

# THE PROUD WARRIOR



WORLD WAR II \* VIETNAM \* GULF WAR \* SOMALIA \* PEACE TIME

National Newsletter of the 1/9 Network, Inc.

June 2005

## Remembering – Memorial Day 2005



That's a picture of the live "Three Soldiers" at my Vietnam Memorial Statue in Meriden. I bought all the clothing and web gear from Ebay and dress up some of my local Marine Corps League members. They really put on a heck of a show. You don't have to use it in the Proud Warrior. I just thought you'd like to see it.– Bill Hesse

Bill Hesse sent the above (blowup at the left); I kept going back to this picture for days, I don't know why, but I kept looking at Louis V. Daigle. I had looked for him on the KIA list, but he wasn't there. It wasn't until two days later that I found him on the 1/9 Roster. Louis V. Daigle served with Alpha Company and Killed in Action on September 30, 1968, his hometown is listed as Waterford New York.

Bill Hesse called me a few days later, after I had related the story to him by email, and said that he had gone to high school with Louis.

**They will not be forgotten as long as we remember them!**

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**MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Good Day Marines. I hope this newsletter finds you well. It's been a busy and hectic past few months since the last newsletter. It started with a trip to Melbourne Florida for the National Vietnam Veterans Reunion put on by the Florida Vietnam Veterans. I made the trip to recruit any 1/9er's I could find and to find brothers who we've lost in the past few years. I stayed with a friend of mine who had moved down there, Marty Lawler from 2/7, and his family in Bushnell. When I arrived at the reunion Doc Gaspard found me. By the end of the first day about 10 1/9er's were there. By the end of the weekend there were about 30 of us. We took over and owned the table leading into the stage area and had

Rebel Dave's flag flying proudly. (Hey Dave, who lost that piece of apparel at the hotel?)

A marine (Lionel Nelsen from Orlando) came up to me to tell me he was in 1/9 and never met anyone else since then. Then met a couple of brothers named Basham (Hey guys, tell me the story again about the marine who got folded up and left in the popcorn machine.). Also, I signed up a Sgt. Maj. Carl Christenson who looked like a marines' marine to me; very squared away. We were entertained that weekend by a 14 year old singer named Roxanne Richards. Boy could that girl belt out a tune. There were about 30,000 people there many staying in campers and I like many others stayed in a tent. It seemed like there were marines everywhere, from all outfits. When the Saturday afternoon picture was taken, they took up the entire hill in front of the stage. When they sang the Marine Hymn, I'll bet it could be heard in downtown Melbourne.

Two weeks later it was on to the Parris Island Rally. Joan and I arrived a couple of days early and drove off into the rural back roads for a day trip. The next5 morning we went to Col. Donnelly's house. I'm afraid we might have gotten him and Kathy out of bed. We sat and had coffee and discussed the upcoming Rally with the same anticipation and excitement we've all shared at a National Reunion. Back at the Days Inn we found Col. Radcliffe, Southeast Regional Coordinator Rob Fabian and his wife Kris. They were running around tying all the loose ends together and arranging things with the hotel so that those attending would have a comfortable stay and plenty of things to do. There were a few mistakes made by the hotel, but, they were quickly rectified. From the Shrimp Boil, at MCAS Beaufort, to the Bar-B-Q on Saturday afternoon, a great time was had by all. They did a GREAT Job coordinating things and getting together the Rally on such short notice.

One of the highlights of the Rally was watching John and Amanda's son, Paul, graduate from boot camp on Friday morning. Paul was the series high shooter on the rifle range, shooting a 242, beating John's score by 3 pts. Paul aspires to be a marine sniper. Those wanting a video copy of the graduation that morning should call the base (1-800-889-6734) and request one for the May 13<sup>th</sup> graduation.

A thank you to Gunny Sgt. Morgan, and Staff Sgt. Durham, for escorting us around the base and showing us a great time. Who was that mean drill instructor who yelled at us and made us get off the bus and onto the yellow footprints? The Sgt.'s showed up at our Bar-B-Q on Sat. and remarked how honored they were to be with "The Walking Dead" and what a great group we were.

I received many suggestions about the Network at the Rally. One of note was Weid's reintroduction of giving out scholarships and the idea that we start a

scholarship program. I'll be discussing with the board about setting up a committee to form some guidelines to qualify and apply for a scholarship with an amount to be determined. We'll set aside a fund that will be used for that purpose. I'll also be asking the board for permission to purchase a lap top computer to be used by the membership chairman. That would save the network future costs of programs and have the capacity to hold permanent files of the Network and be able to be passed to any future chairmen

At this time, I'm still waiting for more information about the reactivation of 1/9 to take place at Camp Lejeune later this year. I'll get the word out as soon as I hear something.

Past president, Frank Healey, Board member, Bill McKenzie, and South Central Regional Coordinator Dennis Lee, made a trip to Branson in May. They attended a Reunion Coordinators Conference put on by the Chamber of Commerce there. They had nothing but raves about the City, hotels and the people they met. We're now receiving Reunion proposals from several hotels there. So far they're all very exciting. Our three representatives were shown a "fantastic time" and received a wealth of information. Frank Healey also won an award while there (Frank ... you give a new meaning to the word SH). It looks like it's going to be one reunion not to miss. I'm open to suggestions about a possible theme.

Thanks to all of you that have sent in dues and donations. You've helped send this newsletter out and contributed generously to the success of this Network. You can be very proud. If you would like to help with a voluntary contribution, you can make a check out to: 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 9<sup>th</sup> Marines Network, Inc. and mail it to:

1<sup>st</sup> Bn 9<sup>th</sup> Marines Network, Inc.  
National Headquarters  
66 Clinton St.  
Meriden CT 06450-4517

Memorial Day has just passed. I hope that you participated in some sort of remembrance of veterans. For me it started Thursday night with a Mass of Colors from my town Every year we rotate to a difference church. Friday I spoke at the local high school about like in Vietnam (from a 1/9er's point of view). Saturday, it was a ceremony at town hall and at the Meriden Vietnams Monument where I debuted my living "Three Solders Statue" which was very successful. Sunday was a parade and Monday was a picnic. Remember that this August we celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of WWII. Bless those that went before us.

Till we meet again, take care of your health and plan for Branson in 2006.

Semper Fi is forever,  
Bill Hesse, National President

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## REUNION NEWS UPDATE !!!!!

Brothers, here's the latest news on next years reunion. Although not yet written in stone, it has been drawn in the sand and can be adjusted.

September 20 - 24 2006 Branson Missouri  
4 nights lodging with continental breakfast  
A manned reception desk, Welcome packets, Show planning  
A Branson representative with us during day time hours for the length of our reunion

Round trip airport shuttle (see Walter we listened to you)  
Wild West Barbeque with TJ Steer, Trips to the Veterans Museum, Outlet Shopping and the Stone Hill Winery,  
Showboat Branson Bell Dinner Cruise

Memorial Service with Color Guard, Memorial Breakfast Buffet, Dinner Banquet with a cash Bar, Dinner Party with D J or Live Band, Hospitality Room available to us 24/7 with smoking outside the room.

**All for the amazing price of only \$319 per person double Occupancy.**

Details on who to contact and the hotel will come at a future time. Plan your vacation time now and start that special cookie jar.

Semper Fi is forever,  
Bill Hesse  
National President

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## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Hello All:

It is time again for the Chaplain's Column. This issue I want to again talk about purpose. God tells us in His word that he has a purpose for each of us in our lives. In Psalms the Bible tells us:

PS 138:8 The LORD will fulfill his **purpose** for me; your love, O LORD, endures forever--do not abandon the works of your hands.

Even though He has this purpose for us in our lives He doesn't tell us that it will just be given to us as a gift. Some times we have to ask. Again in Psalms he tells us:

PS 57:20

PS 57:20 I cry out to God Most High, to God, who fulfills his **purpose** for me.

When I watched people who were important to me die in Vietnam while I was spared I asked God many times, “Why have you spared me? Why was I allowed to live, when those I felt were more needed here on earth died?”

I mentioned in an earlier column that I have in the last five or six years finally come to see the purpose God has spared me for. My wife Aleatha and I have just returned from a month long drive across the U.S. that has once again confirmed His purpose for my life. A favorite aunt of mine passed away and I decided to attend her memorial service in Ohio. As I was preparing for the trip I realized that I could drive through Austin, Texas on my way east and finally have the opportunity to meet with the daughter of Captain George Meerdink, my company commander in Vietnam, who died standing next to me in Vietnam. I made arrangements in advance to meet Jennifer at a restaurant in Austin on the evening of the second day of our trip. Aleatha and I arrived a little early and Jennifer arrived shortly, her brother Jeff arrived a few minutes later. Four hours later Aleatha and I left the restaurant in awe of the healing that God was able to do in my life and in the lives of Jeff and Jennifer through that meeting.

Jeff and Jennifer were very young at the time of their Father’s death and it has had a huge impact on their lives, as you can imagine. Both were hungry for information about what kind of man their Father was, what kind of a leader, what kind of Marine. They wanted to know details of how he died and where. I brought pictures and maps to share with them in addition to my own memories. One of the articles that I took with me that they appreciated most was a letter from Hugh Holden, who was my platoon sergeant, assigned to me by Captain Meerdink. Hugh shared memories of a lesson in leadership he learned from their Father and expressed his appreciation for the knowledge he gained serving with him.

The night was filled with a lot of tears but I think Jennifer and Jeff both learned a lot about their Father that they didn’t know before that evening. I believe that by learning first hand of his courage and leadership some of those wounds his death brought were healed that evening. I know that I also experienced a tremendous uplifting in my spirit from being able to be God’s instrument of healing. We plan to spend more time together in the future and I just want to open myself up to be able to fulfill God’s purpose in sparing my life. It seems to me that that is the least I can do for those who were the true heroes in Vietnam, the ones whose names are on the Wall.

I’m sure there are some of you out there, not all of you but some, who have felt a tugging in your spirit to contact the family of a buddy whose name is on the Wall. Take the next step. With all of the contact information available

today on the internet it is much easier than it was 35 to 40 years ago when most of us first came home. Ask God to guide you and direct you. I can’t guarantee that the response will be as positive as it was for me but you will never know unless you try. Perhaps you will find in this effort a new purpose God has planned for your life.

God Bless and Semper Fi,

*Blaine*

E-mail: [magblaine@msn.com](mailto:magblaine@msn.com)

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### **\*FROM THE EDITOR**

Summer has finally arrived in Ohio. Had three days in a row of 90 degree weather; can’t beat that! Some things don’t always turn out the way you plan: had to miss another great PI reunion. Heard it was spectacular; great job Rob Fabian.

I have been working another website for 1/9. I have had the great fortune to get a hold of all of the Chronological reports for 1/9 in Vietnam and plan to put them on this website, plus some other historical documents. Look for [www.1stbattalion9thmarines.com](http://www.1stbattalion9thmarines.com) **by mid July (beta test version is online now)**. I hope to have the reports, lineage, medals, pictures, maps and other information for those that are looking into our history. Hope you all check it out.

Roger Liggon also has a new website. Look for it at [www.thewalkingdead.org](http://www.thewalkingdead.org). It a great site!

Also, we have had the great fortune to add some more brothers to our KIA list. We did not have these Marines listed before. The next Proud Warrior will be a special issue dedicated to brothers who were KIA in Vietnam.

Semper Fi! Dano out!

**(\* this section is verdana font test size #9)**

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### **QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

For over 221 years our Corps has done two things for this great Nation. We make Marines, and we win battles. [Gen. Charles C. Krulak, USMC (CMC); 5 May 1997]

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### **SICK CALL**

Vince Petrella (C Co. WWII) did not have triple by-pass surgery in early March. It was another Charlie Company Vinnie. Sorry Vince.

Casey Piatt is still at home recovering; says it has been rough, but will beat this thing.

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## KIA ROSTER ADDITIONS

**Berry Joe Bridges** was a PFC with Charlie Company when he was Killed in Action on June 14, 1967. His brother Charles notified the Network recently that Berry Joe was not included on our KIA roster.

**Michael Gustave Rindone** was a PFC with Alpha Company when he was Killed in Action on June 20, 1968. A family friend notified the Network of Michael. The friend and family are looking for more information about Michael; see the request that follows.

**Louis V. Daigle** was a PFC with Alpha Company when was Killed in Action on September 30, 1968. Found from a photo from Bill Hesse

The Network made these additions and now our total of brothers killed in Vietnam stands at 740. Note that recently a database has been made available that may add 15 additional names to the 1/9 KIA list.

Editor

### PFC MICHAEL G. RINDONE KIA 06/20/68 FAMILY LOOKING FOR INFORMATION

I am a new member to the 1/9 Network, Inc. and am currently an active duty MGySgt with 25+ years in the Corps. I am looking for someone who may have served with **PFC Michael G. Rindone** in 1968. He joined the Corps in Oct 1967, and reported to Vietnam in April 1968. Was hit on 20 Jun 1968 near Nui Ho Ke, Quang Tri Province and died on the hospital ship USS Sanctuary several hours later. Michael was with Alpha Company 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon at the time of his death. We are from the same hometown. My family and his were next door neighbors when Mike was growing up. Just recently, I have been in touch via phone and mail with his parents. They are wonderful people and after all these years, seem to like sharing information with me about their son. I am making a shadow box to give them in the near future. They had some questions and I thought it would be great if anyone out there that knew Mike could shed some light on those times. Once again, I really appreciate anything you, or the network can and will provide. Semper Fi,

MGYSgt Richard Williams, 7318 Maude Adams Avenue  
29 Palms CA 92277

Email: [WILLIAMSRL1@3mawyuma.usmc.mil](mailto:WILLIAMSRL1@3mawyuma.usmc.mil)  
(760)219-6447 (cell)  
(760)367-3174 (home, weekends)  
(928)269-3933 (work, weekdays)

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## 1/9 NETWORK SOUTH/CENTRAL REGION

### Mini-Reunion Announcement

**Where:** *San Antonio, Texas*

**When:** *June 2005* (exact day(s) yet to be determined)

**All Hands - Listen Up:** Plans are underway for a South/Central Regional Mini-Reunion for 1/9 Network, Inc. The South/Central Region includes *Arkansas; Colorado; Kansas; Louisiana; Missouri; New Mexico; Oklahoma* and *Texas*.

Regional Coordinator Dennis "Top" Lee will announce more particulars upon completion of scouting the area for the best location to set up base camp. Hotels can be expensive if located in the main tourist areas, so we have some volunteers scoping it out for us and will release our selection at a later date.

No formalities, just a weekend of fun and camaraderie spending time with each other, swapping sea-stories and outright funny lies. We might even give out a prize or two for the best funny story or military joke.

Depending on attendee interest we may plan a casual group trip to the Alamo or some other point of interest. Again, this depends upon general interest. If we all want to just bunker down and shoot the shit, then that's the plan.

For you chowhounds, we will plan on pitching shelter-halves within distance of a suitable eating establishment. Nobody wants to be around a hungry Marine who needs something to feed his face. Be sure to bring sufficient funds as there will be no free eats provided. Perhaps we can go together to a restaurant of choice, but it will be dutch-treat.

In the meantime, we would like to hear back from you if you plan to attend and share some time with your fellow 1/9'ers in the Central/South Region. Then we can better estimate how many rooms to reserve, etc.

**Primary Point of contact:** *Dennis Lee, Regional*

**Coordinator:** [topleeUSMC@msn.com](mailto:topleeUSMC@msn.com)

**Secondary Point of contact:**

***John Freeman:*** [jjftiger3@aol.com](mailto:jjftiger3@aol.com)

Feedback on your plans to attend, preference of a site seeing or shopping trip (or not), etc. is invited and will greatly assist in planning for an enjoyable get together.

***SEMPER FI,***

Dennis "Top" Lee, Central/South Regional Coordinator  
1st Bn 9th Marines Network, Inc.

### CHARLIE CO WWII REUNION

It's the last organized reunion for our World War II brothers. Charlie Company will have their reunion at the Holiday Inn in Canton Ohio on October 6, 7 and 8, 2005. Write Vince Petrella for information at 3328 Elmstone Ct., Mansfield OH 44903

## CENTRAL NORTH REUNION AUGUST 2005

Dan: Hope this is in time for the next news letter. The central /north region will hold a mini reunion Tuesday August 16th thru Thursday August 18th at Eddy's resort on Lake Mille Lacs. Planned activities so far are a launch fishing trip and a fish fry. Since Eddy's is part of Grand Casino Mille Lacs, they also provide free shuttle service to the casino for those interested. Any who would be interested please contact Chuck Olson at [chuckolson15@hotmail.com](mailto:chuckolson15@hotmail.com): phone: snail mail Chuck Olson 41971 Osprey Ave. Aitkin MN 56431. Please contact me by July 15th.

Semper Fi, Chuck Olson

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## 1/9 REACTIVATION NEWS

Hello Marines, sorry if some of you receive this twice. I just got off the phone with Headquarters Marine Corps about the Reactivation of 1/9. The latest scoop is that a ceremony will take place at Camp Lejeune in late Aug or Sept. They will start working on plans for a ceremony in the next couple of weeks and will keep me informed so that I may pass the word to everyone. They did tell me that 19 would be come part of the 6th Marines and would love to have us as part of the ceremony.

That is all ..... LOL

Semper Fi is forever, Bill Hesse

I hear that 2/9 will also be activated and both battalions will become a part of a four battalion regiment. Editor.

Bill,

As I mentioned. my friend Col. Bob Danko from Red Bank, NJ. I & I Staff 6th Motor Transport Battalion stated that his friend LtCol. Brad Vickers has been assigned to return from Iraq in September to take command of a new Battalion being formed at Camp Lejeune. Bob believes it will be 1/9.

I just received my June 27, 2005 Marine Corps Times and on page 7 there is an article that states: About 3,500 Marines are slated to report to Camp Lejeune by the end of the year. The troops will augment the 4<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Brigade (Anti-Terrorism) and will reactivate 1/9 and 2/9, according to the base Commander Maj. Gen. Robert Dickerson.

The General also stated that the 4th MEB is 85% complete and that the base is addressing the infrastructure needs of two new infantry battalions.

Hopefully we will be hearing more.

Semper Fi

Frank "Irish" Healey

Better get geared up for a big party Lejeune – Editor

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## **NOTICES & REQUESTS**

### 1/9 PINS, T-SHIRTS ETC.

Dave Demick has a whole catalog of 1/9 related items he is offering for sale. The catalog includes, 1/9 pins, T-shirts, hats, shadow boxes and a whole lot more. His catalog is posted on the 1/9 Website or you can contact Dave direct at: Dave Demick 35240 Perret Plantation Road, Callahan FL 32011, Email: rebeldave1nine@alltel.net

### 1/9 T-SHIRTS

Frenchy Laverriere, has resurrected the "old style" 1/9 t-shirts with the original Grim Reaper look. The t-shirts are red or black, with the Grim Reaper inside a gold shield with a banner underneath that says "The Walking Dead".

Med, L, XL, \$16.25 plus \$3.25 shipping

XXL \$18.25 plus \$3.25 shipping

XXXL \$22.00 plus \$3.25 shipping

If you're ordering more than one shirt, add \$3.00 shipping for each additional shirt.

Thanks Billy "FRENCHY" Laverriere

Order from: Billy Laverriere, 5 Celia Circle, Metheun, MA 08144



**Got items for sale? Let the Editor know what you have.**

## MARINES

Written by GEN. WILLIAM THORNSON, USA (1956)

U.S. Marines are the most peculiar breed of human beings I have ever witnessed. They treat service as if it was some kind of cult, plastering their emblem on almost everything they own, making themselves look like insane fanatics with haircuts to ungentlemanly lengths, worshiping their Commandant almost as if he was a god, and making weird animal noises like a gang of savages. They'll fight like rabid dogs at the drop of a hat just for the sake of a little action, and are the cockiest sons of bitches I have ever known. Most have the foulest mouths and drink well beyond man's normal limits, but their high spirits and sense of brotherhood set them apart and, generally speaking, the United States Marines I've come in contact with are the most professional soldiers and the finest men and women I have ever had the pleasure to meet.

"There are only two kinds of people that understand Marines: Marines and the enemy. Everyone else has a second-hand opinion."

All militarizes harden their recruits, instill the basics, and bend young men to their will. But the Marine Corps provides its members with a secret weapon. It gives them the unique culture of pride that makes the Marines the world's premier warrior force. "The Navy has its ships, the Air Force has its planes, the Army its detailed doctrine, but culture---the values and assumptions that shape its members---is all the Marines have."

They call this culture "esprit de corps."

"Alone among the U.S. military services, the Marines have bestowed their name on their enlisted ranks. The Army has Army officers and soldiers, the Navy has naval officers and sailors, the Air Force has Air Force officers and airmen--- but the Marines have only Marines.  
Once a Marine, Always a Marine.

Submitted by John Freeman

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## POETRY

I grew up reading (and sometimes memorizing) Rudyard Kipling's poetry and I see one of his most famous lines frequently brought into use here -- so I thought I might post the piece it came from for the edification of all.

Rudyard Kipling's poetry  
From Doug Todd

## **RECESSIONAL**

GOD of our fathers, known of old,  
Lord of our far-flung battle line,  
Beneath whose awful hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

The tumult and the shouting dies;  
The Captains and the Kings depart;  
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

Far-called our navies melt away;  
On dune and headland sinks the fire;  
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday  
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!  
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

If, drunk with sight of power, we loose  
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe,  
Such boastings as the Gentiles use,  
Or lesser breeds without the Law—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

For heathen heart that puts her trust  
In reeking tube and iron shard—  
All valiant dust that builds on dust,  
And guarding calls not Thee to guard.  
For frantic boast and foolish word,  
Thy Mercy on Thy People, Lord!

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**VIETNAM WAR MISSING IN ACTION**  
**SERVICEMEN IDENTIFIED**

NEWS RELEASE from the United States Department of Defense No. 398-05 April 25, 2005. The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of four U.S. servicemen, missing in action from the Vietnam War, have been identified and are being returned to their families for burial with full military honors.

They are:

- Marine 2nd Lt. Heinz Ahlmeyer Jr. of Pearl River, N.Y.;
- Marine Sgt. James N. Tycz of Milwaukee, Wis.;
- Marine Lance Cpl. Samuel A. Sharp Jr. of San Jose, Calif.; and
- Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Malcolm T. Miller of Tampa, Fla.

Ahlmeyer, Tycz, and Miller will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery on May 10. Sharp was buried Saturday in San Jose and will be honored at the Arlington ceremony

The four men were part of a reconnaissance patrol operating near the U.S. Marine base in Khe Sanh, Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam. They came under enemy attack shortly after midnight on May 10, 1967, while occupying a defensive position. During the firefight Ahlmeyer, Tycz, Sharp and Miller were killed. The patrol's surviving members were rescued by helicopter later that morning but the bodies of the four men could not be recovered.

In the fall of 1991 several Vietnamese citizens visited the U.S. POW/MIA office in Hanoi claiming to have access to the remains of U.S. servicemen. One of the men provided skeletal and teeth fragments. Between 1993 and 2004, eight joint U.S.-Vietnamese teams led by the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) interviewed witnesses and surveyed the skirmish area.

Two other joint teams conducted excavations during which material evidence and remains were recovered. After extensive analysis, scientists from JPAC identified Ahlmeyer, Tycz, Sharp and Miller.

Of the 88,000 Americans missing in action from all conflicts, 1,835 are from the Vietnam War, with 1,398 of those within the country of Vietnam. Another 748 Americans have been accounted for since the end of the Vietnam War.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO Web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169

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**VA SEEKS VETS EXPOSED TO CHEMICAL AGENTS**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has launched a national campaign to locate veterans exposed to mustard gas or the chemical agent Lewisite during their military service. Lewisite is a blister-producing chemical to which many veterans were exposed as part of chemical testing programs during World War II. Veterans of this area were also exposed to mustard gas during testing sponsored by DoD. Any veterans who suspect they were exposed to either mustard gas or Lewisite during their service is strongly encouraged to contact VA by calling 1-800-749-8387 or visit the VA benefits Web site at [www.vba.va.gov](http://www.vba.va.gov)

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**Worthy of the Proud Warrior Newsletter ????**

I originally received it from John Homola, so if you decide to use it please give him credit. From John Freeman

**I LOVE GRANDMAS!**

Here's a quote from a government employee who witnessed a recent interaction between an elderly woman and an antiwar protester in a Metro Station in DC.

"There were protesters on the train platform handing out pamphlets on the evils of America. I politely declined to take one. An elderly woman was behind me getting off the escalator and a young (20ish) female protester offered her a pamphlet, which she politely declined. The young protester put her hand on the old woman's shoulder as a gesture of friendship and in a very soft voice said, "Ma'am, don't you care about the children of Iraq?"

The old woman looked up at her and said, "Honey, my first husband died in France during World War II, my second husband died in Korea so you could have the right to stand here and bad mouth our country. If you touch me again, I'll stick this umbrella up your ass and open it."



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# IN MEMORIAM

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## **Fred Bletz May 4, 2005**

Family and friends said farewell to 56 year old Fred Bletz on Monday May 9, 2005. The Vietnam veteran was shot and killed by Ionia County Sheriff's Deputies last week. Deputies were serving an arrest warrant for Bletz's son, Zachary.

Sheriff Dwain Dennis says, "All the information I have strongly suggests the officers followed procedure."

But, most of those who attended Bletz's funeral don't agree. About one hundred motorcyclists rode to the services together. Bletz lead Michigan's Rolling Thunder Motorcycle group. Those bikers took "Fred's Last Ride" Monday. Fellow Rolling Thunder member Gary Marut says, "He's just a great guy. He's a funny guy. He's a no nonsense guy."

Some in the crowd, including Bobbie Sanderson, shared Bletz's mission to raise awareness about POW's and MIA's. She accompanied Bletz when he rode from Michigan to Washington, DC in a homemade bamboo cage. Sanderson explains the impact of the project by saying, "How could they ever, ever sustain such torture? He wanted to give people the real idea of what it was like."

While everyone in the group remembers Bletz fondly, they have a lot of questions. Gary Marut talks about his reaction when he learned of Bletz's death. Marut explains, "Disbelief at first that a guy can go through all he did in Vietnam and then come home and end this way. It just doesn't seem like that's the way it would have ended for Fred."

Bobbie Sanderson says she was, "Very shocked, very appalled, very upset that a brother was taken so quickly and so meaninglessly. Why? Everybody wants to know why. There are just no answers, there are not enough answers."

Emotions are running very high surrounding Fred Bletz's death. Michigan State Police are investigating the police shooting. ([www.wzzm13.com](http://www.wzzm13.com))

Fred lived in Saranac, Michigan. Fred served with Bravo Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon in 1967. You May remember the article a couple of years back about Fred riding in a cage to Washington DC to bring attention to the POW-MIA issue. Fred is survived by his wife Kathryn, son Zachary and Daughter Heather.

Kathryn Bletz  
7799 Centerline Road  
Saranac MI 48881

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## **Eliseo "Al" Perez May 4, 2005**

Al Perez, a brother who served in Vietnam with Charlie Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon 1967-1968, passed away on May 4, 2005 after a prolonged battle with cancer. Al made it to the last Beach Rally in April 2005, insisting his wife take him so he could be with his brothers one last time.

A funeral Mass was held on Wednesday May 11, 2005 at 9:00 AM at Saint Helen's Catholic Church in South Gate, California.

Internment was at the Riverside National Cemetery  
22495 Van Buren Boulevard Riverside, CA 92518  
(909) 653-8417  
215 freeway, south of the 60 freeway, exit on Van Buren Avenue.

Al is survived by his wife Dolores.

Dolores Perez  
2428 Glenwood Pl.  
Southgate, Ca. 90280

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## **Joseph P. O'Connor May 31, 2005**

Joseph P. O'Connor off Billerica, formerly of Watertown, husband of Cathi (Anderson) O'Connor passed away May 31, 2005.

The funeral is on Thursday June 2, 2005 from the SWEENEY MEMORIAL FUNERAL HOME, 66 Concord Rd., Billerica at 8 a.m. Funeral Mass at St. Theresa Church at 9 AM. Relatives and friends respectfully invited. Visiting hours Wednesday from 3-7 PM.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Dana Farber Cancer Research Institute, 44 Binney St., Boston, MA 02215. Burial in Fox Hill Cemetery, Billerica. Funeral Director W.J. Laurendeau

Joseph is survived by his wife Cathi.  
Cathi O'Connor  
6 Webster Lane  
Billerica MA 01821

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**Our condolences to families of our brothers who have passed.**

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# PARRIS ISLAND REUNION

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The reunion at Paris Island 2005 was filled with a feeling of what you would expect to find at a family reunion. It was great to see so many again as well as meet some new folks.

I had the personal pleasure to meet up with one of my old buddies I haven't seen since I left him in Okinawa to rotate home. We actually gave him the nickname Shortround, which coming from a 60mm crew makes no sense what so ever. Calling out his name in country was, shall we say, exciting?

Our hospitality area was 2 ground floor rooms with a connecting interior door. Both of the exits were covered by a good size overhang (as well as all the ground floor rooms) which allowed us to put some table and chairs outside. The weather cooperated and was great so that really worked out nicely. We opened the hospitality rooms on Wed with a bathtub full of beer, wine and ice. From that point on it was never emptied until the last hour of the last day, although we tried hard to get to the bottom of the tub I don't think we ever did. Better luck next year!!

On Friday we had breakfast in the base mess hall, attended morning colors and then attended a special graduation ceremony of our newest Marines. This was a special graduation due to the fact that one of our own, Rick and Amanda Roth, had their son Paul in amongst the graduation Marines. The Roth's have been coming to the reunions as a family since the beginning and many have known Paul for years, so it was easy to feel like we all had a son graduating that day. Paul was presented a cake on Saturday at our barbecue and we broke out into a great rendition of the Marine Corps hymn. It was a very special moment indeed. Good luck to you Paul, and welcome to our brotherhood.

We had 3 different sets of raffle prizes, a grab bag, prize raffle, and of course the 50/50. The grab bag prizes were hand made cloth bags with draw string, embroidered with a Marine Corps emblem and the words Paris Island 2005 on the face. We had about 8 of these and they contained different items Kris received as donations from our local Marine Corps recruiters. One of the recruiters making donations went so far as to ask Kris to come back the next day, he wanted to go and buy some things for our raffle. Semper Fi!!

The 50/50 was a cash drawing that got up to \$450! It was won by Weid, who was also generous with donations to our prize raffle as well as making all our name tags. Thanks Weid, and congratulations on the winning 50/50 ticket. We had many prizes to give away with our prize raffle. We had 2 beautiful clocks made by James Cottongin with 1/9 and USMC logos. These looked like they took a lot of time to make. Thank you James, Semper Fi! One was won by Pete Mestas and he gave it to our gold star mom, Maylene Littlefield. Semper Fi Pete!

Another prize donation came from Kris Fabian. These were 6 more draw string cloth bags, complete with embroidered Marine Corps emblem, and the words Paris Island 2005. She also made matching embroidered T-shirts for inside the bag. I know these took a lot of time to make and I know it was done with love and support for 1/9. Thank you Kris, Semper Fi! Dave Hochstrasser has a spice business and he set us up with some spice kits. He also provided our grill master Tommy Wallis some spices for cooking with at Saturdays barbecue. Thanks for the spices Dave, they were really good. I'll be ordering some of that Island Spice very soon!

I could never get Tommy to take a break and he ended up cooking burgers, hot dogs and fish all day long. Thanks for all your efforts Tommy; it was appreciated by all who ate!!

RoDger Jacobs is a professional woodworker and donated a couple of beautiful cherry bowls with inscriptions of the event on the bottom. His wife is an artist and although she couldn't be there this year, for support of 1/9 she donated 2 very neat coffee cups she made. Thank you for your show of support Mrs. RoDger. Very cool RoDger, Semper Fi!!

Col Radcliffe donated books, and an enormous amount of time. Without efforts like this, reunions wouldn't happen. Thank you Col Radcliffe for all that you have done. Semper Fi! I would also like to extend my thanks to his beautiful wife, Carol for all her help.

From Bill Hesse we received a USMC belt buckle, a 1/9 coffee mug and USMC sweat pants. Thanks for your support in the raffle Bill. The number of prizes donated by those like you and Joan made it lots of fun to do. Semper Fi!

Russ Lawler made a donation of a USMC clock as well as a tape of the Silent Drill Team. That tape would always be fun to watch as they are simply the best Drill Team, period. Here's another example of support from within for 1/9. Thanks Russ, Semper Fi!

Although we tried to make this year's reunion a little easier on the Donnelly's by not having the usual shrimp feast at their house, I think Mrs. Donnelly actually worked harder than ever. Not only did she go grocery shopping for the barbecue, she brought a large folding table, kitchen utensils, bowls, and of course, the shrimp! Lots and lots of shrimp! Thank you for all that you did to help us manage the festivities Mrs. Donnelly. It was great fun to work with you and your sense of humor.

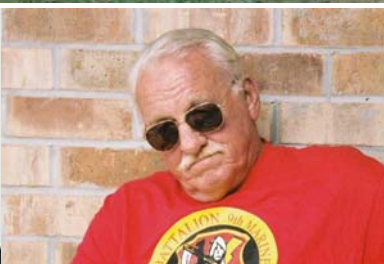
Bob Humphries did an outstanding job as photographer. He sent me a CD of the photo's he took and he managed to catch everybody at different times throughout the reunion. He mentioned that if you want a copy just let him know. Thanks Bob, Semper Fi!

I want to thank John Hoffmann's son, James for all his help in the clean up efforts the "Morning After" the Sat barbecue. He went the extra mile to help and I really appreciate it. Especially his attention to how he could help out on his own initiative.

There were others who donated cash, donated their time and I want to thank all of you. We could not have done it without the active support we receive. It is a great example of how we are family, bound in ways that non military personal will never know. It's a shame they will never know that feeling but I know I am grateful beyond words for being associated with all of you.

Semper Fi!

Rob Fabian, South East Coordinator



# PARRIS ISLAND REUNION PHOTOS





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## A COMMENTARY

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A recent front-page article in my local newspaper commemorating the 30th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War featured quotes from Vietnam veterans. Almost 40 years ago these men and one woman, who belong to a local Vietnam Veterans of America chapter, served on U.S. bases the size of cities, ate three hot meals a day in mess tents, wore clean clothes, slept on cots in tents, shopped in PXs (post exchanges) that rivaled department stores back in the States, watched first-run movies and took showers regularly. They were called support troops, although those of us in the infantry called them something unprintable here.

Because an occasional mortar round landed somewhere on the bases, these veterans' combat experiences were vastly different than mine. I'm a survivor of the bloodiest single day battle of the war - July 2, 1967 - in which three 125-man companies of my Marine battalion lost 84 killed and 190 wounded.

But now these veterans who never fired a shot and never faced the enemy in the war are the spokespersons for those of us who did. This is the frustrating side of belonging to veterans' organizations today. Since every front line infantryman in our military during the Vietnam War needed nine rear area support troops to support him, our spokespersons are very often people who experienced little or no combat.

I've spent a good part of my life being angry with veterans like them. I've listened to many of them spin tales of derring-do that compared with the exploits of Audie Murphy in World War II. I've heard some describe atrocities they knew nothing about. I've heard others say they would never join a veterans' organization because, for example, older veterans called them losers in a VFW bar 25 years earlier. Still others said they took no pride in what they did in Vietnam, until their jobs were about to be outsourced overseas, whereupon they were transformed into indignant veterans who fought for their country.

For decades, others who never set foot in a Vietnamese jungle maintained there were live Americans still held prisoner in jungle camps. I remember a Marine in my unit tearing his trousers leg while on an operation in those jungles. Elephant grass soon cut up his exposed leg. Within two hours infection set in, he could no longer walk and he had to be evacuated out of the field by helicopter. How could American prisoners have possibly survived for decades under those conditions?

For years, much of my time and energy went into trying to persuade my fellow workers, my family and even other Vietnam veterans that the Vietnam War wasn't like many people thought. Vietnam veterans were not losers, druggies, baby killers, or you name it.

But after almost 40 years I believe the war has become just a footnote in history, and people will continue to believe about it what they choose.

I am no longer angry with the veterans who were support troops in Vietnam. Combat is certainly not a prerequisite to be either a spokesman or a leader in a veterans' organization. In fact, one could make the argument that had Sen. John Kerry opted for a support job in the Navy during the Vietnam War, there would have been no controversy about his combat role as a Swift Boat commander during his bid for president.

Combat veterans understand President John Kennedy's quote better than most people: "There is always inequity in life. Some men are killed in a war and some men are wounded, and some men never leave the country. Life is unfair."

Here is an article I wrote that appeared in the Waterbury (CT) Republican-American on May 4, 2005 Tom Evans  
A-1-9

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## REMEMBERING

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Ten years ago, while riding on the back of a flatbed truck with my Veterans of Foreign Wars post in my first Memorial Day parade, an older woman in the crowd yelled "Thank you!" Tears filled my eyes. That was the first time anybody had said thank you for what I had done in the Vietnam War. For the next three days, I was deluged by memories of the war. I filled 20 pages of notes in my word processor. Within two weeks I had written an article describing my tour of duty with the "Walking Dead" battalion, so named because it had the highest casualty rate of any Marine unit. And two weeks after that, the editor of Vietnam magazine sent a short note saying he would publish it. From then on, I continued to write magazine and newspaper articles about Vietnam.

In December 1995, when President Clinton announced he would send troops into Bosnia, the immediate fear was land mines. I wrote an article, published in a local newspaper, which described my Alpha Company's terror of land mines. A father called; his son, a Marine, had been killed by a land mine in Vietnam. He was angry with the Marine Corps for what he thought were lax precautions against land mine deaths. Then he stifled a sob, apologized, and hung up. Afterward I thought of what I might have said, but it was too late.

The next year, I had a call from the widow of Bernard Fall. He was probably the foremost western authority on Vietnam when, while accompanying Alpha Company on Feb. 21, 1967, he was killed by a mine in an area called the 'street without joy' just northwest of the ancient imperial capital of Hue. The article I had written about that operation contained quotes from many of Fall's books. Dorothy Fall was apprehensive about showing the article to her three daughters, who were then in their early 30s. Although she impressed me as somebody who would rather speak to an ex-colonel than to an ex-corporal, the following Thanksgiving she sent me a nice card complimenting the article.

In 1997 I received a letter from the 71-year-old sister of Capt. John Ryan, one of my company commanders, who was killed by artillery on a hill called Con Thien at the edge of the demilitarized zone. His sister was upset that I had written that the captain had died instantly. In fact, she said, he had held on for nine days and during that time told a chaplain how much he loved his wife. I wrote her an apology, explaining that we rarely heard what happened after the helicopter whisked away our dead and wounded. A few years later, the woman's son emailed me. He had found my letter among his mother's effects after she passed away, and he wanted to thank me for writing back to her.

Last year I got a call from Kathy Kelley, whose brother, Navy corpsman Richard Vroman Smith, was in my battalion. In an Internet article, I had described a North Vietnamese artillery airburst on Con Thien that killed six men on Oct. 12th, 1967. She noticed that the date and place agreed with what she knew about her brother's death. We determined the corpsman in the article was her brother, Richard, and that, mercifully, he did die instantly. I couldn't add any more than I had written. It didn't matter. After 37 years, Kathy was thankful just to talk to somebody who had been there.

There were other calls and letters over the years. You'd think by now I'd have composed some stock speech of sympathy. But in fact, each call has been just as difficult as the last, and I often found tears creeping down my cheeks.

The loved ones of our war dead don't need Memorial Day to remind them of the servicemen and servicewomen who gave their lives for our country. They remember every day.

This article appeared in the May 30, 2004 issue of the Hartford (CT) Courant. - Tom Evans A-1-9

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## ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

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### BAKED STUFFED CHICKEN

A great recipe!!!! When I found this recipe, I thought it was perfect for people, like me, who just are not sure how to tell when poultry is thoroughly cooked, but not dried out.

6-7 lb. chicken

1 cup melted butter

1 cup stuffing (Pepperidge Farm is good.)

1 cup uncooked popcorn (ORVILLE REDENBACHERS LOW FAT)

Salt/pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Brush chicken well with melted butter, salt, and pepper.

Fill cavity with stuffing and popcorn.

Place in baking pan with the neck end toward the back of the oven. Listen for the popping sounds. When the chicken's ass blows the oven door open and the chicken flies across the room, it is done.

And, you thought I couldn't cook

From Bob Grubb

### DO NOT TALK TO MY PARROT!!!

Wanda's dishwasher quit working so she called a repairman. Since she had to go to work the next day, she told the repairman, "I'll leave the key under the mat. Fix the dishwasher, leave the bill on the counter, and I'll mail you a check."

"Oh, by the way don't worry about my bulldog. He won't bother you. But, whatever you do, do NOT, under ANY circumstances, talk to my parrot! I REPEAT, DO NOT TALK TO MY PARROT!!!"

When the repairman arrived at Wanda's apartment the following day, he discovered the biggest, meanest looking bulldog he has ever seen. But, just as she had said, the dog just lay there on the carpet watching the repairman go about his work.

The parrot, however, drove him nuts the whole time with his incessant yelling, cursing and name calling. Finally the repairman couldn't contain himself any longer and yelled,

"Shut up, you stupid, ugly bird!"

To which the parrot replied, "Get him, Spike!"

### A WARNING TO ALL GRANDPARENTS

- Heed this warning.

Do **NOT** lose your Grandkids in the Mall!

A small boy was lost at a large shopping mall.

He approached a uniformed policeman and said, "I've lost my grandpa!"

The cop asked, "What's he like?"

The little boy replied, "Crown Royal whisky and women with big boobs."

From John Freeman

### MEDICAL SCHOOL

First-year students at Med School were receiving their first anatomy class with a real dead human body. They all gathered around the surgery table with the body covered with a white sheet.

The professor started the class by telling them, "In medicine, it is necessary to have 2 important qualities as a doctor: The first is that you not be disgusted by anything involving the human body." As an example, the Professor pulled back the sheet, stuck his finger in the butt of the corpse, withdrew it, and stuck his finger in his mouth.

Go ahead and do the same thing," he told his students. The students freaked out, hesitated for several minutes, but eventually took turns sticking a finger in the butt of the dead body and sucking on it. When everyone finished, the Professor looked at them and told them:

"The second most important quality is observation. I stuck in my middle finger and sucked on my index finger. Now, learn to pay attention."

From Danny McWain



## MEMBERS PASSED AWAY

Fred Bletz, 56, Bravo Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon 1976, Passed May 4, 2005  
Eliseo E. Perez, Charlie Company 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon 1967-1968, Passed My 4, 2005  
Joseph P. O'Connor, Charlie Company, 1967-1968, Passed May 31, 2005

**NEW MEMBERS** - The names submitted to the Network should not be reproduced and given to other sources for commercial use. Please respect the privacy of our Brothers and their families.

### ABLE/ALPHA COMPANY

Russell	Hunston	2nd	68-69
Dennin	Roy Peterson	1st	1965

### BRAVO COMPANY

Joseph	E. Harrigan	Attached	1968	Bravo 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tank Bn
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### CHARLIE COMPANY

John	Barrenger	Wpns	69-70
Alan	C. Christenson	2nd	1968
Ronald	Lee Coolman	Wpns	66-67
John	E. Fedyszyn	FO	1968
Louis	Mazza	2nd	1967
Gary	L. Sneed	Wpns	66-67
James	H. Stogner	Wpns	66-67

### DELTA COMPANY

Gary	Lee Lislie Sr.	Wpns	66-67
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### HEADQUARTERS & SERVICE COMPANY

Larry	Ferguson	MT	66-67
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**You can send your address changes to:**

**Tom Stubbs  
15852 N 50<sup>th</sup> St.  
Scottsdale AZ 85254**