

THE

RED 5 DIAMOND

The official publication of The Society of the Fifth Division, United States Army.

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Annual Dues: \$15

November Edition

2019 Reunion Photos

*New Executive Board

*Coming Change to
Red Diamond

*New Presidents
Message



Photo of Flag Display at San Diego Reunion symbolizing one small US flag representing the 514 Fifth Div. soldier KIA in Viet Nam, interspersed with POW flags.

photo courtesy of Sherrell Byrd

“WE WILL”

** Deadline for submission of articles for next Edition: 10 January 2020*

2018 – 2019 Society of the Fifth Division Officers – Roster

Objectives of the Society

A. To perpetuate and memorialize the valiant acts and patriotic deeds of the Fifth Division; to electrify and unify that invisible current of fellowship, friendship and comradeship molded in the throes of war and the exigencies of a peacetime service, and promote the interests and welfare of its members.

B. To publish and preserve the history of the accomplishments of the Fifth Division and the Society, in war and peace, and set forth the gallant and heroic deeds of its members.

PAST NATIONAL PRESIDENTS

- *Maj. Gen. Hanson E. Elyz (1919-22,24-25)
- *Col. Philip J. McCook (1922-23)
- *Dr. E. C. Morton (1925-28)
- *Maj. Gen. Paul B. Malone (1929-30)
- *Capt. Peter Murphy (1930)
- *Maj. Walter E. Aebischer (1930-32)
- *Capt. Peter P. Zion (1932-34)
- *W. Walter Healy (1934-35)
- *Lloyd A. Reder (1935-37)
- *Col. Henry Clay Bate (1937-38)
- *William Barton Bruce, Sr. (1938-39)
- *Emil Everts (1939-41)
- *A. Lincoln Bradbury (1941-45)
- *William Gibbs (1945-46)
- *John W. Fonner (1946-48)
- *William L. McGrory (1948-49)
- *Kenyon Stevenson (1949-50)
- *Charles A. O'Connell, Jr. (1950-51)
- *John H. Pflaum (1951-53)
- *Frederick F. Specht (1953-54)
- *John H. Baskin (1954-55)
- *Walter R. Stout (1955-57)
- *Frank H. Deane (1957-58)
- *Edward Pivovar (1958-59)
- *T. Earl McNaney (1956-60)
- *Russell S. Fisher (1960-62)
- *Gordon S. Henry (1962-63)
- *John J. Madison (1963-65)
- *Herbert K. Webb (1965-66)
- *Charles P. DeRose (1966-67)
- *Victor Dunneback (1967-68)
- *Winston Roche (1968-69)
- *Ervin J. Kotowski (1969-70)
- *Herbert Ginsburgh (1970-71)
- *Aubrey Prewitt (1971-72)
- *Michael S. O'Donnell (1972-73)
- *Virgil Scheibel (1973-74)
- *Frank Kolimaga (1974-75)
- *Kenneth Anderson (1975-76)
- *Howard Singer (1976-77)
- *Robert Young (1977-78)
- *Stanley Piotrowski (1978-79)
- *George Bachman (1979-80)
- Harry Arquette (1980-81)
- William Stanfield (1981-82)
- *Guido Bemasconi (1982-83)
- *Msgr. Harold Prudell (1983-84)
- *Chester Ball (1984-85)
- *William Colon (1985-86)
- *Robert Graves (1986-87)
- *Herman Schell (1987-88)
- William Stanfield (1988-89)
- *John Goodman (1989-90)
- *William Upham (1990-91)
- Bradley Brewer (1991-92)
- Harry Arquette (1992-93)
- *Robert Rochon (1993-94)
- *Charles Coco (1994-95)
- Michael Giannini (1995-96)
- *Don Brown (1996-97)
- *Cullen Stone (1997-98)
- Jay Balderson (1998-99)
- *Jimmy C. Walker (1999-2000)
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- Jim Spiller (2007-08)
- Pat Andreoni (2008-09)
- James "JJ" Jackson (2009-10)
- Bernie "Buck" Kean (2010-12)
- Steve Wheat (2012-13)
- Bobby Moody (2013-2014)
- Wayne Cumer (2014-2015)
- Robb Robetson (2015-2016)
- Bob Dudley (2016-2017)
- Dennis Thompson (2017-2018)
- Alex Candelaria/Steve Wheat (2016-2019)

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A Note from the President

Hal Roller



Greetings to the members of our Society of the Fifth Division from one of the guys who is working diligently to make our upcoming 100th reunion a resounding success- **and most of all fun!** If you missed this past reunion in San Diego, you missed a good one. There were so many war stories told, I thought our Chaplain, Ron Van Beek, would have to lead us in a prayer service asking forgiveness for so much lying. San Diego was a grand time and we are going to have great fun in San Antonio as well. Mark September 9 through 13, 2020 on your calendar.

The season of autumn is my favorite. I love the cooler weather, the bright colors of the trees and (especially) pumpkin pancakes. This autumn, however, has included sadness. My wife and I along with several members of Alpha Company and their spouses were in Arlington, Virginia for the interment of Captain Robert Dean. Captain Dean was commander of Alpha Company, 1/61st Infantry from September 1970 to May 1971. The year before, Captain Dean had served as a platoon leader in Delta Company 1/11th Infantry. Truly, his combat division was the Fifth Division. During the ceremony, I assisted as clergy and had a small role. But I felt a stronger portrayal as representative of all who served under and with Captain Dean in Vietnam, as well as, you- the members of the Society of the Fifth Division. It is right and fitting that we should honor Captain Dean for his service to our nation. Likewise, it is right and fitting that we should honor the fallen members of the Society of the Fifth Division as we do at the memorial services. The surroundings of our memorial services may not be as awe inspiring as Arlington National Cemetery but honoring the fallen is the same. This honoring is the last in the U.S. Army Chaplain's triad moto:
Nurture the Living – Care for the Wounded – Honor the Fallen

Honoring, or simply honor, is a value. Just before the turn of the century, the Army published and had every soldier carry a copy of its values. Those values are: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. I see those values in you-guys at every reunion.

The 1st Vice President's Message: Lou Pepi



It is such a treat to see old friends, and in that respect, the San Diego Reunion was no disappointment. And, as always happens at these reunions, I made a slew of new friends, that by the end of the weekend, became old friends—if you know what I mean! It's inspiring how people with a common bond like ours, can form instant and lasting friendships—and for that we are blessed. It is surprising to me what a small portion of our lives is comprised of meaningful moments and that those moments are gone before we realize their significance. Then years later, when these seminal mo-

ments become evident, their simplicity is such that it confounds the mind that we did not see them earlier—probably because these meaningful moments are sometimes shrouded in tragedy. The people reading this newsletter understand my premise—and if I could—I would see heads nodding right now as you read. Because of that, I know I am among friends and I thank you all for your friendship. You all have helped me more than you know. I hope I have helped you as well. I wrote a book to help me come to terms with war and my past, and I ended up helping others—brothers in arms—friends from my past and strangers. Thank you for a superb weekend. It was a great five days and not even a bout with the flu could dampen my spirits.



This year's Alpha/ 1-61 soiree in Old Town San Diego



The site of the Kelly family's new home

rebuilding—and a new and better home will rise out of the ashes. Thank you Gene, Debbie, Trey and Thomas for your hospitality.

I also spent several days with Gary Higgins touring the San Francisco bay area. Gary arranged a book talk for me at the local VVA chapter in Redwood City and I got to meet and talk to many new friends and tell them about the Fifth Infantry Division. Then, Gene, Gary, Debbie and I drove up to visit John Estrada at his beautiful mountain home. You live in such a beautiful place, John. Thank you for your hospitality and getting us back in one piece after the hair-raising ride in your ATV to the top of the mountain.



View from John Estrada's porch above Lake Oroville

My west coast time did not end there. Gene Kelly and I went on a little road trip up California's Central Valley to his temporary home in Chico—north of Sacramento. I say temporary home because Gene and his family lost their house in the infamous "Camp Fire" last December. We toured the site of the fire in the towns of Magalia and Paradise and the scene was devastating. Gene—tough old 11-Bravo that he is—is



Gary Higgins, Gene Kelly and John

Steve & Alex—you put on a great reunion and I can only hope to be half as successful with the 2021 reunion in the New England. I am honored—yet humbled—with the faith all you have put in me in taking on the View from John Estrada's porch of this event. I will do my best.

Lou Pepi

Past Presidents Comments: Alex Candelaria



We had a wonderful and giantly successful annual SOFD Reunion this past September. Thank all of you that contributed to making this a reunion to remember. Our past president and emcee Stephen Wheat led the reunion with his up beat lovey feeling. This display of comradeship was evident through out the reunion. We remembered and honored the 514 KIA of the 5th Division by having 514 American flags displayed on the grounds of the hotel. The flags were displayed in the form of a Red Diamond with POW-MIA flags on the outer edges of our American flags. We shall never forget our POW-MIA.

We had two great banquet speakers in Col. Hank Neill and Mr. Vien Doan. At the Sunday evening banquet Col. Neill spoke of contributions made by the 75th Support Personnel during the Vietnam War. As he said 75th Support made trips to Con Thien, Khe Sahn and other locales along the DMZ. The Saturday evening banquet was highlighted by Mr. Vien Doan speaking of his struggles during his Journey from South Vietnam to the United States at the end of the war. There were several members of the SOFD with tears running down their facial checks while hearing Mr. Doan Speak.

These raw emotions were also displayed by Society members and their spouse during The Rose Memorial ceremony. Several surviving spouse told their story of their beloved husband that had passed on. During this Rose Memorial Ceremony a brand new bell was gifted to the SOFD by Scott Hickey, foundry manager for the veterans art project in San Diego, As each name of the deceased was called out a hand held bell was struck alternating with the striking of the newly gifted bell. Judge Advocate, Phil Maniscalco had the honor of being the first to strike the newly gifted bell in an official capacity. Past Society Historian, Leigh Blood is the last Society member to strike the now retired hand held bell used for many a year. A rose was placed in a vase at the calling of each name or was handed to family members present.

Most attendees at the reunion participated in tours of the USS Midway and Seaport Village on Friday. On Saturday many attended the La Jolla, Mt. Soledad and Old Point Loma tour. A feast was prepared by Jennie Knight and three of her volunteers for Society Members returning to the hotel from their tours. Tremendous amount of various food items awaited the hungry. Two members played guitar music while everyone enjoyed the wonderful feast while visiting with each other. Jeanie and her volunteers are to be commended for the many years they have provided food snacks during our reunions.

Chaplain Ron VanBeek again led The Society in a thought provoking Non-denominational Worship Services.

Although Society shirts and other product sales were not available many orders were taken by Dennis Coulter who will be mailing these purchases to those who bought items. Lou Pepi sold about 40 of his recently published book "My Brothers Have My Back".

Under the guidance of Colonel Bob Dudley the San Diego Reunion was financially successful. Past Society President Dudley set the financial standard for a very successful reunion when he organized his SOFD annual reunion several years past. There have been times when the annual reunion has ended in the red, but now we have returned to reunions of financial stability.

We now have new leadership. Hal Roller is now our President. Louis Pepi is First Vice-President, Dan Haverman is 2nd Vice President, David Kocan is now Red Diamond Editor. The rest of the leadership positions remain the same. The Society of The Fifth I.D. remains in good hands. Let all of us support our leaders that make for a continued strong and positive membership. I hope to see all of you and at our next reunion in San Antonio, Texas during our 100th year reunion.



Second Vice Presidents Message: Gary Haverman



Greetings from your newly elected 2nd Vice President. First, I would like to thank President Steve Wheat and Co-President Alex Candelaria for an amazing time in San Diego. Jeanne and I really enjoyed a good time at our 99th reunion. This has been my sixth reunion that I've attended, each time has allowed me to get to know someone better and meet someone new. I also want to thank the nominating committee for putting their trust in me for this position. I'm ready for the challenges that lay ahead and have already contacted Armed Forces Reunions to look into a date and place for the 2022 reunion. I plan on working very hard for the Society of the 5th Division just as I did 49 years ago when I entered firebase Carlie 2. I was just a PFC "Gunbunny" assigned gun #4. In my upcoming articles I will be sharing more of my time in Vietnam as well as my life after. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the loss of my dear friend Don Hatch who passed away September 13th. Don and I went to basic training together, AIT and Vietnam, at one time served on the same gun together. He was a member and attended the Nashville and Kansas City reunions. He always made me laugh, he will be missed. God rest his soul. Sincerely, Gary Haverman 2nd Vice President Society of the Fifth Division.

National Editor of Red Diamond Message: David Kocan



My name is David Kocan I volunteered for the Army on 04/07/70 and did my basic training in Fort Dix New Jersey. I then went to Fort Polk to fine tune my skills. I arrived in Vietnam 09/03/70 and volunteered for the 5th Division 1/61 Battalion

Charlie Co., just kidding no one volunteers for the DMZ. On the plane over was my dear friend Joe Piechoinski, we did not know at the time we were going to be best friends. We both served in the same platoon and squad. When the division went home, we were sent to the Americal Division, Delta Co. 2nd Bn. 1st Inf. 196 Bde. I was trained an 11 Bravo, that means I have no writing, reading, spelling or editing skills. Joe and I both earned 2 overseas Bars, only because we were smart enough to volunteer to extend our time in Vietnam. We both were discharged from Fort Lewis, me on 11/10/71 at approx.. 11:58 PM and Joe on 11/11/71 at approx.. 12:01 AM. So here I am again volunteering, this time to be an Editor. I will do my best, but I will make mistakes, sorry I am not perfect. Questions and concerns and complaints, please leave a message, I will get back to you some day.

Your brand new Editor David Kocan

Chaplains Message: Ron Van Beek

Christian - Your Twin

Gen. 2:7 - And The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and Breathed into his nostrils The Breath of Life; and man became a living soul.

You have a Twin...an identical twin. Every person living on earth today; has a twin...all 7,000,000,000+ of us. Otherwise, none of us; would be alive. When a person dies; they die simply because their twin, leaves their union with their body...not for any other reason! The Great question today is, do you know your twin? Sadly, most people don't know this basic fact.

Have you ever communicated with each other? Your twin, is the very "You of You", and it is an exact "copy" of your physical body...but it is a spiritual body. Obviously, your twin, is your soul, Given in intimate union with your physical body. Your soul is Given directly from God, at the moment of conception in the womb, and THAT Act of God, is what gives you, and each person their life itself. This is where each human life begins. Having no soul...means having no human life, for God has bound these two inextricably together and closely intertwined in this world!

While they are so exceedingly similar, they also have obvious fundamental differences. We can see the physical body, but we can not see the spiritual body. Great and many medical books have been written about the human body, describing it in incredible detail. But all the dictionaries in the world, and all human words on earth, can not begin to describe the soul, or the spiritual realm. The physical body, upon death, quickly deteriorates back to dust; back to the ground, from which God formed it. However, the soul comes from God, and is therefor spiritual and not only can not die, but lives forever in Eternity. Only on The Last Day of Judgment, will God Miraculously bring each human body, back to it's own spiritual soul. Then, Body and Soul, each human will live forever in it's Eternal destination.

When God Created the first human, Adam, perfectly from the ground of the earth, Adam lay lifeless before God, in all of his intrinsic detail and human perfection...but he was still lifeless, for he had no soul. Then Scripture tells us, "God Breathed The Breath of Life into him"...his soul. This moment of this indescribable, Miraculous union of the physical and the spiritual, is called life or conception of life. Conversely, the moment the soul leaves the body, is called Death.

To understand this mystery, it is critical to recognize that there are two vast realms, which God Created, the physical and the spiritual universe. Both of these realms have characteristics, dimensions and elements, intrinsics, which are impossible for any human to begin to understand, or to even describe. Both of these realms, which God Created in a split-second, are His Divine Work, and both are obviously far separate from His Divine Being and Essence. Clearly, both Eternity and time are His Creations.

Amazingly each soul has many of the same features, as you have in your body, but in a spiritual manner. Each soul has a mind, a will, feelings, emotions, mouth, hunger, etc., etc. Before the disaster of sin, in the Deep Falls of Adam, our physical body knew and had a deep and full relationship, with our spiritual soul. How full and ravishing was this relationship. There we could walk and talk with God, Glorifying Him in both the physical and spiritual world. What a happy, blissful time, as Adam and Eve were fully ravished in Glory and Bliss.

However, when sin entered the world, it abruptly and totally severed that intimate relationship between a body and a soul. No longer could Adam and Eve communicate spiritually with God. With sin, their soul lost its communication ability with God. Before they could walk and talk with God daily. Now not only can they not talk with God; but now their human body constantly, actively hates God and our neighbor...daily working against our God-Given-Purpose of Glorifying God, and thus against own self interests. An impenetrable chasm instantly came between the Heaven and the earth, the body and the

soul, and the physical and spiritual. Now, only the Power of The Holy Spirit, in The Divine New Birth, can cause reconciliation to take place, and awake a sinner to it's Great Danger.

Get to know your soul. You already have spent a long time together; living as strangers, in the same house. You will spend a lot longer; living together in Eternity! It is critically important that you get to know your soul, for it is the real, "you of you". It is the essence of your life! Have you ever talked to your twin. David knew his twin, for example, we can read in Scripture of him often talking to his soul. Why art thou cast down, o my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His Countenance. Psalm 42:11

Jewish - Soul

The Hebrew word, "nefesh", and the Greek word "psuche", in the English language, are both translate into the word, "soul". In The Bible, the Soul is always considered the opposite of the word flesh, "Sarx". Nefesh or Psuche has complex overtones associated with the concept of life itself. It can relates to the "self", and often assume a special spiritual connotation, as the "seat" of the supernatural, or eternal life.

As such, Scripture emphasizes that each human soul has a priceless value, far greater than the whole universe. For his/her soul, a person would give the whole world. With such incredible value, anchored in and dedicated to God, it acquires a special character within Scripture.

The soul's Eternal Value, is in it being a Gift from the Hand of God. Each human soul is under the intimate, daily, and continuous care, of it's Creator. Because it is spiritual, and not material, it can not be guarded as a house, nor is it safe in a bank, nor can it be washed as a car. The Bible pictures it; as the Breath of God. The word, "Psuche", is fundamentally rooted in the "self", self-hood, or the center of our being. We are all Created by God.

God is a Spirit; thus all communication with Him, must be in spirit and truth. In Genesis, we read that God Created humans, "in His Image". Obviously, because He is a Spirit, being Created in His Image, does not mean anything physically involved in this Image. While God often uses anthropomorphism terms to describe Himself; God never portrays Himself as human, in Essence. He uses these human terms simply to better illustrate to humans what He means. Obviously, God does not have human physical features, such as hands, feet or mouth.

Therefore Created in His Image, means especially man being Created in something of God's Knowledge, Righteousness and Holiness which are spiritual, abstract, values. That the human body and soul has been given, and retains, some of these spiritual values, demonstrates how closely God has Given these Graces to human nature.

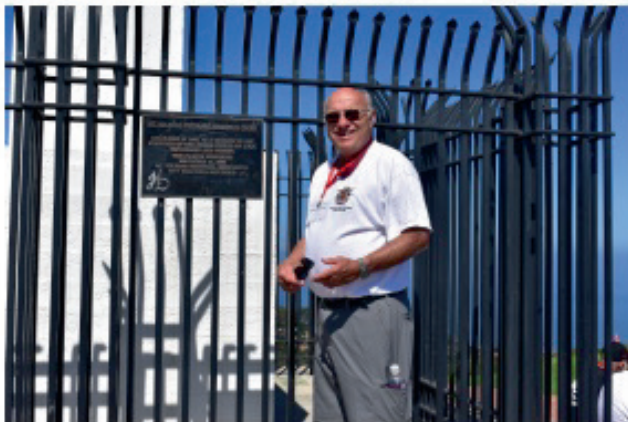
The human body decays in the grave, but the soul is immortal and lives forever...uninterrupted. Only on the Last Day, will all the graves open and every cell of every human body, will again be reunited with its soul. The Glory of the immortality of the soul, is inextricably woven throughout Eternity, and lies in the Great Hope of the Hereafter. Death is not the final answer; but only the Beginning.

TAPS

Don Hatch

died Sept 13, 2019

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FINAL Hard COPY OF RED DIAMOND

As voted on during the September 2019 General Membership meeting, a motion to publish all future quarterly editions of the Red Diamond Newsletter on soft copy will begin with the Feb. 2020 edition. This will benefit both the Society and our members. The Society currently spends a hefty dollar amount on printing and mailing fees, the soft copy version will yield a significant savings. The Red Diamond will be easily available 24 hours a day from the moment it is published on soft copy and distributed via a link on the Society of the Fifth Division web page. If you as an individual reader want to print a paper copy for your retention it is as easy as using the print function on your computer or taking the "pdf" file to a copy center of your choice and having them print a copy for you. If you just want to read it on your mobile devices you can download and save the soft copy pdf file and put it on as many devices as you please. Every library has computer facilities available free of charge with access to the internet and they will also offer you any assistance you may need in going to the website. The following directions will help you access the Red Diamond you are reading and the previous several editions and it is easy as the following the examples below.

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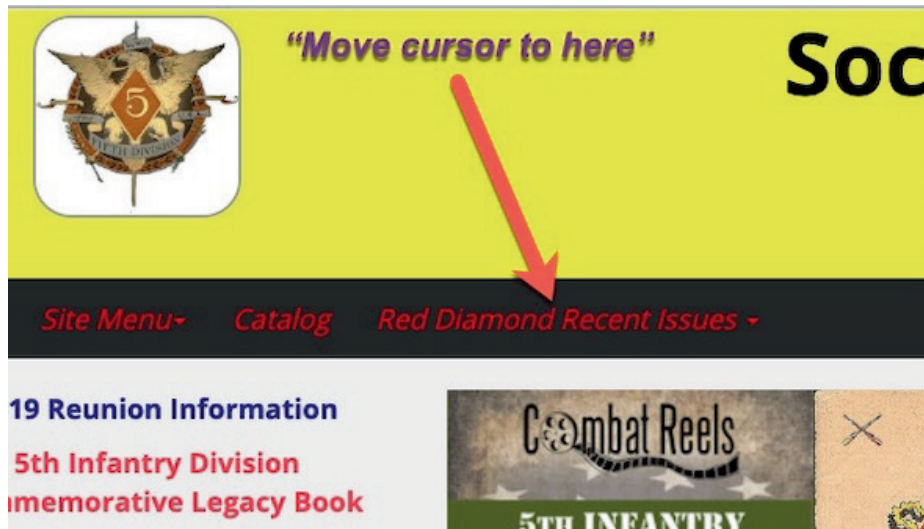
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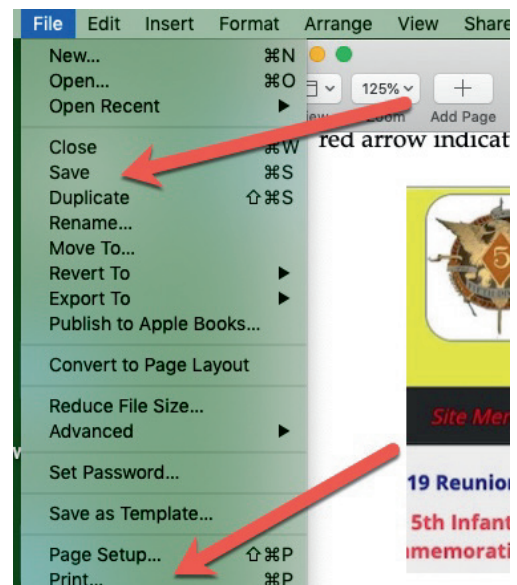
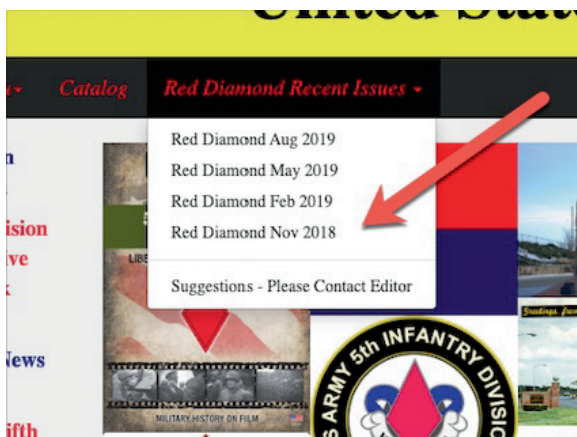
About Us
The Society of the Fifth
Division, United States
Army was created by the
World War I veterans of the
Fifth Division at the Fifth
Division Headquarters in
Esch-sur-Alzette,
Luxembourg, on the
eleventh and thirteenth of
June 1919. It had some

Continued

2. After you are at the Society webpage move your cursor over the menu line to where the phrase. “Red Diamond Issues” appears. In this example I have added a red arrow indicating where this appears on the menu line.



3. Once your cursor is at “Red Diamond Issues” a pull down menu will appear (see red arrow) showing the last 4 editions of the Red Diamond select the one you want and mouse click on it and a pdf will appear on the computer screen and you can begin reading. If you want to save a file copy or print it, right click your mouse and a pop up will appear allowing you to do the following: File- Save (choose file format pdf) and indicate where you want it saved to on your computer (I choose desktop) or you can also select “Print” and it will send the file to your printer and print it out on paper.



EDITORS TWO CENTS by Steve Wheat, National Editor



This will be the last edition of the Red Diamond that I will be the editor of. It has been a very interesting job and I want to thank all of the members who enjoyed reading the RD and who contributed articles and photos from your many exploits during in Viet Nam and afterward back in the United States.

The new Editor David Kocan is a long time member of the Society of the Fifth Division and has written two articles for the RD while I have been editor. His wit, creativity and perspective on the world will bring us some interesting and accurate Red Diamond newsletters in the future. If all of you are as

helpful toward him as you have been me his job will be made easy.

The All digital Red Diamond will look just the same as it always has except every edition will be in full living color and for people like me who cant read fine print easily your computer will permit you to scale the view to what ever size that suits your eyes. With all of the money that we don't spend on printing and mailing the RD it can be used for prime entertainment and guest speakers at our annual reunions and to fund other activities for the good of the society. If you have a special idea or a project that you would like made for executive board consideration send it to a board member or present it when you are at the annual general membership meeting held during the reunion. I look forward to seeing all of you at the next reunion when I will return to being a happy and humble society member.

Cheers !!! Stephen Wheat

National Society's Treasurer report: George Shoener

2019 Treasurer's Update The finances of the Society of the Fifth Division are in good shape. Combining our checking account and our Certificates of Deposits (CDs), we currently have a little over \$75,000. Your elected Presidents and Boards continue to do an outstanding job of managing your funds.

Over the past 5 years (since I've been Treasurer)...

1. We've come out ahead financially on all reunions.
 2. We've started using "free" teleconferencing for Board meetings,
 3. Our Editor does his own Red Diamond editing,
 4. Our Quartermaster, Secretary, and Treasurer have eliminated mailing expenses by automating our financial communications,
 5. Our use of electronic tools has allowed us to cut back on additional mailing expenses.
- Our Fiscal Year (FY) ends in December of each year, and your Auditing Committee reviews and reports on the annual finances in the Red Diamond. This all done electronically. We appreciate you paying your dues on time and for any and all donations.

George Shoener, National Treasurer

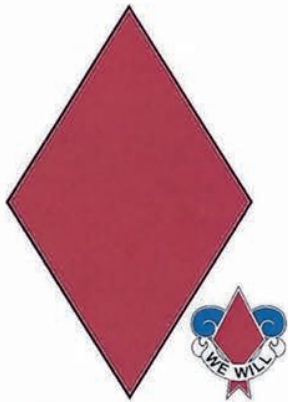
Great 99th reunion!! Enjoyed the tours. The San Diego Zoo was fantastic. Steve and Alex did a wonderful job. And Jeanie and crew provided a spectacular hospitality room feast. We had a great time.

Stan and Andy Shaffer

5TH INFANTRY DIVISION COMMEMORATIVE LEGACY BOOK

Good News! The highly-anticipated 5th Infantry Division Commemorative Legacy Book is hot off the press and available for immediate delivery. This exiting new book contains:

5TH INFANTRY DIVISION



COMMEMORATIVE BOOK
1917-2019

- History of the 5th Infantry Division including hundreds of historic photographs from WWI through 1993
- 5th Infantry Division Insignia, Units & Campaigns
- Commanding Generals
- Memorials & Tributes
- The Society of the Fifth Division
- Photographs & Memories
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For All Orders Send Check or Money Order to Address Shown Below:

SOCIETY OF THE FIFTH DIVISION, U.S. ARMY

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For questions please contact Quartermaster:
Dennis Coulter
dwcoulter1@aol.com



“A Memorial for our Fallen in Northern I Corp January 31, 2007; Quang Tri Province Graves Registration Collection Point 1968-1971”

To Society of the Fifth Division

Joy and I felt welcomed to the 5th Division Reunion.

It was a good feeling experience for me because I got a lot of hugs thanking me for what I did for our Fallen and I was very glad some listened to what happens to their Fallen Brothers after they go to a Graves Registration Collection Point. At the Memorial Service it was the most nervous I have ever been talking about our Fallen. I could feel the pain that some of my Brothers were having as I know it brought back sadness for them. I do hope that my talk helped.

Attachment 1 is a Bio by VVA Chapter 522 which I joined in 2011 and they put this article out in their newsletter. There was a misspelling in “Plaque” and I didn’t catch it. Also, at that time I didn’t want everyone to know I had a 100% PTSD Disability so I just said 70%. Joy and I are now married over 52 years and we were High School Sweethearts starting in 1963. The photo is me at Mai Loc by the old Special Forces Camp that the 5th Mech took over after it was overrun. Several Australians and American Special Forces KIA fought against the NVA in a hand to hand combat battle for their lives. At the Collection Point the survivors helped us identify their Brothers and you couldn’t help but cry with them for their loss.

PAGE 6

FIVE DOUBLE DEUCE

VOLUME 21, ISSUE 03

Vietnam Profiles

Chapter 522 Member: Jerald Collman

Branch of Service: United States Army

Type of Service: ROTC (Florida Southern College)

Military Service: November, 1968 - November, 1971

Vietnam Service: October, 1969 - October, 1970

Vietnam Unit: 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Div.

Rank during Vietnam service: 2nd Lt., 1st Lt. (O-1, O-2). Promoted to Captain (O-3) after returning to the US.

Type of duties performed: Graves Registration, Field Service Platoon Leader, Reactionary Force Platoon Leader, Company C, 75th Support Battalion

Places served in Vietnam theater: Quang Tri Province

R&R Location: Hawaii

Military Awards and Decorations:

Bronze Star Medal

Army Commendation Medal

Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon

Vietnam Service Medal with 4 Service Stars

National Defense Medal

Let me first just say that I served and I am proud of my medals even though I hardly ever wear them in public except for the Veterans Day Parade and I do that "for my Fallen Brothers and Sisters who can't." I always walk with the book of over 58,229 plus Names of our Fallen Brothers and Sisters.

I consider this as still part of the Graves Registration Processing, Notification of Killed, Survivor Assistance, Body Escort, and I will do it until the day I die. I feel that once you have been a Graves Registration Officer your responsibilities go beyond the call of duty. It is a life commitment "to never forget those who have given the ultimate sacrifice;" it is the least I can do for them. As my fallen brothers fell around me, I handled them with loving arms, I whispered to them that God was with them and to embrace Its Presence, and I told them all that I would never forget them nor their sacrifice. This has always been my purpose of life since I left Vietnam.

My Vietnam service:

It was hell and it changed me forever. Most of my tour was difficult and I would have never cared to have had that experience. It still was an honor and privilege to have served my Fallen Brothers. I did it with Honor, Dignity, and Respect. Whenever possible a Universal Prayer was said with or without a Chaplain to all Body Remains at the Quang Tri Graves Registration Collection Point. It was a very humbling experience for all of us. Providing Notification of Killed (NOK), Survivor Assistance, and Body Escort out of Dover as a Captain while stationed at the Army Chaplain School in New York after my tour in Vietnam helped to reinforce the preciousness of Life.

Personal Message:

In January, 2007 I returned back to Vietnam with the first ever medical team allowed back



into Quang Tri Province. I secretly had a memorial plaque made to honor our American Fallen Soldiers who died in Northern I Corps.

The dedication was held at the old Graves Registration Mortuary/Collection Point site which had been found a few days earlier. I didn't inform the government officials or the families who were living around it as to the historical significance of the site because I knew they would never authorize it or allow it.

The plaque was carved by the son of an ARVN who had been "invited to attend a re-education camp in 1975" by the NVA/Communists. He was never seen again. His son knew that he would be jailed if caught, but he said "it was worth the risk as a way for his father through him to thank the Americans for trying to save his country." The marble for the plaque was actually obtained from Marble Mountain in Da Nang, which was illegal because the marble sold to tourists in the area is actually a poorer quality that is shipped down from North Vietnam. The dedication was a complete surprise to the Communist Party Officials who were always filming and following us everywhere.

Since returning from my trip, I was informed by a friend who still travels to Vietnam that local officials have stated that I would no longer be allowed back in Vietnam, but who cares because "mission accomplished!"

I have also learned that the plaque has been removed from the site and it is currently bolted on the wall of the Quang Tri Province Chief's office. There have been numerous requests for the Memorial Plaque to be placed back where it belongs, but so far that has not happened.

We, however, did take pictures of the Dedication Site and the Memorial Plaque. They cannot take those from me!!

Other Information: Member of VVA Chapter 522

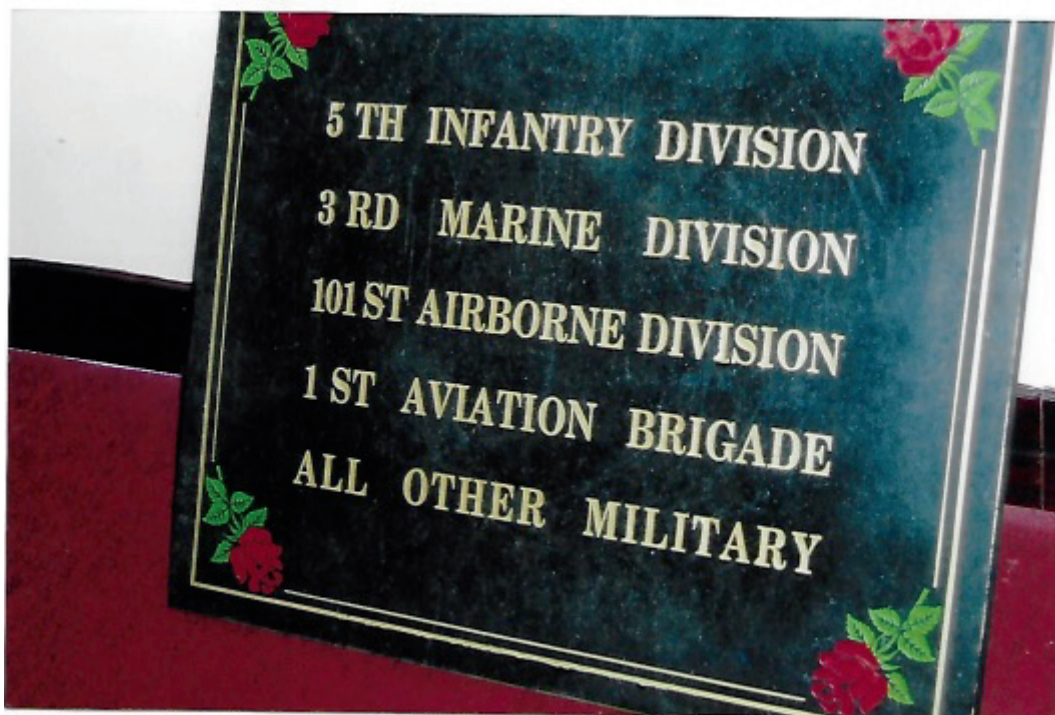
I have been married for 45 years (two kids and five grandchildren) and I have no idea why she keeps me. I have a 70% PTSD Disability.

Welcome Home

Attachment 2 is the front and back side of the Plaque that a 3rd Marine Division friend, a 101st Airborne friend, Vets With A Mission Group we all there with; after placing the first American Plaque for our Fallen in Northern I Corp and the DMZ , January 31, 2007, along with a very short Memorial Service before the communist realized what was happening.



Attachment 3 is a close up of the front and back of the Plaque before going to the Quang Tri Province Graves Registration Collection Point I had found a few days earlier.



Attachment 4 1st photo is the actual site of the Collection Point and the cement slab was still there in 2007. In 1970 there was a Hooch/Structure on top of the slab where we processed the Fallen. The structures you are seeing weren't there in 1970. Some 100 meters back from the slab was a bunker line, then rice fields. 18th Surgical Hospital was some 25 meters to the left and the helicopter



pads was some 25 meters to the front; to the right some 50 meters was some kind of a building for the Vietnamese. Some 150 meters to the front was Hwy 1; heading north on Hwy 1 was the Back Gate of QTCB to DHCB.

2nd photo is one of the communist who were using camera's, videoing, and plain just following us everywhere we went. After a while, we would just tell them where we were going in case they lose us due to traffic. The other people in the back ground were staged as family's members living in those buildings you saw where the cement slab is located. Originally the communist were lead to believe we were going to place something on the ground recognizing Vets With A Mission and their helping hand with medical support for the Vietnamese people. The real families weren't there as they were basically in rags & lack of food was obvious to us so they replaced them.



THE BAD AZZ DOG TAG CLUB

If you have been at the past several reunions you may have noticed members in our midst wearing golden doglegs. They are members of an elite group (some call it a cult) known as the Bad Ass Dog Tag Club (BADTC). Now you may be wondering “What is such a thing? “Dare I dream of achieving such status?” “How do I become a member?” The answer to these questions and more will be revealed in the following story.

HISTORY: While it is uncertain when the idea was spawned in the fertile imagination of our founder, the fact is the BADTC has only been in existence for a few years. Do not believe the stories some tell that it dates back to the first crossing of the Rhine. In the words of our founder Robert Rochell: “I was with a large group of my friends at the reunion and we were approached by a be-kilted man named Steve Wheat who asked me “Where did you get those golden dog tags?” Then with a Scottish brogue he exclaimed, “They are Crackin Baaaad Ass they are! Aye laddie dem golden dog tags are are sweet, you betcha.”.

Bob Rochell said “It was if the sky overhead opened up and the sub conscious reason I got the dog tags in the first place was revealed to me.” The message was this “If you start the BADTC they will come!” From that moment an underground movement within the society began and the rest is prologue.

*“Some are born great, some achieve greatness,
and some have greatness thrust upon them”* -William Shakespeare

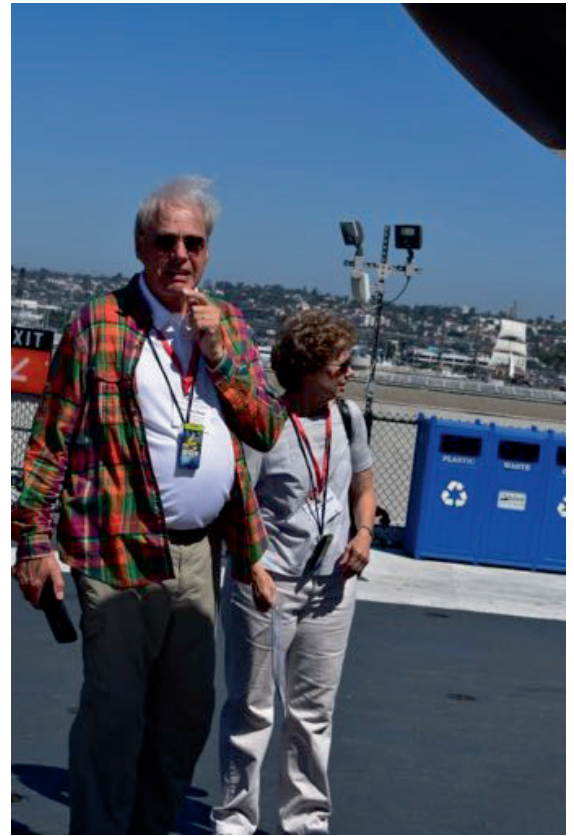
The nomination process is all very hush hush but you have to be nominated by a member to be inducted into the BADTC. Once a decision was made by our founder Bob Rochell he signs the executive orders, acquires the dog tags and a polo shirt identifying you as a Bona Fide member of the BADTC.

The traditional Induction Ceremony is always on a Friday night in the hospitality room where Founder Bob reads the executive orders to the inductees who have assembled, they are then given sanction by Fr. Steve Wheat, spiritual leader of the BADTC. Afterward the new members are presented with their dog tags in a rather rough manner. And that concludes the annual induction.

The first Lady of the BADTC is Brenda Smallwood. BADTC members Ray Collins and Nick Pink have just been promoted to the rank of General. Photos of our most recent induction follow this article.







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VOLUME 55, NUMBER 11 WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2013 FIFTY CENTS

A legendary life leads back home

Madison pastor named a Madison County "Living Legend."

Amelia Flood
AFLOOD@YOURJOURNAL.COM

Madison County considers Rev. Sherrell Byrd Jr. a living, breathing legend, not only for his military service, but also his triumph over the scars of war and his work with students.

Byrd is a combat veteran of the Vietnam War who overcame addiction and despair and became an art teacher who touched the lives of students in Madison and Brooklyn. For his life story, Byrd, 64, was named this year's Madison County Living Legend.

For Byrd, currently pastor at the Southern Missionary Baptist Church in Madison, the award was "almost like a national award."

"That healed a lot of wounds," Byrd said of the Feb. 20 award. "At the (county board), it was absolutely the first time I've felt totally appreciated for what I've been through. I'm just humbled."

County Board Member Gussie Gasper nominated him for the award.

"It had never really dawned on me this man sacrificed so much," Gasper said. "When I think of him, (Rev.) Byrd, I get choked up. It just dawned on me that no one had ever really thanked him. It's never too late to say, 'Thank you!'"

See Legend, A4



AMELIA FLOOD, JOURNAL

The Rev. Sherrell Byrd Jr., pastor of Madison's Southern Missionary Baptist Church, pages through the photo album he carried with him during his eight months in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War.



SHERRILL BYRD

Sherrell Byrd Jr., shown during his service in the Vietnam War in this 1968 photo. The Madison native was recently named a Madison County Living Legend.

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Amelia Flood AFLOOD@YOURJOURNAL.COM

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AMELIA FLOOD, JOURNAL

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SUBMITTED

Sherrell Byrd Jr., shown during his service in the Vietnam War in this 1968 photo. The Madison native was recently named a Madison County Living Legend.

Friend Terryl Curry, of Olivette, Mo., has gotten to know Byrd as his church pastor. "I've gotten to know him as being a very com-passionate, warm person," Curry, 66, said. Church member Norma Griggs, 76, of Edwardsville, and her daughter, Angela Griggs, 53 of Glen Carbon, also cite Byrd's influence in their lives. "My daughter calls him `Dad:" Norma Griggs wrote in a March ii letter, "Our church has accomplished much under his leadership. We are looking forward to even bigger and greater things." "I lost my dad, then my grandfather, but, thank God, he has given me Pastor Byrd," her daughter wrote in the same letter.

The boy who loved war

Growing up, Byrd, loved catching "Combat!," the television series that starred Vic Morrow. He and his friends played war games grow. g up in Madi-son. "I grew up loving war," he said. "But I never thought I would be in an actual war."

After his graduation from Madison Madison High School, he was toying with the idea of entering the Air Force when his draft number came up. It was 1968 and U.S. troops were fighting in the jungles of Vietnam. Byrd completed basic training and advanced infantry training.

When Byrd and other troops arrived at Bien Hoa, Viet-nam, in the fall of 1968, they touched down in the middle of a fire fight. "It was an eye opener,," Byrd recalled. From there, he was sent to a camp in the Demilitarized Zone near Quang Tri as part of the 5th Infantry Division. He made rank quickly, rising from a private first class to sergeant.

An M-60 machine gun-ner, Byrd and his unit were charged with taking out ambushes. "It was kind of sad in a way, when you looked into the wallet of a Viet Cong soldier," he said. In his first encounter with hostile troops, Byrd said he remembers "they froze, we froze." Then a firefight ensued. "The one guy had a picture of his wife and children in his wallet and you knew he wasn't going back home. We had to survive, but it was kind of sad, The killing, however, became part of everyday life, he said, for both sides. Byrd and his unit called their camp in a cemetery "Tombstone," and used graves as cover from attacks.

A friendship nearly turns fatal

Ambushes by Vietnamese soldiers weren't the only dangers Byrd would face in the war. One danger that nearly killed him was much closer. Byrd befriended another member of his unit, his best friend," Abraham Drayton, who could not read. Byrd said. So, Byrd would write home to Drayton's wife for him. According to Byrd, the couple had marital problems. Those issues, combat and the and ghosts Abraham insisted haunted the cemetery began to prey on his mind. Drayton began hallucinating, convinced at one point that he had no blood.

Byrd was in camp on June 13, 1969 when other mem-bers of the unit came to him about his friend who was out in the field. "Abraham cracked up there and

went berserk," Byrd recalled. "He was screaming, 'We're all gonna die, we're all gonna die!'" Byrd brought him back to the camp after others dis-armed Drayton. Later that night, as Byrd was laying. Claymore mines around the camp's edge, Drayton took a detonating device. As Byrd was setting up a third mine, he saw Drayton standing over him. "He had tears coming down and a crazy smile on his face and as soon as I shouted 'Abe no!" He blew it," Byrd said.

Pronounced dead but still living

Sheered Byrd Jr. was pronounced dead on the helicopter flying him for treatment following the blast. It blew out his left eye, severely injured his right leg, chest, right arm. head, face and other parts of his body. He'd tried to shield Drayton, who was also injured. On the hospital ship, USS Repose, surgeons treated his injuries. While on the ship, Byrd saw Drayton for the last time. "He said, 'Byrd, did I do that?'" he recalled. "I said, 'Yes, but don't worry about it!" Drayton wheeled away. Although Byrd tried to locate him later to reconnect with him, he could not find Drayton before the 1 other man's death. "I didn't want Abraham to leave this world thinking he'd killed a friend," Byrd said. "And it really broke my heart when I found out he passed away."

A rocky return

Byrd spent a year recovering from his wounds before returning to Madison. His family, including his fiancée, Mauristiane, found out about his injuries through a Granite City Press-Record article before he was sent home. Byrd said he struggled to come to terms with his injuries and the war. • "I thought it would be best to break the marriage off," he said. "She said 'I'm marrying what's on the inside' I could not have chosen a better wife. If I ever needed her, she's always there." Despite his family's support, recovery wasn't easy. "I was just bitter," Byrd said. "I was so full of hate I started drinking to heal this thing, but then I started drinking to stay angry." While he finally overcame his drinking and began to move on with life, Byrd said he struggled with the "hate" for years.



Rev. Sherrell Byrd Jr. of Madison, in an undated photo following his return to the United States for treatment for wounds suffered in Vietnam.

Madison relationships shape new man

Byrd eventually turned his childhood interest in art into a career, earning a bachelor's degree in art education in 1979 from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. From there, he taught 30 years in the Brooklyn and Madison school districts. Many students, he said, keep in touch despite his 2009 retirement. "They'll say 'I am what I am because of you,'" Byrd said. What surprises him is that coming back to Madison has had such an impact on his life since the war, he said. "I told my father I'd never come back to Madison." Byrd said. who now lives in Belleville while continuing to work in Madison. "It's like God said. going to make you a liar and I'm going to send you back to Madison.' And I have no regrets coming back here."

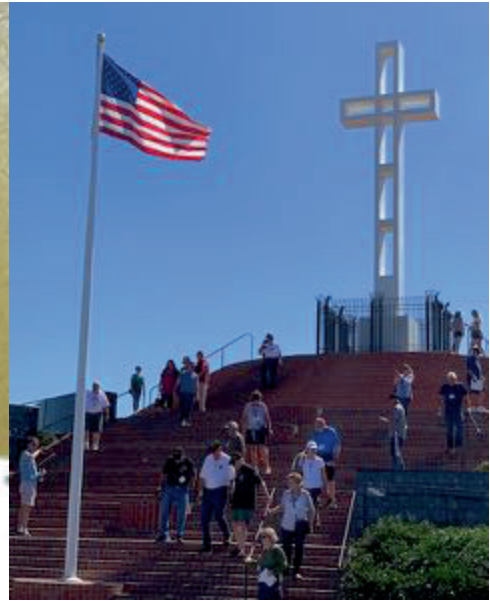
Memories reminders of good in life

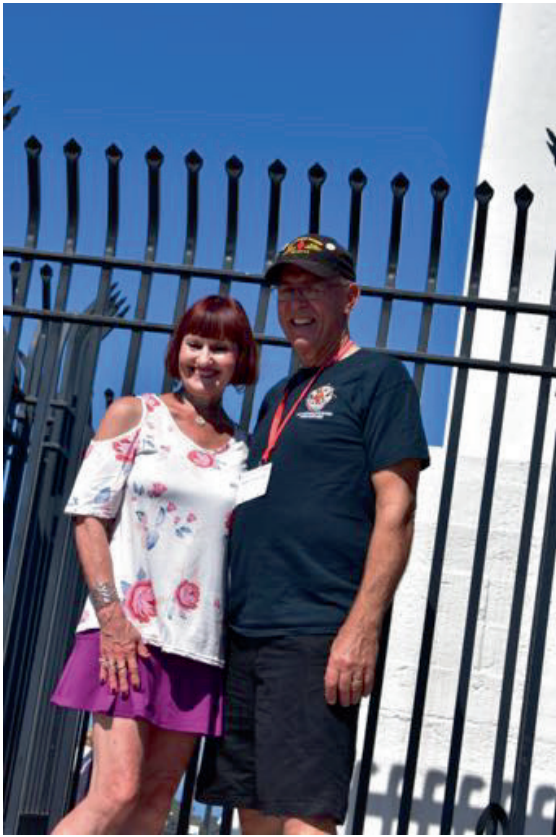
While Byrd left teaching in zoo, he's still active in the Madison community as pastor of the 96-year-old Southern Mission, Baptist Church. However, his past isn't far away, both physically and through the Facebook connections he's made with former members of his Army unit and soldiers he once fought against. His office in Bissell Avenue Church is filled with pictures of his Vietnam days and other war reminders. "I keep little memories to always remind me I didn't have to be here," he said. "Each morning, I'm just grateful to be alive. I can say I'm happy because I know what I've been through. When you see death and you smell it, you're just grateful to be alive."

*"Each morning, I'm just grateful to be alive.
I can say I'm happy because I know what
I've been through.
When you see death and you smell it,
you're just grateful to be alive."*

Rev. Sherrell Byrd Jr., a Madison
pastor who served in the Vietnam War













Fifth Division U



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The best way to protect yourself and your loved ones against influenza (flu) is to get a flu vaccine every flu season. Flu is a contagious respiratory disease that can lead to serious illness, hospitalization, or even death. CDC recommends everyone six months and older get an annual flu vaccine.

What are some key reasons to get a flu vaccine?

- Flu vaccine has been shown to reduce flu illnesses, hospitalization, and even death in children.
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- Flu vaccination also is an important preventive tool for people with chronic health conditions.
- Vaccinating pregnant women helps protect them from flu illness and hospitalization, and also has been shown to help protect the baby from flu infection for several months after birth, before the baby can be vaccinated.
- A [2017](#) study showed that flu vaccine can be life-saving in children.
- While some people who get vaccinated still get sick, flu vaccination has been shown in several studies to reduce severity of illness.



Why is it important to get a flu vaccine EVERY year?

- Flu viruses are constantly changing, so flu vaccines may be updated from one season to the next to protect against the viruses that research suggests will be common during the upcoming flu season.
- Your protection from a flu vaccine declines over time. Yearly vaccination is needed for the best protection.



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QUARTERMASTER REPORT

Following are pictures and descriptions of merchandise that is available for sale from the Quartermaster.

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Black or White Polo Shirt w/embroidered logo design. Choice of short or long sleeve. Cotton/Polyester (50/50)
Cotton/Polyester (50/50).
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Long Sleeve: M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL - \$50
S & H: 1 shirt - \$7.00 \$2.50 each additional Larger orders: Contact the Quartermaster

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Larger orders: Contact the Qtr.master



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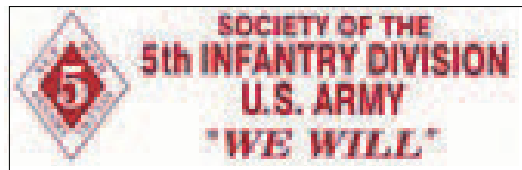
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- renew my membership in

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- a full member
- an Associate Member

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