

Issue 22  
January 2025



## “You’re in the Army Now” Joseph H. Louwagie Cat Platoon 1970

Joanne and I were married June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1968.

Shortly after we returned from our honeymoon, I went to the draft board and found out that they would be drafting 13 in August and I was number 7 on the list. I decided to signed up for OCS primarily to delay for a few weeks, the time I had to report for military service.

The Army gave me a physical, at which time I explained that I had been in a car accident a few weeks earlier and hurt my back. The Dr. asked me how I was doing at the time, and I explained that I was having some pain, but it was not as bad as it had

been. The Dr’s response was “Next” and I passed my physical.

I took Basic and AIT at Ft Dix NJ and then entered Officer Candidate School at FT Benning GA. Each month during OCS every candidate would rate the other men in his platoon. The candidate receiving the lowest rating would be paneled (cut) out, Officer candidates cut after 6 weeks were given the rank of E5; those cut after 12 weeks were made E6; candidates cut out after 18 weeks were given the rank of E6 or E7

When I enlisted Joanne already knew that she was pregnant so I specifically asked if I would be allowed to come home for my child’s birth. Of course, the answer was yes. In the 22<sup>nd</sup> week of OCS I received a call at 2:00 AM advising me we had a son. The next morning, I went to the XO to get my pass to go back home. However! I was advised that if I went home, I would not be able to return to my Unit but would be sent to another unit which would put me back to my 15<sup>th</sup> week of training, so I would have to repeat 7 weeks of training.

In that same 22<sup>nd</sup> week, my increasing back pain became severe enough that, I went to see an Army Doctor. After an examination the Dr. advised me that I would never graduate as an Infantry Lieutenant due to back problems. The Doctor explained that I had fractured a vertebra in my lower back and I would not be able to handle the physical grind of a foot soldier, based on this information and the desire to see my son, I chose to resign from OCS.

After resigning from OCS, I was placed in a reserve group waiting for my next assignment. During this time, I drew KP every day having to get up at 2:30 or 3:00 each morning to help prepare breakfast. This involved throwing batter and other ingredients into a 50gallon drum, mixing it up and serving it, along with some bread to the troops for breakfast. I learned this concoction was called, “Shit on a Shingle.”

While I was pulling this KP duty I realized that the Army did not like quitters. I was informed that even though I was a senior candidate in OCS with a bar on my shoulder, The Army had busted me back to E3. I quickly realized, In this man’s Army, there was a price to pay for quitting. In hindsight I should have waited for a medical discharge from OCS, and possibly the Army.

After two weeks of this KP “schooling” I received my orders to Vietnam and was given two weeks leave to go to Minnesota to see my wife and Son who was born while I was attending OCS.



After my time with the family, in June of 1969 I headed to Vietnam. I do not remember my route of travel, but I distinctly remember landing at Tan Son Nhut airbase and looking out the window and seeing large numbers of soldiers walking around covered in red sand. I also remember being assigned to a jeep that took me and a couple of other soldiers to Di An the base camp for the 1<sup>st</sup> Division or the “Big Red One”. With my background and training I was immediately placed in an Infantry Unit. assigned to the point squad of the 4<sup>th</sup> platoon of Alpha Company 2<sup>nd</sup>/18<sup>th</sup>. Within a short time, I was made Squad Leader.

As customary with the 1<sup>st</sup> Division, our platoon was assigned a Chu Hoi Scout. A Chu Hoi Scout was a former NVA infantry Soldier who had left the NVA and agreed to serve as a scout for an American Unit for the remainder of the war. Our Chu Hoi Scout, named Nuguyn (sp) Van Coo was assigned to my squad. As a former NVA soldier, Coo knew where the NVA or VC were likely to put traps and/or explosive devices.

Shortly after Coo was assigned to our unit, we went on a two day stand down at Di An. Upon arrival mail and rations for the next mission were distributed to the troops. Everyone sorted through and stowed what they wanted leaving the tent in a shambles. Soon the 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Announced, “Deuce and one/halves getting ready to go to Thu Duc. I asked what this was and learned it was a place for immoral purposes, so I elected to stay at base camp while the majority of the men climbed into the trucks and left for Thu Duc.

Later the XO saw me in the tent, noticed the mess and requested that I clean it up and get rid of the leftovers. As I swept the mess into a pile maybe 8 inches high and 25-30 inches in diameter ready to throw them away, Coo happened to walk by. I asked him if he had any use for the leftovers. At that time, I learned that Coo was married and had a son as well. He was receiving the great salary of \$30 per month to fight with the American’s. When he saw the pile Coo Explained that a simple pack of Pall Mall cigarettes (that I was throwing away) could be sold for \$4. I told Coo he could take it all, which he did and my relationship with Coo began.

From that point on whenever we were in the field Coo walked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the point squad so that he could point out anything suspicious or dangerous. Through Coo I learned that the NVA and Viet Cong never put out booby traps without marking them to warn the locals of their location. As we worked together, we became close friends. I regret that I never learned what happened to Coo and his family after the American’s went home. I do know that many who worked with Americans were executed when the American forces left.

My relationship with Coo and my reliance on his advise, led to a bragging point of my time in the Big Red One. No one in my squad ever tripped a booby trap or explosive device or was injured while on search and destroy missions. That being said, I believe we did have a few injured from skirmishes while ambushing trails or night attacks on our position. One of our platoons was virtually wiped out when a soldier lit up a cigarette in the open. The VC saw it and opened fire on the platoon.

Alpha Company was involved in a Village seal, together with companies from a couple of other divisions. The village had a population of between 1,000 and 2,000 people and had a name I couldn’t even begin to spell. The purpose of the “Seal” was to keep any local people from sneaking out of the village to aid or provide information to the Viet Cong or the NVA.

When we first arrived at the village, we were advised that the “seal” would last 10 days or more, so we started building bunkers. We filled sandbags with either black dirt or sand to build our individual bunkers which would have two firing ports in the front, a covered roof to protect us from Sapper charges and protect us from the monsoon rains which came around 5:00 each afternoon, as well as an entrance back to the rear that could close when we entered the bunker at night.

As soon as we were set up in bunker positions around the village, the village children would come to our bunkers every day, pestering us for candy and Cigarettes. Then about an hour before dusk the children would suddenly leave us and melt back into the village. Then just before dusk we began receiving both machine gun and rifle fire from many of the huts in the village each evening.

In Vietnam the military was always concerned about body count so every morning different squads would be sent into the village to search the huts for any casualties from the previous night’s fire fight. My squad was sent to the village on a couple of occasions to do this hut-to-hut search for casualties. When we started going into the various huts, we were shocked to find that each hut had a bunker made from 8 to 10 inch thick concrete at ground level. Each bunker was 7-8 feet wide and about 10 feet long. When we entered the bunkers we saw that each bunker had an escape tunnel so that if the entrance was blocked for any reason the occupant had a way out. This was when I realized how long the NVA and Viet Cong had been at war, first with the French and now the Americans.

Once while making the morning search, we entered one of the huts, the elderly couple who lived there were standing near the door with their faces turned down word, so they would not have to face any of us. Within seconds Coos turned to me and said “Den Day” (come here) I turned and went to where Coos was standing. He said, “These are my parents. They do not dare recognize me or acknowledge their relationship to me or they would be immediately shot when we leave the hut.” So we left without Coos saying a word to this parents. This encounter taught me another bit of reality about the Vietnam War. Many of the NVA and Viet Cong combatants fought not because they believed in the cause but to protect their families and loved ones, I believe this is a side of the war that most American Soldiers never knew.

I was 23 when I was sent to Vietnam. Much older than most of the soldiers who were normally only 18 or 19, being drafted or signing up right out of High School. I learned later that behind my back I was referred to as “Gramps” or the “Old Man” but no one called me that to my face.

In December of 1969 the 1<sup>st</sup> Division was recalled back to the States. Only soldiers, having 10-12 months in country were allowed to go back with the colors. The rest were reassigned to different units. I had the luck of being assigned to Delta Company 2<sup>nd</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Cav the Wild Cat Platoon. As I recall we were put in at the “Dog’s Head” or “Parrot Beak” of Vietnam about 45 miles NW of Saigon. At the time we would be in the field for five or six days and then go back to a base camp for re-supply and to get showers. As any line unit will tell you whenever we got to base camp, we would go to the artillery units and buy a few cases of beer and return to the bunkers and drink several beers.

At one time our platoon was positioned in a tree line adjacent to an open field maybe 300 yards wide, waiting for supplies to be dropped off by chopper. I was stationed by the machine gun facing the open field. I saw two or three individuals coming across the field directly at our location. They did not appear to be carrying weapons. I reported by Radio that I had three individuals approaching our position. I was given the order to “Open Fire” and when I looked back out, I saw 3 NVA Soldiers with weapons coming across the field behind the first group. Although I qualified as expert on every weapon I ever fired in AIT and OCS I somehow missed all three of the individuals coming at our position which by now was not more than 25 yards. All I know is that the 3 individuals and the 3 NVA soldiers quickly disappeared. I always hoped that the three individuals would escape the NVA.

When I was with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cav we had several firefights where we had five or six soldiers medevaced out of the field. Then we had the fire fight where 35 of our total 85 soldiers were medevaced leaving only 50 troopers in the field. At this time, due to our shortage of soldiers we were assigned to ride with the 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cav. We worked with them a while before we were taken to Illingsworth. Delta Company was on Illingsworth when Charlie Company 2<sup>nd</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> walked into an NVA Base Camp and had to be rescued by the 11<sup>th</sup> Armored Cav. If my memory is correct the 11<sup>th</sup> Armored picked up Charlie Co. and brought it to Illingsworth where they dropped them off and picked up Delta Company to go with them.

We were with the 11<sup>th</sup> ACR about two clicks away from Illingsworth when Illingsworth was overrun. We could see the rockets etc. going into Illingsworth and I went to the Commanding Officer to see why we were not going in to help only to be told, “We never go into a fire fight at night, as we do not know the size of the force fighting and we might be walking into an ambush.” And if my memory is correct 28 soldiers were killed on Illingsworth that night. I have the book, but it has been some time since I bought the same.

When I returned from the service, I met with a psychiatrist who told me that I had a condition called “Conversion Reaction”. I asked, “What the Hell does that mean?” She stated that my conscious thoughts have suppressed many of my memories of Vietnam so that I simply do not recall them, but I have a lot of anxiety do to what I experienced. She told me that she could help me recover these memories but when questioned could not rule out the onset of Nightmares if I did remember. We decided not to do hypnosis. All I can say is that every day since I arrived home has been a great day. When we stop and count our blessings, Life is truly Great!

Thank you Joe Louwagie





# 2025 Reunion

**It's Time to Reunite - Join us in San Antonio Texas**

See some of the sites available in San Antonio at [JimGarvin.org](http://JimGarvin.org)

If interested in a group outing to one let me know at [james.garvin47@yahoo.com](mailto:james.garvin47@yahoo.com)



The 2025 ASA Reunion  
will be held at the  
Holiday Inn Riverwalk  
217 North St. Mary's St.  
San Antonio TX 78205

**May 13-17 2025.**



The special ASA room rates may be applied for any night from MAY 9 - 21, 2025.  
Standard Room \$144.00 Tax and 2 Breakfast meals per night included.  
Check in is 4:00 PM and Checkout is 11:00 AM.

All attendees will need to make their own reservations directly with the hotel.  
For hotel reservations, please call 1-210-224-2500 and reference the Group Code "TAS"  
To reserve a room on-line go to [angryskipper.org](http://angryskipper.org) and click on the link above the \$144.00.  
Last date to register is April 17, 2025

This hotel does not provide transportation to and from the airport.  
Several ride share options are available as well as Taxi Service.  
Parking is available at the discounted rate of \$19.0 per day.

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## Golf

May 14th Wednesday 9:30 Tee time Breckenridge Golf Club  
\$97. Register by April 11th includes green fees, cart and taxes.  
Club rentals are available, call 210-226-5612 to reserve.



May 15th Thursday 9:30  
Quarry Golf Club \$124.  
Register by April 11th  
includes green fees, cart,  
and taxes.  
Club rentals are available,  
call 210-824-4500 to reserve.



**Thank You John Bourdelais!**

# Angry Skipper Association: Reunion Registration Form

Holiday Inn Riverwalk – May 14 – 18 2025

**Make your hotel reservations at 210-224-2500 use Block Code "TAS" Cut off Date 15 Apr 2025**

Listed below are all registration, meal, and other costs for the reunion. Please enter a quantity for each event you and your guests wish to participate in. Then total your costs and send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of a check or money order. **"OR"** register online and pay by credit card at <https://www.events.afr.reg.com/angrystickper25> (online registrations have a convenience fee of 4%). Registration form and payment must be received on or before 15 Apr 2025.

We suggest you make a copy of your completed form before mailing.

Do not staple or tape your payment to this form. (each returned checks will incur a \$20 fee)

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:**

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.  
322 Madison Mews  
Norfolk, VA 23510  
ATTN: Angry Skipper Association

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Received \_\_\_\_\_ Inputted \_\_\_\_\_

**Don't forget CUT-OFF date is: 15 Apr 2025**

	Price	# of Ppl	Total
<b><u>MANDATORY REGISTRATION FEE ( For Each Attendee)</u></b>	<b>\$17</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b><u>Golf Outing – **** Signup Cutoff April 11, 2025 ***</u></b>			
Wednesday May 14, 2025 – Breckenridge Park	\$97	#	\$
Thursday May 15, 2025 – Quarry	\$124	#	\$
<b><u>Reunion Banquet Saturday May 17, 2025</u></b>			
Fire Grilled Sirloin Filet	\$67	#	\$
Chicken Picatta	\$59	#	\$
Seared Salmon	\$59	#	\$
<b><u>Merchandise</u></b>			
Shirts Black (place quantity desired by the appropriate Size <b>Size:</b> S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ XXL ___ XXXL ___)	\$24	#	\$
ASA Caps Black	\$15	#	\$
<b><u>Mailing of Merchandise if not attending the Reunion</u></b>	\$17	#	\$
<b><u>Donation to Angry Skipper Association</u></b>			
Donation Amount to Angry Skipper	\$	#	\$
Total Amount Payable to <b>Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</b> -----			\$

**PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND SPOUSE/GUEST NAMES as you wish THEM TO APPEAR ON THE NAMETAG:**

FIRST \_\_\_\_\_ Nick Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last \_\_\_\_\_

Platoon Name \_\_\_\_\_ In Country Date \_\_\_\_\_ To Delta Date \_\_\_\_\_ DEROS Date \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE / GUEST NAME(S) \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PH. # \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY, ST, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

DISABILITY REQUIREMENTS / DIETARY RESTRICTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PH. # \_\_\_\_\_

Cancelations will be taken Mon-Fri 9-5 Eastern at 787-625-6401 (receive Code) Prior to May 1 2025 full Refund will be made - \$17 registration Fee



# Members Identified as Deceased



Home of the Free

Because of the Brave



12Dec2015	Gene R. Austin	Rifle/Range	68-69
17Apr2024	Danny Barnett	Wild/Cat	68
14Jan2019	Eddie Bishop	Rifle/Range	69-70
16Nov2024	Clyde "Sgt B" Bonnelycke	Rifle/Range	69-70
19Nov2017	Azarias L Bousquet	Rifle/Range	69-70
21Oct2018	Harvey Brothers	Med/Rifle/Range	70-71
03May2015	Newman W. Brumlow	First Sgt.	69-70
05Jul2022	Fred Carrell	White/Skull	66-67
17Feb2023	Michael Cobb	Wild/Cat	70-71
14Jun2020	Michael Crume	White/Skull	67-68
08May2018	Kenneth Flower		69-70
08Jul2018	Howard Gage	Wild/Cat	68-69
20Mar2023	Glen W. Goyer	Recon/Weapons	67-68
02Feb2022	Frank Higgins	Rifle/Range	68-69
11Dec2024	Roger Jacobson	Rifle/Range	69-70
17May2420	William Greasy Johnson	Wild/Cat	70
22Feb2024	Norman Joseph	Wild/Cat	67-68
03Jan2023	Terry Lee Juhas	Wild/Cat	67-68
16Apr2020	Tim Kanan	Rifle/Range	68-69
30Nov2016	Fred Klash	White/Skull	67-68
21Jul2018	John E. Mayo		67-68
03May2007	Charles C. Milligan		65-66
24Oct2016	David Noe	Rifle/Range	70-71
26Jul2013	Porfirio N. Perez	Rifle/Range	65-66
23Oct2024	Sue (Stoltz, Rathbun) Pyle	White/Skull	68
13Nov2008	Harold Lynwood Queen	Wild/Cat	68
07Jun2017	James C. Rhinehart Jr.	Rifle/Range	71-72
23Oct2024	Edison E. Scholes,	Skipper 6	67-68
04Apr2022	Leroy Sells	Wild/Cat	70-71
06Jul2020	Carl Shipley	Wild/Cat	67-68
26Dec2023	Stephen Showalter	Rifle/Range	68
22Feb2019	John Sloat	Recon/Weapons	66-67
12Feb2024	John Smiley	Recon/Weapons	66-67
08Sep2024	Robert Smock	Rifle/Range	67-68
2Mar2009	James Roy Sparks	Wild/Cat	70
23Mar2014	Shannon W. Thorpe		66-67
25Feb2013	James Manuel Threatt	White/Skull	70-71
21Nov2020	Daniel Ray Washburn	White/Skull	72
04Nov2017	James Weddell	Wild/Cat	67-68
09Jan2006	Harold M. Weimer	White/Skull	67
04Aug2003	Charles F. Ziegler	Rifle/Range	70-71
02Feb2020	Stanley Zielinski	Rifle/Range	69-70



**Angry Skipper Association, Inc.**  
**Operating Statement**  
 January through December 2024

		Jan - Dec 24
<b>▼ Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>▼ Income</b>		
Banquet		4,235.00
Donations		3,261.00
Misc Income		0.00
Registration Fee		1,275.00
Shirts, Hats & Patches		2,688.00
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>11,459.00</b>
<b>▼ Expense</b>		
ASA Website		482.17
Banquet - Saturday		4,383.20
Postage and Delivery		566.93
Printing and Reproduction		418.00
Professional Services - Reunion		1,150.00
Shirts, Hats & Patches-reunion		3,197.99
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>10,198.29</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>		<b>1,260.71</b>
<b>▼ Other Income/Expense</b>		
<b>▼ Other Expense</b>		
Other Expenses	▶	1,200.00 ◀
<b>Total Other Expense</b>		<b>1,200.00</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>		<b>-1,200.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b>60.71</b>

The \$1,200 (Other Expenses) was to file for retroactive reinstatement of our 501(c)(19) tax-exempt status and filing 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 Federal and State Tax returns. \$600 went to IRS and \$600 went to the Tax Service who filed for retroactive reinstatement of our 501(c)(19) status, including preparing and electronically filing the tax returns. We were subsequently granted retroactively reinstating our 501(c)(19) status. Professional Services was to AFR, who handles registration. ASA Website hosting was renewed for 3 years and extended our domain name.....RW

ANGRY SKIPPER ASSOCIATION, INC. ®

P.O. BOX 501  
Stockton, NJ 08559

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



*"Remember the bad times once,  
Remember the good times forever"*

We are on the web:  
[www.angryskipperassociation.org](http://www.angryskipperassociation.org)

PRESORTED  
1<sup>st</sup> CLASS  
U. S. POSTAGE PAID  
SACRAMENTO, CA  
PERMIT #586

## What is your Story?

Everyone has a story to tell and we all like hearing of the experiences of our brothers.  
Please send your submissions to "james.garvin47@yahoo.com"  
Or you can dictate it to me at Cell #817-688-0731

### Minutes of Business Meeting June 1, 2024

DoubleTree by Hilton – Jacksonville Riverfront, Florida

- Call to order: 9:05am by President John Dullahan. Benediction. Minutes from 2023 approved. Treasurer's report approved. Officer's election: John Dullahan, President; Frank Guidara, Vice President; Robin Woo, Secretary; Ed Regan, Treasurer. Members voted for black shirts and hats. Members voted for 2026 reunion to be in Reno, Nevada hosted by Ed Regan. New Business: DC Tabled until the 2025 Business Meeting; Moved 2025 reunion to Dallas; Phil Leekley will look into shirts for women; Ed Regan suggest No More Raffles; Jim Garvin spoke about organizing the roster and gave input of Dallas. Adjourned.
- Postscript: Board decided to move 2025 reunion to San Antonio. Signed Ed Regan.