressed by the short presentation that was given to our members on the monetary contributions we and others have given to needy former RVNAF soldiers. The "Thank You" signs those old soldiers displayed really hit home in helping me to realize that they were not getting any support from the current Vietnamese Communist Government for their medical care.

I would like to propose that at our general meeting next year we consider doing some kind of initiative to "adopt" needy RVNAF Veterans. To get the ball rolling, I will, as an individual provide the funds to support one former comrade on an annual basis. I would not want to be recognized as the supporting individual to the recipient of the funds. If other members support this idea, the end result could be that that we can help more individuals without depleting COUNTERPARTS' treasury.

...Hank Choy

COUNTERPARTS XO

NEW MEMBERS

Counterparts is pleased to welcome a large group of new members to Counterparts, four of whom attended the Houston Reunion.

Stephen O. Cunnion, U.S. Army, served with the 29th Civil Affairs Company, MACV Advisory Team 1, Hue, from 1970 to 1971. One of their largest projects was construction of the 80-bed Tu Ai hospital at Phu Bai. Many Counterparts members met Stephen at the Houston reunion. He lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Patrick J. Gillis, U.S. Army, served on MACV Advisory Team 56 from January 1968 to December 1968. Among his several tasks he was the U.S. RTO in the Phong Dinh Province TOC in Can Tho. Patrick lives in Riverside, California.

Aaron W. Gritzmaker, U.S. Army, served as a medic with the 5th Special Forces Group, assigned to Detachment A-100, the I Corps Mobil Guerrilla Force from June 1966 to January 1976. The team had both American and Australian leaders/advisors. Aaron learned about Counterparts from his Australian comrades. He was awarded two Bronze Stars for valor, and a Purple Heart after being severely wounded and medically evacuated. Aaron lives in Maypearl, Texas.

Michael A. Hood, U.S. Army, joined Counterparts at the Houston reunion after being "recruited" by fellow MACV Advisory Team 1 member Andrew Martinez. He served as an advisor with the ARVN 1st Ranger Group from October 1971 to October 1972. Michael lives in Houston.

Michael R. Latimer, U.S. Army, served as MAT Team leader on MACV Advisory Team 56 from May 1970 to April 1971. Michael lives in Riesel, Texas.

Ms. Uyen H. "Carie" Nguyen, civilian, joined Counterparts at the Houston Reunion. She is a PhD Candidate in History at Texas Tech University, researching MAT Teams for her Dissertation. Carie interviewed many reunion attendees during the reunion. Carie's late father was an ARVN officer. She continues her desire to interview as many former MAT Team members as possible.

Drexel L. Smith, U.S. Navy, served on the Naval Advisory Group from March 1967 to April 1968. Although assigned to the NAG Headquarters in Saigon, he was a Technical Ship Rider and operated primarily along the Bassac River from Can Tho. In Saigon he was involved in repairing and refitting U.S. Navy ships for transfer to the South Vietnamese Navy. Drexel lives in West Covina, California.

Donald E. Stader, civilian, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), served in Vietnam continuously from August 1970 to April 1975. His assignments included Deputy District Senior Advisor, Cu Chi District, Hau Nghia Province (MACV Advisory Team 43) August 1970 to February 1972; Refugee Resettlement Officer, Phuoc Tuy Province (February 1972-April 1972); Province Development Officer, Advisory Team 43, Hau Nghia Province (June 1972-January 1973); Deputy Province Representative, Tay Ninh Province (January 1973-April 1974); Province Representative, Hau Nghia Province (May 1974-February 1975); and Province Representative, Tay Ninh Province (February - April 1975). Don was delighted to attend the Houston reunion.

*...John Haseman
Membership Chairman*

FIRST REMINDER: Counterparts annual dues for 2019 became payable on January 1. Members should send their checks, made out to "Counterparts" for \$35.00, and mail to the Counterparts Membership Officer: John Haseman, 555 West Saddle Drive, Grand Junction CO 81507. Or if you choose, upgrade to lifetime membership for \$350.00

COUNTERPARTS Reunion 2020, San Diego.

Schedule and Reservations

Handlery Hotel San Diego, CA

950 Hotel Circle North San Diego, Ca. 92108 (short Uber or cab to hotel - **no hotel pickup**)

Reservations: (619) 298 0511. Specify "COUNTERPARTS" Reunion.

Room rate: \$145.38 (\$129.00 plus 12.7% taxes & fees)

Reservation Cutoff date: March 20, 2020

Reunion Registration::

\$170 per person (includes access to hospitality room & refreshments, banquet dinner, dinner cruise & bus trips).)

Banquet Dinner Guest \$60.00 (banquet dinner only)

To Register, Please Send:

Name of member:

Email address or other contact information:,

Name of Spouse and name of guests:.

Make checks payable to Counterparts and mail to:

Lewis Grissaffi

1221 Vega Street

San Diego, Ca. 92110

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Wed. April 15

Registration, Refreshments & camaraderie.

Hospitality room

8:00 am - 10:00 pm

Thursday April 16

Free day to explore San Diego on your own with many interesting places & venues to enjoy. (Contact Lewis for ideas or help with reservations)

Hospitality room

8:00 am - 10:00 pm

Fri. April 17

Bus trip to Ft. Rosecrans & Cabrillo National Monument

9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Dinner Cruise

5:00pm-10:00pm

Hospitality room 8:00am-10:00pm

Sat. April 18

Business meeting 9:00 am - 12:00pm (working on alternative activity for spouses during meeting)

Banquet dinner-

Cash bar 5:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Guest speaker (**TBA**) Tom Green has someone in mind and will send his bio soon; nothing concrete.

Hospitality room 8:00 am - 10:00 pm

Sunday April 19

Check out & Good Byes/See you in 2021

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DAUGHTER OF ARVN SOLDIER JOINS COUNTERPARTS

A Special guest at the Houston Reunion was new COUNTERPARTS member Uyen H (Carie) Nguyen, a Ph.D Candidate from the Department of History at Texas Tech University. Carie's father was an ARVN officer who spent years in the reeducation camps after the fall of Saigon.

"They told my father to only bring provisions for a 3 day camp but they kept him for much longer than that. He spent more than three years in the camps before he was released. He never really recovered from deprivations endured there," said Carie.

At the end of April 1975, Carie's father decided to stay in Vietnam to take care of his aging mother and his wife, (Carie's mother), whom he had just married in February 1975. When it was discovered that documentation allowing South Vietnamese who had worked with the Americans to immigrate to the U.S did not include Carie's name, her father wrote repeatedly to the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok (at that time, before 1995, US did not have diplomatic relations with Vietnam) to include her. When the paperwork was finally corrected, after many years struggling with health issues complications from the camp, he took his last breath in November 11, 2000 just before the final interview with the U.S. Consulate in Saigon. After three days taking care of the traditional funeral at home, Carie's grieving mother came to the Consulate and was told that since her husband had been the main holder of this HO/ODP his case had died with him. When Veteran's Day comes every year, Carie said that her heart is overwhelmed with sadness and pain in thinking about her own deceased father and many fallen soldiers of all sides whose families were left behind, but such pain encourages her to continue her current education and research as a path to healing and supporting veterans and their families.

After finishing college at the top of her class in 2008, Carie worked for many years to provide for her family before she could finally apply to Texas Tech University in 2013 under the mentorship of Dr. Milam.

Dr. Ron Milam, guest speaker at the Houston banquet, had met Carie in 2006 in Saigon when he was taking a group of Texas Tech students on an annual study abroad trip organized by the Vietnam Center and Archive. Carie earned a Master's degree in 2015 and was interviewed by the university in this article: <https://www.depts.ttu.edu/international/highlight/Uyen.php>. Finding her passion in history, she continues to pursue the doctorate degree. She is now working on her PhD dissertation on the U.S. Army's MATs (Mobile Advisory Teams) advisors' experience in Vietnam working with the Regional Forces/Popular Forces/People's Self-Defense Forces. Her mentor, Dr Milam, served on a MAT team in the Central Highlands.

Carie said that she hopes her doctorate research on MAT advisors will contribute to a deeper understanding of the American experience in Vietnam not from the top-down perspective, but from the bottom-up approach with a focus on the role of the American foot soldiers/ field advisors and what they experienced out there in the villages and hamlets of South Vietnam. Carie was busy interviewing those members who served on the Mobile Advisory Teams throughout the reunion. When the South Vietnamese anthem was played at the Friday ceremony to honor fallen comrades, Carie silently shed tears, "That's the first time I have ever heard the anthem." In Vietnam today, it's against the law to play the anthem or even display the former South Vietnamese flag.

If you served on a MAT team in Vietnam, Carie would like to get in touch with you and interview you for her dissertation research. She can be reached via email address: uyen.nguyen@ttu.edu. Carie also expressed a sincere desire to find Counterparts and Americans who worked in Nha Trang (II-Corps) alongside her father, whose name is: Nhon (full name: Nguyen Van Nhon). Her father left behind handwritten notes of some American friends' names that were close to him, including: "Lou G. Maier, Jack Clement, Martin L. Caplets, David B. Finney, Lonnie W. Glen, Jack D. Gale, Patrick H. Dillon, Keith D. Swartz, John Lopack, James A. Slade, John F. Kirpatrick, and William E. Young." If any of these names is familiar to you, please kindly reach out to help her connect with her father's friends.

SFC HO VAN BE – LOYAL, RELIABLE, UNFORGETTABLE FRIEND

By
John Haseman

... .Sergeant Ho Van Be, whose loyalty to his advisor transcended any requirement of duty or position, the one man among many in Vietnam I proudly call friend, whose knowledge and dedication bridged the gap between nationalities and cultures, and made my job easier and richer every day, who turned down a transfer to his secure home district "until Dai-uy Haseman goes home too". . . .

ARVN Sergeant First Class Ho Van Be was a Hoa Hao from An Giang Province in the western Mekong Delta. I first met him in 1968 when I was the 9th MI Detachment (Forward) commander at Dong Tam and he was one of my counterintelligence section interpreters. He was young, early 20s, and he spoke fluent English learned in school. Like all young males he was drafted into the army and got assigned as an interpreter with U.S. units because of his English language skill. He was a good worker with a pleasant personality and we got along well. His nickname among the Americans as well as his fellow interpreters was "Tiger."



John Haseman and SGT Be

Fast forward to July 1971 when I arrived in Kien Hoa Province. We had two ARVN interpreters at Ham Long. Early on I learned that Sergeant Be was an interpreter on another Kien Hoa district advisory team. Be had also heard that I had been assigned to Kien Hoa and he was anxious to work with me again. At my urging the two district senior advisors arranged a trade, and so. Be fit right into our small team in Ham Long. We got caught up and I found Be to be more mature than three years earlier; he had married and had a son. His family lived with his wife's parents in An Giang Province, far to the west of Kien Hoa.

When we closed out the Ham Long advisory team in May 1972 I asked Be if he wanted to move to Mo Cay with me, and he readily agreed. When I was assigned to go back to Ham Long as DSA in August 1972 I took Sergeant Be with me, and the two of us continued to work as an effective team.

At some point one of the Vietnamese officers asked Be when he was going to return to an assignment in his home province. He said, simply, "I stay with Dai-Uy Haseman. When he goes home, I go home." When I finished my assignment, two weeks after the deadline for all American advisors to leave the field, Be remained with me in Mo Cay until we were able to make it safely out to Ben Tre. I processed out of Vietnam, and Be returned to An Giang Province.

Haseman and Be on the Ben Tre helipad, February 1973

In 1974 I stopped off in Vietnam on leave en route to my next assignment in Thailand, so I could visit the Delta again. I went out to Ham Long, where I found out that LTC Son had been promoted to Colonel and reassigned as Province Chief in neighboring Vinh Binh Province. The PSA contacted his colleague in Vinh Binh and I had a chance to say hello on the radio to Colonel Son. He immediately invited us to visit him in Tra Vinh. I took a civilian bus to Vinh Long, where a convoy of jeeps from Vinh Binh met me at the Vinh Long side of the ferry and drove me to Vinh Binh, the adjoining province. Sergeant Be arrived the next day, and we spent three days as guests in Colonel Son's official province chief's residence in Tra Vinh, the province capital.

At the end of the visit to Tra Vinh, Sergeant Be returned to An Giang, and Colonel Son sent me all the way back to Ben Tre in one of his jeeps. I then took a bus back to Saigon and flew on to Bangkok for my assignment there.

For me it was a difficult parting. We had spent 2 ½ years in close, daily contact, frequently sharing danger and risk, both of us lucky to be untouched by the enemy even though many colleagues had paid the supreme price. I was, presciently, quite sure we would not see each other again.

Sergeant Be and I maintained sporadic letter contact for a few months, and he sent me a photo of him sitting on a rock during an operation in the Seven Mountains area of Chau Doc Province.

Then the letters stopped.

After a long while I received word from another Vietnamese friend that Sergeant Be had been KIA during that same operation, not long after that photo was taken. I was devastated, and still think about him all the time.

Remembering.....

Rest in peace, my friend



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