



Walking Point

The newsletter for D Co. 2/8 Vietnam 1965—1972

Text of the 2009 Banquet Speaker
Bill Neal, Skipper 6, 1971



My main theme tonight is that you need to be very, very proud of your service. Not just among your fellow vets, but with all your associates and colleagues.

What the mainstream media and their talking heads have reported over 40 years is mostly wrong, and I want to correct some of those errors.

All wars are different, and even during the same war things change dramatically over time and terrain. What you guys experienced in 65-66 was quite different compared to those who served in 67-68, and it changed again for those who served in 69-70, and then again for those who served from 1970 onward.

Just a reminder about the war in Vietnam

- Over 2.7 million Americans served in uniform in SE Asia - 2,594,000 personnel served within the borders of South Vietnam.
- But during the 2000 Census count, the number of Americans falsely claiming to have served in-country is 13.8 million. By this census, FOUR OUT OF FIVE WHO CLAIM TO BE Vietnam vets are not – that’s a national shame.
- But it is also a strong condemnation of those who didn’t have the guts to go, but now claim they did.
- I’ll leave it up to you to figure out why these 13.8 million gutless wonders now all want to claim service in Vietnam - mostly combat service - after 35 years of doing so much to depreciate the service of you who did step up to the plate.
- Of those 2.7 million that served in Vietnam, approximately 500,000 of them were in combat units, including helicopter pilots, door gunners, artillery, etc. But the vast majority were infantry soldiers.
- The other 2.2 million were supporting those 500,000 in combat.
- Of the 58,202 KIA in Vietnam, 66% were Army, and the vast majority of those were Army Infantry units.
- Of those 58,202 – 47,378 (81.4%) were KIA due to hostile action.
- Why did that war take 10 years? Again, I won’t get into the politics of it, but I will assure you that it could have been done in a much shorter time if North Vietnam had been subjected to the full power of the US Armed Forces early in the war.
- The 10 year Vietnam War was the longest war America was ever engaged in, including the 8 years of the Revolutionary War.

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Angry Skipper Association, Inc.® Board of Governors

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Myth: There is a common belief is that the fighting in Vietnam was not as intense as in World War II. That's a crock of bull!

Facts:

- The average infantryman in the South Pacific during World War II saw about 40 days of combat over four years.
- The average infantryman in Vietnam saw about 240 days of combat in one year thanks to the mobility of the helicopter.
- In WWII in Europe the average distance when an infantry engagement was initiated was over 200 yards.
- In the Pacific, the distance of initial engagement averaged about 100 yards (there were notable exceptions.)
- In Vietnam it was about 35 yards.
- In WWII the infantry engagements were mostly from bolt action and semi-automatic weapons. I don't have to tell you guys what Rock n Roll meant in Vietnam.
- In Vietnam, across all uniformed services, 58,148 were killed and 304,000 wounded out of 2.7 million who served – that was a casualty rate of 13.4%.
- That is twice the rate in WWII where the US casualty rate across all the uniformed services was 6.6%.
- In Vietnam, if you were in an Infantry company, your chances of getting hit – KIA or WIA – were over 50%.

When VN vets returned to the US, the mainstream media and many politicians and commentators depicted them as mostly dysfunctional, violent druggies.

Facts:

- 97% of Vietnam Veterans were honorably discharged – the same rate as from 1955 to 1964.
- BUT over 99% of combat vets were honorably discharged.
- Vietnam veterans have a lower unemployment rate than the same non-vet age groups.
- Vietnam veterans' personal income exceeds that of our non-veteran age group by more than 18 percent, on average.
- There is no difference in drug usage between Vietnam Veterans and non-Vietnam Veterans of the same age group (Source: Veterans Administration Study)
- Vietnam Veterans are MUCH less likely to be in prison - only one-half of one percent of Vietnam Veterans have ever been jailed.

Myth: Common Belief is that most Vietnam veterans were drafted.

Facts:

- 75% of the men who served in Vietnam were volunteers.
- 2/3 of the men who served in World War II were drafted.
- Approximately 70% of those killed in Vietnam were volunteers. (continued on page 6)

New Members since the January, 2009 Newsletter:

Philip Leekley, Cat 72
John C. Dullahan, F.O. 72
Bob Edwards, 67

Deceased Member/s: (Date of Death)

Dwayne S Logan, Wild Cat 69-70

Membership count:

Active Members: 700
Members Online: 257



Thanks to **Henry Cruz**, Skull 70-71 (Vice President) for his research and finding our comrades in arms.

Angry Skipper Association, Inc.® Treasurers Report

Angry Skipper Association, Inc.®
 Profit & Loss (unaudited)
 January 1 through May 22, 2009

Angry Skipper Association, Inc.®
 Balance Sheet (unaudited)
 May 22, 2009

Ordinary Income & Expense

Income	
Banquet	\$ 3,680.00
Donations	2,421.00
Group Photograph	615.00
Membership Dues	1,800.00
Registration Fees	1,420.00
Shirts, Hats, Patches	<u>2,697.00</u>
Total Income	\$ 12,633.00
Expenses	
Banquet—Saturday	3,657.27
Funeral/Flowers	120.00
Corporate	50.00
Insurance	310.00
Member Assistance	238.18
Merchant Account	439.28
Photographer	492.00
Postage & Delivery	362.43
Printing & Reproduction	600.00
Professional Services—Reunion	3,050.29
Shirts, Hats & Patches	<u>2,088.93</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 11,408.38
Net Income (Loss)	<u>\$ 1,224.62</u>

ASSETS

Current Assets:	
Checking	\$ 1,376.74
Deposits	<u>300.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 1,676.74</u>

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities	
Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	<u>0.00</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>\$ 0.00</u>
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	3,316.97
Retained Earnings	(2,864.85)
Net Income	<u>1,224.62</u>
Total Equity	\$ 1,676.74
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>\$ 1,676.74</u>

Note: The 2008 Tax Return was prepared and filed by **Robert Burke, CPA** (Skull, 70-71) Thanks Bob!

Minutes of the Business Meeting held 16May09 at the El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel

The minutes from last year were presented to the members by Robin Woo and accepted. The Treasurers report was given by Ed Regan and accepted. ASA's financial condition is solid. Tom Vollmar (Skull, 70-71) was elected President. All other officers were elected for another term; Henry Cruz (Skull, 70-71) Vice President; Ed Regan (Range 68-69) Life Treasurer and Robin Woo (Skull, 71-72) as secretary. The members voted on meeting in Washington D.C. every 4 years. Accordingly, the reunion for 2011 will be held in D.C. The wives names will be added to the roster along with their husbands. Mike Galway and Ed Regan discussed their recon to the Dolphin Beach Hotel in St. Pete Beach, Florida for 2010. The hotel website is located: <http://www.dolphinbeach.com/beach.htm> . The hotel sits on the beach and our hospitality suite will be located in a cabana on the beach, as well. In other news, Frank Guidara (Range 6, 70-71), now CEO of Uno Chicago Grill, is working with certain agencies and groups to distribute between 30-40,000 pizza's to our troops on July 4th. Frank is in contact with 1LT Lee Tibbetts, XO of D 2/8th CAV, to make sure they get theirs. Hoorah!!

San Antonio After Action Report

The El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel staff was professional, friendly and accommodating to our group like we have never had before. We want to thank Henry Cruz (Skull, 70-71) and Everett Tolbert (Skull, 69-70) for their help in coordinating and organizing this years reunion. Our members made multiple trips to the Riverwalk and visit to the Alamo. We want to thank Stacey Smith, of Register with Ease, for helping us during the registration process, as well.

Originally from San Antonio, PFC Fermin Saldana, Jr (KIA 23May66) was wounded by a AK round three days before he died. Henry Cruz contact his surviving sisters; Rachel Saldana Camarillo and Rita Saldana, who joined us at our banquet. We gave them a warm Delta, 2/8th welcome and embraced them into our family.

Tom Vollmar (Skull, 70-71) our new President, ran the banquet program.

There were approximately 117 in attendance, of which approximately 58 were members.



Bill Bott



Bill Neal

Bill Bott (Range 6, 70-71) introduced our speaker Bill Neal (Skipper 6, 70-71). Bill's speech is the cover story in this newsletter. Many interesting facts were presented.

Arthur L. Arnold, Jr., Ph.D., Colonel, USA (Retired) spoke to the group of his own struggles in breaking the color barrier and has always reached out to help others. He actively reached out to younger people, forming bonds and helping them map military and civilian career paths.



Arthur Arnold, Jr., Ph.D. Colonel (Ret)

Jim Taylor (Cat, 66-67) shared a video from The D.O.V.E. Fund (www.dovefund.org) and presented slides of his last visit to Vietnam this past December. The DOVE Fund is a non-profit corporation founded by several Vietnam veterans, Rotarians, and other concerned citizens in January 2000, in Toledo, Ohio. Their goal is to provide humanitarian and development assistance to areas in Vietnam; to promote communication, education, and cultural exchanges that reflect the best qualities of both cultures; and to create an environment brightened by hope and sustained by peace. Since its founding, the DOVE Fund has built 40 schools, including 11 daycare centers, 3 medical clinics, 5 major water projects that have provided clean water to thousands of children, built 150 latrines, conducted several medical missions, implemented an Emergency Medicine Residency Program, and started 2 micro-finance programs for the poorest women in Quang Tri province.



Jim Taylor



This memorial is located a few blocks from the hotel. A group of ASA members went to the memorial and found 4 young women there. One was in tears. They comforted the women and explained why the RTO was looking into the sky. We received this note from Tammy:

"I truly appreciate the stories these men shared with my friends and I around the heart wrenching memorial statue there in San Antonio. I honor the sacrifices they made, then and now, and want them to know that through my tears of thankfulness that day I saw brotherly love that could not be traded for all the treasures on earth. The uniting I felt at that memorial was full of peace, friendship, honor, compassion for each other and those that came in contact with them.

The experience I had that sunny May morning will remain with me for a lifetime. I was so proud to have met these fine gentlemen and loved sharing their stories and my encounter with them to my husband, my 8 yr. old son & 4 yr old daughter on my return to Richmond, Virginia. My heart will be with you and your families on this Memorial Day. Thank you for serving our beloved country, you are priceless. Tears of Thankfulness Tammy, Richmond VA."

Myth: Common belief is that the war was fought largely by the poor, minorities, and the uneducated.

Facts:

- Vietnam Veterans were the best educated forces our nation had ever sent into combat.
- 79% had a high school education or better. In WWII it only 45% had a high school diploma.
- Proportionately, three times as many college graduates served in Vietnam than in WWII.
- 12.5% of KIA's were Black, which was almost exactly the proportion on Blacks in the general population.
- If any ethnic group had a disproportionate percentage of casualties, it was the Hispanics. (But I cannot find exact statistics to support that and there are some reports that the proportion of Hispanics KIA was less than the percentage in the general population. However, that analysis is based strictly on an analysis of surnames, and is likely not accurate.)

Myth: The common belief is the average age of an infantryman fighting in Vietnam was 19.

Facts:

- Average age of the 58,148 killed in Vietnam was 23.1 years. Breaking that out:
 - Enlisted: 50,274 KIA, Average age: 22.3 years
 - Officers: 6,598 KIA, Average age: 28.4 years
 - Warrants: 1,276 KIA, Average age: 24.7 years
 - 11B MOS: 18,465 KIA, Average age: 22.6 years
- Proportionately, more officers were killed and wounded in Vietnam than any other war we have ever fought, including the war between the states.
- Two reasons: This was a company commander's and platoon leader's war – and they were always in the thick of it, and a significant number were killed as a result. Secondly, all helicopter pilots were commissioned or warrant officers, and they took a lot of casualties.

Myth: The Common belief is that the domino theory was proved false.

Facts: The domino theory was accurate.

- The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries, Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand stayed free of Communism because of the U.S. commitment to Vietnam.
- The Indonesians threw the Soviets out in 1966 because of America's commitment in Vietnam.
- Without that commitment, Communism would have swept all the way to the Malacca Straits that is south of Singapore and of great strategic importance to the free world.
- If you ask people who live in these countries that won the war in Vietnam, they have a different opinion from the American news media.

The Vietnam War was the turning point for Communism.

You should be very, very proud of your service in the Vietnam War.

- Over the entire 10 years of combat, the American military did not lose a single battle of any consequence.
- From a military standpoint, it was almost an unprecedented performance.
- By the end of 1970:
 1. Not a single main force NVA unit was operating in South Vietnam, and those who had retreated into Cambodia were at half strength or less.
 2. The Viet Cong had been virtually destroyed, mainly due to their 1968 TET offensive where they came out in the open to mount mass attacks against US and ARVN bases.
 3. All key NVA sanctuaries had been eliminated.
 4. 90% of the Vietnamese population was living in secure areas.

- The beginning of the end for the Viet Cong and the NVA was the 1968 TET offensive – which the vast majority of the media misreported to the American People.
- It was reported as an overwhelming success for the Communist forces and a decided defeat for the U.S. Forces.
- Militarily, the TET Offensive was a total defeat of the Communist forces on all fronts.
- I was there in the thick of it, and I can attest to the absolute defeat of those attacking forces in my AO and through out all of III Corps.
- It resulted in the death of some 45,000 NVA troops and the complete destruction of the Viet Cong elements in South Vietnam.
- The organization of the Viet Cong Units in the South never recovered.
- The TET Offensive succeeded on only one front and that was the News front and the political arena.
- This was another example in the Vietnam War of an inaccuracy becoming the perceived truth. However, inaccurately reported, the News Media made the Tet Offensive famous. But their reported outcome of that offensive was a total lie.
- The fall of Saigon happened 30 April 1975, two years AFTER the American military left Vietnam. It is not often reported that the US Congress had cut off virtually all financial and military equipment aid to Vietnam in early 1974, which put the South Vietnamese armed forces at a tremendous disadvantage. At the same time, the Soviet Union was pouring ever more aid into North Vietnam to allow them to build up their conventional forces for a major land invasion of the South.

You all should be immensely proud of what you accomplished, both individually and as part of an outstanding military effort. We won all the battles. The politicians lost the war. You need to make sure your friends and neighbors know the truth.

End Notes:

Vietnam Facts vs Fiction; Capt. Marshal Hanson, U.S.N.R (Ret.) and Capt. Scott Beaton, Statistical Source.

2000 Census

Various studies by the Veteran's Administration

FACT VS FICTION.....THE VIETNAM VETERAN - <http://www.vvof.org/factsvvnv.htm>

Other online sources:

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/casualties.htm>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II_Casualties

<http://www.luxlibertas.com/a-history-lesson-vietnam-war-facts-vs-fiction/>

<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/1551081/posts>

Lt. General Harry W.O. Kinnard
U.S. Army, Retired

Harry William Osborn Kinnard, Lieutenant General U.S. Army (Ret.) at the age of 93 died peacefully at his home in Arlington, Virginia on January 5, 2009. He was born into an Army family on May 7, 1915 in Dallas, TX. He lived an Army life of service to his country beginning with witnessing the attack on Pearl Harbor and defense of the island, then later parachuting into France on D-Day, commanding airborne soldiers in Holland and directing operations during the Battle of the Bulge with the 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne. In the early 60's, he formed and tested a new type of Army division and after 2 1/2 years transformed and lead it into combat in Vietnam as the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). This new Division set the standard for future U.S. Army airmobile operations. He ended his Army career as Commander of Combat Developments Command at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia in 1969. He received many high military honors, including the Distinguished Service Cross, and being knighted by the Queen of Holland for his actions in Holland in 1944. After his retirement he remained very active as a consultant and advisor. He was president of the Army Aviation Association of America and inducted into the Army Aviation Hall of Fame. He was president of both the 1st Cavalry Division and 101st Airborne Division Associations. *Info provided by Frank Trapnell, who attended the funeral.*

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*“Remember the bad times once,
Remember the good times forever”*

We're on the web:
www.angryskipperassociation.org

2010 Reunion Site Dolphin Beach Resort & Conference Center



Next years reunion will be from May 13-16, 2010 at the Dolphin Beach Hotel, consisting of 173 spacious guest rooms with 400 feet of sandy beach on the Gulf coast.

Their website is <http://www.dolphinbeach.com/>.

