

THE

RED 5 DIAMOND

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ISRAEL OR HAMAS WHERE DO WE STAND FREEDOM OR????

“WE WILL”

Deadline for submission of articles for the next Edition:

January 10, 2024

2020-2021 Society of the Fifth Division Officers – Roster

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 Healey (1934-35)
- *Lloyd A. Reder (1935-37)
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- *Emil Everts (1939-41)
- *A. Lincoln Bradbury (1941-45)
- *William Gibbs (1945-46)
- *John W. Fonner (1946-48)
- *William L. McGrory (1948-49)
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- *Charles A. O'Connell, Jr. (1950-51)
- *John H. Pflaum (1951-53)
- *Frederick F. Specht (1953-54)
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- *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 Slone (1997-98)
- Jay Balderson (1998-99)
- *Jimmy C. Walker (1999-2000)
- *Mickey McCoy (2000-01)
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- Phil Maniscalco (2005-07)
- 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 (2018-2019)
- Hal Roller (2019-2020)
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- Hal Roller (2022-2023)

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A Message from our President Bud Wagner

I still have fond memories of the great reunion we had this year in San Antonio Texas. Although the weather was hot it didn't stop the camaraderie with our brothers and sisters! Thanks to Hal Roller and the Executive Board for all their hard work.

And now we are setting our sights on Harrisburg, PA for next year. The dates are September 19-23 at the Red Lion Hotel Harrisburg/Hershey. I will be working on our schedule and off-site trips over the next weeks and months so stay tuned for further information in the Red Diamond and on our web site @ <http://www.societyofthefifthdivision.com/>.

I would like to refer you to a very good article that is posted on our web site from Bob Dudley about prostate cancer. I know who wants to think about that, but education and awareness in our age group is paramount to keeping us healthy. You can find the article by going to the web site and on the left-hand side halfway down is a link called "Veteran Health Posting", click on this link for some very good information.

My wife Melinda and I are looking forward to serving you as we make plans for Harrisburg next year. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me or someone on the Executive Board.

Bud Wagner

President, Society of the 5th Division



Hello from our 1st Vice President Larry Burnett

Hello everyone. Hope this finds everyone in good health. Cooler weather at last is here. 35 Saturday morning. What a change. But like all living in the midwest WE NEED RAIN. Not as bad as our friends in Texas but lot of ponds won't last through the winter without some measurable amounts of rain.

I would like to thank Hal for a great reunion in San Antonio. [after they got the AC fixed] I really enjoyed it and meeting old friends and new people for the first time attendees is always enjoyable and interesting.

Don't really have much to add for my 2025 reunion in KC for now. Wife and I have been checking some possible sites to visit and tour. Been to a couple places thus far but are going to check more a little later this year.

Sounds like my wife has maybe found a new 5th Div. person here in our area. He drives a school bus in our district. Am excited to meet him and visit with him about joining the Society.

1st VP
Larry Burnett

We all need to be praying for Israel.

A Message from our 2nd Vice President Lee Aanonsen

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A Sermon from our Chaplain Ron VanBeek

Christian Chaplain Message

Christian Chaplain Message: Aliens exist; & they are here

Last month, in Washington, DC, our Congress held an official congressional hearing on aliens. Such a bizarre hearing had never been seen before. There the many witnesses alleged, and swore under official oath, that they had personally seen, and experienced many unexplainable sightings of alien objects, during the last generation, that defy, any normal human abilities, or anything known on this earth. Therefore, they insisted that these unexplained things, must be alien beings, or alien forces, coming from some other universe or unknown dimension. We know, The media breathlessly reports daily of some new planet in the universe where they believe life exists. O how eagerly humans want anything, but God, to rule over them. Many were pilots who testified of seeing Things such as aircraft can accelerate far faster than any aircraft on earth, that can reverse directions instantly, that can suddenly disappear, or dive into the water, etc. etc. Superior things, Bizarre unexplainable things, that were far above anything humans can do. Even giving testimony, that our military has secretly retrieved crashed alien aircraft, constructed of superior metals unknow to us, and they have even recovered the bodies of alien pilots, that were clearly non human, and then conspired to keep these things secret, from the citizens of this country, for the last generation.

Many Christians ask the obvious question. How could these strange things be happening, in a normal society, today, to normal looking people. Yes, these are bizarre things, Unbelievable things, that defy human logic. Nothing this bizarreness was ever even been seen or spoken of before, in all the 119 previous generations, that existed previous to this generation. But, fortunately we have God's Word, The Scriptures, to explain them. Sadly, it will only be to those who have received eyes to see, and ears to hear. The rest will go on in their insane conspiracy concoctions. Yes, this strange phenomenon of the subject of aliens, is only happening in this present generation, and as we will see, there is a very good reason, that it is happening only now.

But before we go there, we must understand the real meaning of aliens. The dictionary defines Aliens as some being on earth; that is outside of mankind. Using that narrow definition, we can say with utmost confidence, that yes, of course aliens are real, yes, they exist and yes, they are here on earth right now. Yes, aliens are in the same place, or room, you are in right now. You just can't see them for they are in the spiritual world, invisible to us humans. Yes, Aliens really exist in this world, in huge numbers, every day, all day. These aliens actually are older than humans, for they were on earth, even before the first humans, Adam and Eve. Moreover, there are even two different kinds of aliens. Obviously, then to deny that aliens are real and exist; is a denial of Truth, of Scripture itself, for Scripture speaks of these aliens repeatedly. Their Spiritual nature, is far greater, far more advanced, than our human nature. And yes, There is a violent, vicious war, going on in the spiritual world, violent war between the Good Angels, and the Bad angels. Heaven is an extremely busy place, a war camp, with both of these great angelic forces clashing mightily. We in our human nature are blind to this war, but at times, and especially in the last days, of last days, we will be seeing these aliens more and more. For at that time the evil angels are loosed for a season, by God, to sift and try Christians and Christianity.

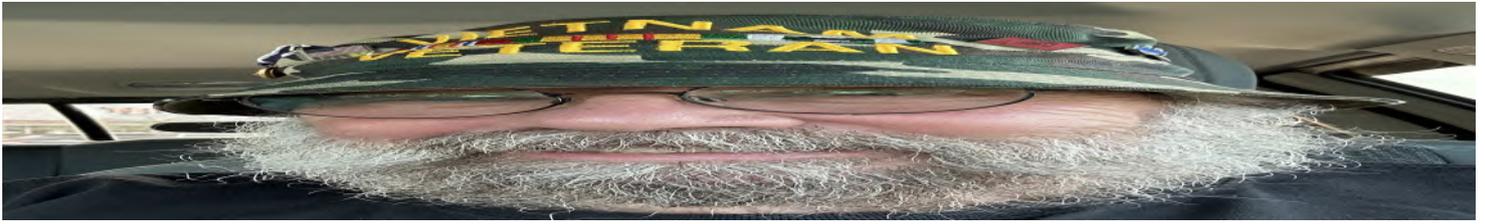
But, First, before we look for these aliens, then we must define what the term alien really means. The Dictionary more fully defines aliens as; some being, differing in nature, or in characteristic, to humans; to the point of being incompatible with humans. That is an excellent definition, for both of these two types of aliens, the Good and the Bad Angels, that really exist in Heaven and on earth today, are utterly incompatible with humans, with human nature. They are the aliens beings, which are seen today. Yes, angels are as far away from being like our human nature, as anything can possible be. Yes, As far away, as East is from West, as up is from down, as light is from darkness.

These two types of Aliens, who really do exist in heaven and on earth, all around us; are easy to explain. Simply put, they are The millions and billions of Angels, which God had originally Created sinless, in a split second, on the 1st Day of Creation. From Scripture even we read of 7 different levels of angels, serving different roles and functions. Each which God Created, each according to His Plan, in The Trinity's Grand Master Blue Print, for the Creation.

Now, We know, one of the highest of those Created angels, rebelled against God, in Heaven, shortly after Creation. In his rebellion, Lucifer, who was one of the most beautiful and powerful angels, willfully, instantly lost, his sinless innocence, and earned the awful name, Prince of Evil, satan, The father of all lies. We periodically get a hint of these aliens, or angels, written of in Scripture. Yes, the two types of Angels, both the Fallen and the Good Angels, is the sum and substance, of where all reports of aliens comes from that are appearing so strangely in our day. It must be emphasized with absolute certainly, There are not any aliens, outside of these two types of angels, whom God has Created for the spiritual world.

To understand aliens, we are going to look at how God Describes them in Scripture, from Rev. 13. These evil angels, in the last days, are loosed from their chains of hell, for a season, to refine the church. More importantly, God allows them to exercise great power in their days of loosening, to delude, to deceive, foolish humans, with delusional miracles. We can read of this in Scripture:

Rev. 13:11 – And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon, and he exercise all the power of the first beast before him, and because the earth and them which dwell therein, to worship the first beast whose deadly wound was healed. And he do with great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceived them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles, which he had power to do, in the sight of the beast, saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which has the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life and to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast could both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed. An he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in therefore heads, that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark or the name of the beast or the number of his name.



What do you see in the picture above ? Do you see me, or are your eyes out of focus. When you look on the front cover what do you see? Do you see a soldier fighting for his flag, his country, freedom for all that are dear to him? When we hear of those fighting for freedom, do we stand with them or turn our backs? How do you define a Veteran? How do you decide what is right and what is not? As a Christian I believe that everyone should live in peace and not be afraid to sleep at night. I also believe that those who attack without provocation should feel the wrath of vengeance. I stand with Israel. Veterans Day is approaching, and every year I say my prayers to those who have gone before me. I usually go to a cemetery to see the flags waving in the breeze and silently thank each and everyone for the freedom I have. God Bless America.

Today I wonder if the countries that believe in freedom and have fought and died for freedom have a Veterans Day.

A big shout out to JJ and Karen Jackson and their family. Karen we are so happy to have you back in the U.S.A. We are all praying for you.

Happy Veterans Day and never forget

This page is dedicated to those who may need prayers, cards and maybe a phone call. If you know of anyone who should be listed please email the names, thank you.

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The B-17 bomber is one of only three still in operation in North America.
PHOTOS BY ELLEN CREAGER/DETROIT FREE PRESS FILE

Yankee Air Museum offers rides in bomber that helped win WWII

Jasmin Barmore
Detroit Free Press
USA TODAY NETWORK

The Yankee Air Museum is offering one last chance this year to jet across the skies in a historic B-17 bomber, a plane that helped the Allies win World War II.

The plane, The Yankee Lady, is one of the only three left operating in North America. Once airborne, passengers will be able to move to other places inside the aircraft, including the nose, flight deck, bomb bay, radio room and waist gunnery section.

"The B-17 Flying Fortress was a heavy four-engine bomber in the US Army Air Force during WWII" a release from the air museum said. "And was noted for its dangerous daylight missions over Germany."

The event will run from 10 a.m. to noon at the Yankee Air Museum's Hangar located at the



Tickets to ride in the Flying Fortress cost \$525 and can be purchased on the Yankee Air Museum's website, yankeeamuseum.org.

Roush Aeronautics Center at Willow Run Airport in Ypsilanti. Tickets for the ride are \$525 per person and can be purchased on the Yankee Air Museum's website, yankeeamuseum.org.

Another reason to visit Michigan
Submitted by Stan Shafter

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIETY OF THE FIFTH DIVISION, UNITED STATES ARMY

— Amended 25 September 2022 —

— ARTICLE I —

"NAME"

The name of this Society shall be, "The Society of the Fifth Division, United States Army."

— ARTICLE II —

"OBJECTS"

The Objects of this Society shall be:

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 moulded 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.

— ARTICLE III —

"MEMBERSHIP"

Membership in this Society shall be of four kinds: Annual, Associate, Honorary, and Life members. Membership will be comprised of: (1) members of Local Camps, and (2) members at large who do not belong to any Local Camp.

A. **ELIGIBILITY:** Those who served honorably as officers and enlisted men and women in the Fifth Infantry Division during its periods of activation are eligible to become members of this Society. Also eligible to become members of this Society are war veterans who served honorably as officers and enlisted men and women in the United States Armed Forces and who are ancestors (parent, grandparent, etc.), lineal descendants (child, stepchild, grandchild, etc.) or collateral descendants (brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, etc.) of those who served in the Fifth Infantry Division. Also eligible are war veterans of Regiments of the Fifth Infantry Division that remain active in the United States Armed Forces. (Note: Eligibility requirements were amended and approved at the annual reunion/convention on Sunday, September 25, 2022, during the Business Meeting in Springfield, MO.)

B. **ANNUAL:** An Annual member is one whose dues are fully paid yearly. Delinquent members will be dropped from the Society rolls three months after the date of expiration of dues.

C. **ASSOCIATE:** Associate membership in this Society may be conferred upon any member of a family of a Fifth Division veteran, or any person who did not serve in the Fifth Division, but who is interested in the activities of the Society upon payment of annual dues as required in Section A. of ARTICLE VI hereof. Associate Members shall not have the right to vote under Section E. of ARTICLE V hereof. They are extended the choice of becoming an Annual or Life member.

D. **HONORARY:** Honorary membership in this Society may be conferred upon any individual to whom the membership may wish to give special recognition or reward, through election by majority vote of those in attendance at an Annual Meeting. Honorary members are required to pay dues and are not entitled to vote: They may also become Annual or Life members.

E. **LIFE:** Any member wishing to become a LIFE member may do so by paying the following one-time dues: age less than 61, \$150.00; age 61-69, \$75.00; age over 70, \$50.00. All LIFE members are subject to any special assessments declared by the Executive Board or adopted at any meeting.

— ARTICLE IV —
"LOCAL CAMPS"

Inasmuch as members of the Society are widely scattered throughout the United States, authority is vested in the Executive Board to organize branches of the Society to be known as Camps. Because of the greater benefits to be enjoyed through Camp membership, every Society member shall be urged by the National President to affiliate with the Local Camp of his choice.

— ARTICLE V —
"ORGANIZATION"

A. OFFICERS: The following National Officers shall be elected annually for one-year terms:

National President
National 1st Vice President
National 2nd Vice President
National Secretary
National Treasurer
National Historian
National Chaplain
National Judge Advocate
National Editor

And such Honorary Officers as the Society may authorize.

Duties of National Officers:

1. NATIONAL PRESIDENT: The National President (or, in his absence, the National 1st Vice President, or National 2nd Vice President) shall preside at the meetings of the Society. The National President shall be responsible for the administration of the Society in all functions and undertakings, in accordance with the policies established by the Executive Board or the membership in meeting assembled. The National President shall be the Chairman of the Executive Board.

2. NATIONAL 1ST VICE PRESIDENT: The National First Vice President shall perform the duties of the National President in the absence of that official, and shall serve in any administrative capacity designated by the National President. In the event of the death, resignation, or incapacity in other matters of the National President, the National 1st Vice President shall succeed to the office of National President and continue in the office until the next election.

3. NATIONAL 2ND VICE PRESIDENT: The National Second Vice President shall serve in any administrative capacity designated by the National President. In the event of the National First Vice President's succession to the National Presidency, the National Second Vice President shall be termed simply "The National Vice President."

4. NATIONAL SECRETARY: The National Secretary shall be the Statistical Officer of the Society, being responsible for keeping complete and up-to-date files of the names, addresses, and former military organizations of members of the Society. The National Secretary shall be responsible for keeping a separate list showing the members by Camps and the geographical localities in which they live. The National Secretary shall keep a list of names and addresses of all parties with whom the Society deals. The National Secretary shall be responsible for keeping the minutes of all meetings of the Society, shall keep a file of all correspondences of the Society, and shall be responsible that all members of the Society are properly notified of all meetings of the Society in time for them to act on the notification. The National Secretary shall remit to the National Treasurer all monies received for the Society on the 1st and 15th of each month. Upon termination of National Secretary's term of office, the National Secretary shall turn over all the Society's files, software and equipments to the successor.

5. NATIONAL TREASURER: The National Treasurer shall be responsible for the reception, disbursement, and safekeeping of all funds pertaining to the Society and shall render an annual accounting for the same which shall be audited and distributed to all members of the Society. All checks issued by the National Treasurer against Society funds must be approved by the National President or supported by appropriate statements or invoices. The National Treasurer shall arrange for a suitable bond for all the elected officers of the Society, and shall furnish a copy to the National President and the National Secretary. Upon termination of his term of office, the National Treasurer shall turn over to his successor all Society funds, records and files.

6. NATIONAL HISTORIAN: The National Historian shall be responsible for preparing, publishing, and preserving historical data pertaining to the Fifth Division, the Society and its Annual Reunions, and the deeds of the officers and men thereof. The National Historian shall be the custodian of the History of the Fifth Division, and shall render an annual accounting and report to the Society.

7. NATIONAL CHAPLAIN: The National Chaplain shall conduct the devotional and memorial services at the meetings of the society, and perform the usual duties of chaplain of a veteran's organization.

8. NATIONAL JUDGE ADVOCATE: The National Judge Advocate's duty shall be to advise the National President and the Executive Board on the legality and constitutionality of all questions and matters submitted to the National President.

9. NATIONAL EDITOR: The duties of the National Editor shall be to publish quarterly the Red Diamond magazine to the membership of the Society from a list provided by the National Secretary.

B. EXECUTIVE BOARD: Government of this Society shall be vested in an Executive Board composed of elected Active Members who have demonstrated an enthusiastic, constructive interest in the Society and who shall be selected annually as follows:

1. Two Past National Presidents.
2. All elected officers shall be members of the Executive Board.
3. The National President shall be Chairman of the Executive Board.
4. The Executive Board is authorized and empowered to direct and conduct the business of the Society and to order the National Officers to make such disbursements as it deems necessary to conduct the Society's business. Issues considered by the Executive Board shall be determined by a majority vote of those members of the Board present at a meeting of the Board. When the Board votes by mail, the issue shall be determined by a majority of the votes cast.

C. ADVISORY COMMITTEE: There shall be a president's advisory Committee, constituted as follows:

1. All National Officers.
2. All living Past Presidents who are Active Members.
3. One representative from each Active Camp, to be chosen by the Camp and so certified by the National President.
4. Eight members – at-large - to be chosen geographically as follows:
 - Two from the Northeast (region east of the Mississippi River and North of the Ohio River extended).
 - Two from the Southeast (region east of the Mississippi River and South of the Ohio River extended).
 - Two from the West (region west of the Mississippi River).
 - Two Vietnam veterans at large.

The functions of the Advisory Committee shall be to bring before the National President any and all questions and recommendations pertaining to the welfare of the Society which may arise in the Camps, and to advise and consult with the National President on any matters the National President cares to submit to them.

D. ELECTIONS: All National Officers and the Executive Board shall be elected for one-year terms at the Annual Business Meeting held at the Society's Annual Reunion, by a majority of the votes cast. In the event no Annual Reunion is held, the annual election shall be conducted by mail in a manner to be determined by the Executive Board.

E. VOTING: Voting for National Officers, Members of the Executive Board, and on all other matters coming before the Annual or Special Meeting shall be as follows:

Each active member in good standing shall be entitled to one vote. Voting of the Active Membership of Local Camps shall be delegates selected not later than thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting, one delegate and one alternate for each ten (10) members or fraction thereof in good standing. The delegate or delegates of each Local Camp present at the Annual Meeting shall be entitled, as determined by the Credentials Committee. Such Credential Committee shall be appointed by the National President at each meeting. Active members in good standing present at the Annual Meeting, who are not members of a Local Camp shall cast their individual votes. At Special Meetings of the Society, the votes of Active Members in good standing shall be cast in the same manner, except the requirement for election delegates by Local Camps thirty (30) days prior shall not apply. Local Camps shall submit to the National Secretary not less than thirty (30) days prior to the Annual Meeting a list of the duly elected delegates and alternates as herein before provided. In case camps are formed after the thirty (30) day period provided for above before the Annual Meeting they shall be allowed to elect their delegates.

The term "Active Member in good standing" shall be taken to mean Active Members with National dues paid up to thirty (30) days prior to the meeting.

F. FISCAL PERIOD: For the purpose of accounting for receipts and expenditures of the Society, the fiscal year shall end on December 31st of each year. (Note: Fiscal Period was amended from July 31 to December 31 at the annual reunion/convention on Sunday, 18 September, 2016, during the Business Meeting in Columbus, Georgia).

G. INABILITY OF ELECTED OFFICERS TO CARRY OUT DUTIES: In case of the inability of any elected officer to carry out the duties of his office, the National President, with the approval of the Executive Board, may appoint a member of the Society to fill the unexpired term of such elected Officer.

H. QUARTERMASTER AND WEB ADMINISTRATOR: The National President shall appoint a Quartermaster and Web Administrator with the approval of the Executive Board.

— ARTICLE VI —

"DUES and ASSESSMENTS"

A. DUES: To be an Annual, Associate, or Honorary Member of this Society, any qualified person shall pay annual National Dues of \$15.00 per year, or other amount set by the Executive Board, plus whatever local dues are set by the Local Camp to which the member belongs. The annual period of membership shall run for Twelve (12) months from the date that the dues are received by the National Secretary of the Society.

B. INITIATION FEE: There shall be no National Initiation Fee.

C. ASSESSMENTS: Assessments may be levied upon Active Members of the Society by a two-thirds majority vote of the Active Members thereof present.

D. CONTRIBUTIONS: Any member of the Society may make contributions to the Society, and may indicate in connection therewith the exact purpose for which such contribution may be used, and if the purpose is so designated by the contributor, said contribution may not be used for any other purpose without the consent of the contributor. All contributions shall be separately accounted for, and recorded in the annual report of the Treasurer of the Society.

— ARTICLE VII —

"EMBLEM and CREST"

The emblem and the crest of the Society shall be the same as those adopted as the Fifth Division emblem and the Fifth Division crest, with proper modification of inscription to conform to the requirements of the Society.

— ARTICLE VIII —

"ANNUAL REUNIONS and MEETINGS"

The date and place of the next Annual Reunion and Meeting shall be fixed by majority vote of those entitled to vote for National Officers at the Annual Business Meeting. In the event that a meeting place and date cannot be fixed at the annual meeting, the decision shall be made by the Executive Board.

— ARTICLE IX —

"Headquarters"

The Headquarters of the Society shall be deemed to be the city in which the National Secretary lives.

— ARTICLE X —

"AMENDMENTS"

This constitution may be amended in either of two ways:

A. By a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at an Annual Meeting in conformity with the provisions of Section E, VOTING, of ARTICLE V, ORGANIZATION of this Constitution.

B. By a two-thirds majority of the votes cast when a proposed amendment is submitted to the Active Members for a mail vote. Amendments may be proposed by any member or Camp. Each amendment shall be presented to the membership for consideration, with the Board's favorable or unfavorable recommendation, at the Annual Meeting or to be voted upon by mail.

— ARTICLE XI —

"DISSOLUTION"

Upon the dissolution, or cessation of existence, of the Society, all historical materials in the custody of the National Historian and other such records (e.g. files of the National Secretary) shall be turned over to any Museum of the Fifth Infantry Division which exists at that time. Should there be no such museum, the aforementioned materials shall be deposited with the U.S. Army Military History Institute. After payment of all indebtedness, all other assets (e.g. monetary or other such assets) shall be distributed by the Executive Board, as constituted at the time of dissolution or cessation of existence, to the Patton museum at Fort Knox, Ky, and/or other entities, including but not limited to, the Battle of Normandy Foundation; the museums Clervaux and Diekirch, Luxembourg; and any VA medical center recreation fund deemed appropriate.

Society of the Fifth Division, U.S. Army
Minutes of General Business Meeting
Sunday, September 10, 2023, San Antonio, Texas

The regular Business Meeting of the Society of the Fifth Division, U.S. Army was called to order at 1:00 p.m. (EST) by National President Hal Roller in the Tango Ballroom, Holiday Inn Riverwalk, San Antonio, Texas. President Roller led The Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation was made by National Chaplain Ron Van Beek. The National Secretary was absent and the Roll Call was taken by President Roller, with the following officers present: National President Hal Roller, National First Vice President Bud Wagner, National Second Vice President Larry Burnett, National Treasurer George Shoener, National Historian Roger Allen, National Chaplain Ron Van Beek, National Judge Advocate Phil Maniscalco, National Editor Dave Kocan. Past National President (1st year on Executive Board) Gary Haverman, Quartermaster Dennis Coulter.

Absent & excused from the business meeting were National Secretary Scott Murrah, Past National President (2nd year on Executive Board) Lou Pepi and Web Administrator Joe Boman. President Roller stated that the National Secretary Scott Murrah had to leave for home early and that Past National President Lou Pepi had house repair issues in Maine that required attention and Lou was unable to attend the reunion.

President Roller requested a motion to approve the Minutes from the September 25, 2022 General Business Meeting. The Minutes were posted in the May 2023 issue of the Red Diamond. A Motion was made and seconded to approve the Minutes. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Officer Reports

National President: Hal Roller welcome everyone and identified the members attending the reunion/convention for the first time. He also stated that the Society is in good shape with membership, participation and finances and he appreciated everyone assisting with the reunion whenever requested. The President stated that, as a Society, we are fulfilling our mission to help the interest and welfare of our members and other veterans.

National First Vice President: Bud Wagner stated that it is an honor to be a member of the Society and an honor to serve as the President of the Society this coming year. The reunion/convention next year will be held in Harrisburg, PA from September 19, 2024 to September 23, 2024 at the Red Lion Hotel Harrisburg Hershey, 4751 Lindle Road, Harrisburg, PA 17111. Bud assured the membership of one issue ~ that the temperatures would not get up to 105 degrees, to the laughter of the membership!

Dave Kocan reminded everyone that years ago at the General Membership meeting on September 2, 2012, when the Society's General Membership approved expanding the dates available for scheduling the reunions from Labor Day Weekend to some other period in September each year, that the Society would endeavor to not conflict its reunion dates with the Vietnam Veterans Reunion, Kokomo, Indiana annual meeting always held on the 3rd weekend in September every year. The Harrisburg reunion dates conflict with the Vietnam Veterans Reunion and it could impact the Harrisburg attendance.

National Second Vice President: Larry Burnett reported that the 2025 reunion will be held in Kansas City, MO from Thursday, September 18, 2025 to Monday, September 22, 2025 at the Hilton Kansas City Airport, 8801 NW 112th Street, Kansas City, MO 64153. Larry will be looking at some of the recommendations from Armed Forces Reunion for Friday and Saturday tours. Larry also thanked Hal Roller for hosting a great reunion in San Antonio.

National Secretary: Scott Murrah had to leave the reunion early and was not available to give his report.

National Treasurer: George Shoener reported an update on the Society finances: the Society has a checking balance of \$41,551.90 and an investment savings account balance of \$53,925.02 for a total balance of \$95,465.92. The Society staggers the maturity of the CDs so that they continually come due and give us the benefit to move with the market conditions. The Society's financial records are audited every year after the fiscal year end of December 31st and the balance sheet is published in the Red Diamond in about the May issue.

Two payments of interest were \$5,000 in November 2022 to the National Museum of the U.S. Army for the 5th Division Unit Tribute Plaque that is placed along the Museum's Path of Remembrance along with many other Division plaques; and, the \$730 contribution in January 2023 to the Fisher House Foundation (helping military families) from the proceeds from the sale of our Challenge Coin. Every year, the Society contributes \$5.00 from every sale of a Challenge Coin to the Fisher House Foundation. The National Treasurer obtains the number of Challenge Coins sold from the Quarter Master and submits the payment in January to the Fisher House Foundation.

National Historian: Roger Allen reported that the Society's archives are safe and in good shape and that they are housed in a locked American Legion facility with visual and audio security. Roger reported the addition to the archives of a hard bounded publication published in 1919 titled "History of the 5th Division during WW I".

The document is an excellent addition to the archives and was obtained by Phil Maniscalco.

Budd Russell inquired if the archives contained old copies of the Red Diamond and Roger replied that the archives' copies of the Red Diamond go back as far as 1946. Roger closed his report by saying that he is truly honored to represent the Society as its National Historian.

National Chaplain: Ron Van Beek reported that Suicide Prevention continues to be our mission and the average of 22 veteran suicides a day improving to 21 veteran suicides a day means we are not winning this battle.

Collectively, we must continue to work and help anyway we can when we see veterans that may be growing in depression with age or with the loss of spouses. Take opportunities to talk at schools and churches, when we can.

National Judge Advocate: Phil Maniscalco reported that the Executive Board conducted five bi-monthly Zoom Executive Board meetings this past year, conducting the Society's business in an effective manner. Almost all the meetings had 100% attendance & participation and the meetings ranged in time from about 1.0 hour to about 1.5 hours. Roberts Rules of Order governed the conduct of the meetings.

National Editor: Dave Kocan reported that being Editor is a fun job. Send your articles in and I'll get them published. Dave appreciates everyone's support in getting articles in on time. President Roller stated that Dave's responsibility as Editor is critically important to our success as a Society since the Red Diamond publication is the life-blood for communicating in the Society.

Nominating Committee: Past National President Gary Haverman, in his first year as Past National President on the Executive Board is the Nominating Committee Chairman.

Before Gary presented the slate of officers, President Roller acknowledged the beautiful walnut-wood frame that Gary created and built for the Society's forged-iron bell. The bell and iron frame were gifted to the Society at the San Diego, CA reunion in September 2019 by Scott Hickey, Foundry Manager of the Veterans Art Project, Calabasas, CA. Originally, the Society requested a small piece of art titled "Fallen Soldier's Cross" for the Silent Auction and the end result was the beautiful forged-iron bell for our Memorial Service.

Gary presented the propose slate of officers for the Society year 2023 – 2024 as follows:

Elected Positions:

National President – Bud Wagner

National First Vice President – Larry Burnett

National Second Vice President – Lee Aanonsen

National Secretary – Scott Murrah

National Treasurer – George Shoener

National Historian – Roger Allen

National Chaplain – Ron Van Book

National Judge Advocate – Phil Maniscalco

National Editor – Dave Kocan

Past National President (first year as Executive Board member and Nominating Committee Chairman) – Hal Roller

Past National President (2nd year as Executive Board member and Installation Officer) – Gary Haverman

Appointed Positions:

National Quartermaster – Dennis Coulter

National Web Administrator – Joe Boman

Nominations from the floor were called for three times. There were none offered. A motion was made that the slate of officers as presented be accepted. Motion was seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Compared to \$628 last year. Steel Pot contributions during Hospitality totaled \$973. The shirt inventory must be replaced. A motion and second were made to approve the purchase. There was no discussion and the motion carried. Quarter Master: Dennis Coulter reported quartermaster sales at the reunion this year already are \$2,593

passed. Request was made to purchase smoker shirts with pockets. Given the limited demand for the shirts, orders could be made individually when other larger orders are made. Dennis will also look at ordering more caps. Dennis thanked everyone for their help in working the quartermaster store and also thanked Jay Balderson for donating several new T-shirts with the Red Devil LOGO.

Special Report:

Bob Dudley reported on the Unit Tribute Plaque that George Shoener described. The cost is \$5,000 and the committee's Divisional Units are represented. The GB Business Meeting investigated the possible purchase of the Unit Tribute Plaque that would be located at the National Museum of the U.S. Army, Fort Belvoir, VA. The plaque appears along the Path of Remembrance for the 4,507 5th Division soldiers killed in action (1,908 WW I, 2,083 WW II, 514 Vietnam, and 2 Panama Operation Just Cause), along with many other Divisions. The committee include Bob Dudley (Chairman), Mike Cooper, Jim Donovan and George Shoener. All the Unit

Bob also noted that Web Administrator Joe Boman has managed the Society website since 2016. Joe does not have a military background, loves reading the Red Diamond, loves contributing his time and supporting the Society and is Bob Dudley's neighbor. Joe created the software for conducting the Society's annual election online during the Covid crises.

approved and selected the purchase in 2023. The 5th Division Plaque was dedicated in May 2023 and now

WW II, 514 Vietnam, and 2 Panama Operation Just Cause), along with many other Divisions. have a military background, loves reading the Red Diamond, loves contributing his time and supporting the Society and is Bob Dudley's neighbor. Joe created the software for conducting the Society's annual election online during the Covid crises.

Old Business: There was no Old Business.

New Business: Life Member Bob Curnell (Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment is attending the reunion representing A 4/12. He needs to report back to his A 4/12 membership about the Society's willingness to have A 4/12 attend the upcoming Society reunions. President Roller had an interesting response. He asked the Society membership to respond with a "HOOAH" if they support the A 4/12 attending the upcoming reunions! The membership responded with an "ABSOLUTELY LOUD" HOOAH – which we all know translates to Heard, Understood and Acknowledged!

National Editor Dave Kocan requested that the Society acknowledge all the work over the years that has been performed by Web Administrator Joe Boman and Silent Auction committee co-chairs Karen Jackson and Linda Sperling. After some discussion, President Roller asked that incoming National President Bud Wagner take up the subject during their next Zoom Executive Board meeting in November 2023 for further review and decisions. Vern Sondgeroth wanted to know the total funds contributed from the Armed Forces Reunion Registration forms for the category Donations for hospitality Room Expenses. The 2022 total was \$1,919. There being no additional New Business, President Roller moved onto For the Good of the Society.

For the Good of the Society: Several issues were raised for the Good of the Society.

1. Robb Robertson alerted everyone that vendors are always trying sell 5th Division quartermaster merchandise on Facebook and in email messages and that these Vendors should be reported. Dennis Coulter made the point that they are scams and if we provide purchase information, we'll never see the merchandise. Dennis notifies Facebook Administration when these ads appear.
2. Budd Russell alerted everyone of the importance of tracking our Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) results and that notices should be published in the Red Diamond about the importance of knowing our numbers. Budd gave the example of one of our members not having tested for the PSA and learned he had Stage 2 prostate cancer, when discovered. Bob Dudley noted that in recent Red Diamonds, he published an article on the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) on the topic of prostate cancer. Bob will ask Web Administrator to post the article on the Society website and Bob will also submit it for publication into the Red Diamond again.
3. Joe Piechoinski asked if we can consider one banquet and one luncheon for future reunions. Not all members attend the Sunday banquet and perhaps a luncheon would be a better choice. After some discussion, President Roller asked that incoming National President Bud Wagner include the topic on the Agenda for his next Zoom Executive Board meeting in November 2023 and consider the various ramifications that might result.

There being no additional items for the Good of the Society, National Historian Roger Allen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 1:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Philip Maniscalco, National Judge Advocate
Acting as Secretary for National Secretary Scott Murrah

During the annual business meeting at the 2023 reunion, the issue of prostate cancer was discussed and there was a request to post something on our website about this agent orange disease that has afflicted so many of our veterans. I was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2021 and I posted this information on both Face Book and in the Red Diamond to help educate our members. My oncologist also provided an outstanding resource to help understand prostate cancer. It is from the National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN) – here is the 2023 updated document website:

<https://www.nccn.org/patients/guidelines/content/PDF/prostate-early-patient.pdf>

Below is an update and re-posting for those who did not see the original posting.

Ho Chi Minh's Agent Orange revenge has hit for the second time – first one was my heart attack from ischemic heart disease in 2013; now it is Prostate Cancer. The purpose of this post is not a “pity party”, but for education.

The normal method of checking on your prostate health is through a Digital Rectal Exam and a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test. The doctor will conduct the rectal exam and check the size and form of the prostate to determine if it feels normal and if there are any abnormal growths. When PSA test levels are high, it can be due to prostate cancer or other noncancerous conditions.

My PSA readings were always around 1.5+/- . In June 2019 it rose to 2.03 and my doctor noticed a small bump so he referred me to a urologist who found nothing. In June 2020 the PSA was 3.4 and then rose to 4.3 by September. Since the PSA was now over the max of 4.0, my urologist decided to do a biopsy of the prostate. The biopsy takes 12 samples from the prostate using a real-time Ultra Sound in a grid fashion – pathology found nothing.

In July 2021 the PSA was 7.02. My urologist said although the PSA had gone up, it still wasn't extremely high. However, I was concerned not necessarily with the actual number, but with the trend – it was consistently rising. My urologist agreed with my concern and ordered an MRI – this test revealed a small mass that appeared to be cancerous.

My urologist decided to do a Fusion Biopsy – using a computer, overlay the results of the MRI with real-time imaging from an Ultra Sound. Again, they took the 12 samples from the grid, but also took a 13th sample from the exact location of the mass found with the MRI – pathology showed cancer

What is my point here? The only reason I was able to find out I had cancer was being persistent with my doctors. The numbers were not all that high – my urologist told me he had a patient with a PSA over 1000 once. The good news was my primary care physician noticed a change in my prostate and referred me to a specialist. My urologist continued to monitor the situation and was receptive to my concerns that the PSA was rising EVEN THOUGH THE BIOPSY LAST YEAR WAS NEGATIVE.

Of true importance here is the fact that both the annual Digital Rectal Exam and PSA tests by my civilian doctors were the indicators that something was wrong. I get two physicals each year – one from my civilian health providers and one from the VA.

In all my years of going to the VA, they have never conducted a Digital Rectal Exam or a PSA test. If I was just counting on the VA for my health, I would end up with Stage 4 cancer instead of finding it early and only having Stage 1 to deal with now.

So, if you are only using the VA, demand both of these tests. That's right – bend over and put your elbows on the table – here the snap of the gloves and the doctor say, “you will feel some slight pressure”; and get the blood drawn for a PSA test of the prostate. These procedures can save your life.

My update: I had 45 radiation treatments and then 2 years of oral chemotherapy. I have 5 months left on the chemo – my PSA is currently 0.008.

Bob Dudley
C Battery, 5/4 Artillery
Past President

From:
sec5thid@yahoo.com

To:
drkocan@verizon.net

,
pmanis@cox.net

,
Lou

Sat, Sep 16 at 6:10 PM

Since the file was so big I had to copy and paste 2 excel sheet. Let me know if you have any questions? Sorry took so long to get back to you, I had a lot to catch up at work.

Sincerely,

Society of the 5th Infantry Division, U.S. Army
Scott Murrah, National Secretary
P.O. Box 162176
Fort Worth, TX 76161

Society of the Fifth Div. (societyofthefifthdivision.com)

On Friday, September 8, 2023 at 12:45:34 PM CDT, Lou <lapepi@charter.net> wrote:

Hello Scott and Dave and Phil,

Can any of you give me a list of world war II, 5th Infantry vets with addresses that are still alive? I am working with Phil Bienvenue to get a hold of any that are still living to interview them about their experiences during world war II to be archived in the library of Congress.

I am reaching out to you two because you process yearly memberships and mail hard copies of the newsletter to these individuals. Phil, and help you can contribute would be appreciated.

If you could delve into this after the reunion, that would be great..

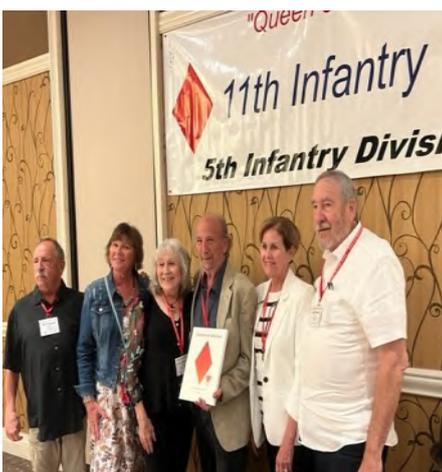
Lou
Download all attachments as a zip file

This list is to large to post in our Red Diamond I will forward you the list upon request
Dave Kocan editor

The following pages contain pictures of the 2023 San Antonio 5th Division Reunion a redo from Covid years All people are real people' all facial expressions are real. I am sorry if your picture did not make this issue please come to next reunion and let me know. Thanks to Bob Galloway or Ron VanBeek for the photos any request for a full copy of these photos contact them.













Jim Pief and The Trace

The Trace was the ill-conceived notion of former Brookings Institution think-tanker and then sitting Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, and the idea was to defoliate a 160-mile-long and 1000-yard-wide strip of ground just below the DMZ from Laos to the South China Sea to keep North Vietnamese soldiers from crossing into South Vietnam. It would be an anti-personnel barrier comprised of minefields, ditches, barbed wire—entirely defoliated—with military strongholds (Khe Sahn and Firebases, A1, A2, A3 and A4 at specified, geographically advantageous positions. It was also an antivehicular barrier, designed to interdict traffic on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. The barrier was to consist of numerous sensing devices of various styles and applications, both heat sensing and pressure sensing. It would be monitored in Nakhon Phanom, Thailand.

From its birth, the idea was a complete failure. The daily casualty numbers were unacceptable from the start of construction and many more casualties were suffered as marines and army personnel crossed the open ground while pursuing North Vietnamese troops. Eventually Khe Sahn, A1, A2, and A3 were abandoned, leaving only A4—Con Thien.

After passing through Hue in 1968, Lance Corporal Jim Pief and his unit were trucked north through Quang Tri, Cam Lo, and Dong Ha. Their destination was the Trace. Staging south of “McNamara’s Electric Fence,” Jim and his unit started across the open ground. They were welcomed by a heavy mortar and artillery attack, followed by North Vietnamese rifle fire.

They did finally make it to the north side and entered the DMZ, receiving and inflicting heavy casualties. They next day, they returned south to their firebase—nothing gained or lost except for these heavy casualties of wounded and dead on both sides. The “Op” was called Operation Hickory. This same tactic was repeated thousands of times at thousands of places during the war.

Days 6 & 7

Del and the Diary of Luu Hong Lam at Phou Ynoi

Delfino Candelaria was a United States Marine NCO in 1967. Del was originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, but is residing now in Phoenix, Arizona. He was with the 2/4 Marines in '67. He was originally with the 1/4 further south, but was transferred up to Phou Ynoi to the 2/4. He was semi-fluent in Vietnamese, so he was an interpreter who also questioned prisoners when they captured them. On June 12th, he was choppered north along with two companies of the 1/4—Charlie and Delta Companies. To soften the enemy forces, the whole landing area at Phou Ynoi was napalmed earlier in the day. Del was on the first chopper and the pilot was afraid that it would crash due to being overloaded, so the pilot ordered everyone to jump ten feet to the ground. When Del jumped, he fell forward and burnt both hands on the still-smoldering ground.

The Marines set up their perimeter and all was quiet until just before midnight of the 14th. There were two men in Del's team who had been in country a few weeks. He could see that they both were very frightened. He took them aside and told them what to expect. There would be heavy mortar fire first, and a sharp whistle would signal the charge of hundreds of NVA. There was a listening post out in front of their position that started clicking the handset of their radio at 0200 continually until 0545—signaling that the NVA were within feet of them. At 0545, mortar tubes were heard again and the ordinance started landing all around them—followed by the whistle and the sapper assault. From later questioning of prisoners, Del was told that 2700 NVA sappers were in the assault that night and over 400 on his portion of the perimeter.

Del then saw five Marines without weapons running from the opposite side of the perimeter, because the other side had been already overrun. Meanwhile four NVA were approaching from his front and he attempted to fire but his gun jammed. He slammed the stock of his rifle on a tree trunk and the stuck round chambered. There was also a dead NVA right in front of him. As the Marines from behind passed him running wildly, an NVA mortar hit several feet in front of him, but one of the fleeing Marines took the brunt of the blast. Del then took cover and he & his team killed the other four NVA. After the fighting died down, Del turned the NVA soldier that lay in front of him and saw a diary or notebook. There was hardly any writing at all in the diary, but there were several drawings. He kept it and through the years, thought about the fallen soldier and his family.

In 2020, Bill Stilwagen was able to find the family, but Covid prevented the tour that year and required waiting until 2023. The NVA soldier's name is Luu Hong Lam. He was one of seven children and there was only one surviving sister who lived in Hanoi. On March 12, 2023, Madame Lam travelled to Phou Ynoi, deep in the mountains that divide Vietnam and Laos, to meet our tour group and receive the diary from Del. With her, was her brother-in-law, and four younger family members. Del's plan was to take Madame Lam and our group to the top of Phou Ynoi, but he could not receive permission to walk to the battlesight, only 500-600 meters away, so the family, journalists and cameramen boarded our bus with us and we travelled 40 miles back through Lao Bao to the site of the old Special Forces Camp in Lang Vei. That was where the ceremony to return the diary was held. I do not know what was going through Del's mind, but I saw in his reaction that a great load of emotion was lifted from him that he had carried for fifty-four years—and I saw closure—particularly because I also saw forgiveness in Madame Lam's demeanor. It was a special moment.

Days 8 & 9

Larry and the Rice Paddy

Towards the end of February of 1968, Tet was winding down and President Lyndon Johnson—in order to beef up the U S presence in Vietnam & replace the wounded and dead from 100s of pitched battles across Vietnam—called on the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs to send 30,000 replacements to Vietnam. He requested 15,000 from the U S Army and 15,000 from the U S Marines. The problem was that there were literally no Marines with combat training available, so cooks, truckdrivers, clerks, mechanics, and photographers were chosen to make up the new fighting force. They were all given rifles and told that they were going to places like Hue, Khe Sahn and Anh Khe to join the fight nearly everywhere across the I Corps. Larry Hill was picked and placed in the 3rd Battalion of the 27th Marine Regiment. Larry had just finished training and was an 03-11—one of the few combat-trained that were found. They immediately put him in a key position because they assumed he knew what he was doing. But Larry had never been in a combat situation, and as he bluntly put it, "I knew NOTHING!" He arrived in Vietnam in late February of 1968 and he was put immediately on patrol. Because he was an 03-11, they made him the point-man for the company. On his first outing, he walked point for several hours. Eventually he was relieved and given the "plumb assignment"—he thought—of bringing up the rear as "tail-end Charlie."

Now in the rear of the advancing line, he was walking across a flat open area when his right leg was blown out from under him. It swung around and his boot struck him in the helmet. His torso dropped straight down and the stump dug into the sand. He was also hit in the other leg when a 2-inch piece of bone from the right leg lodged in his left. He later found that all the damage was done with one bullet from a lone sniper. The sciatic nerve and main artery in both legs were taken out. He credits a great corpsman for saving his life by stopped the bleeding in both legs. Larry told us that he remembers never in his life screaming more loudly as when the corpsman picked up his right leg and straightened it out with a splint. When the medivac came in, it landed so close, the skid narrowly missed his arm.

He was put in the helicopter, it lifted off and Larry started sliding out the open side door, but he was saved by the door-gunner who pulled him back in by the collar of his shirt. His was the first gun-shot wound in his regiment. Larry's tour was over on the same day that it started.

Larry was taken to a hospital in Danang, where he stayed for two weeks. They put him in a full plaster body-cast with a bar between his ankles to hold both legs still. He was then choppered to Japan. Flying over the ocean, he worried that if the craft was shot down, he would sink like a rock to the bottom. Reaching a base in Japan, they placed him on another helicopter, this time lashing him to a medic-basket on one of the skids and they took him to an Army hospital in Tokyo, where he stayed for two months. From there, he returned to the States and spent three more months in hospitals before he was discharged.

He was told he would never walk on the right leg again, but he did and had a fully satisfying career as a police officer. Fifty-four years later, he only recently has had trouble with his legs. Still, on this recent tour to Vietnam, he walked on every grueling hike with the rest of us. His good friend, Stan Daily, came on the tour with him for moral support. Stan was in the Air Force as an air weapons systems mechanic of "fast movers" in Vietnam.

Day 10 & 11

Colonel John Bates

Colonel John Bates was stationed at Anh Hua Marine Base with the 2nd Battalion/5th Marine Regiment in 1967. One of his missions took his unit, out of the base and across a mile-wide open flat. When our tour bus pulled up to that same open expanse, and we all exited to hear his story. As they moved across the immense expanse, all hell broke loose with a pop pop pop pop pop, and Bates was hit in the chest before he could hit the ground. Unfortunately, he was wearing a flak jacket. One of the fiberglass panels splintered and the bullet strike sent hundreds of shards into his left lung and destroyed it. Had he not been wearing a flak jacket, Bates contended that the bullet would have made a clean hole and he would not have been as badly wounded.

Day 12

A Veteran's Pilgrimage Taken by His Brother.

Douglas Woolverton is from Henderson, Colorado. His brother Ed was a Marine stationed at Khe Sahn in 1967 with the 3rd Battalion/ 26th Marine Regiment. His post in The Battle of the Hills was as a commander of a platoon sized observation post atop Hill 881 South, west of the Khe Sahn airstrip overlooking the expansive Khe Sahn plain. His mission was to report any enemy movement to the command center at the Air Base.

The Hills Battle, one of the most ferocious battles fought in Vietnam, lasted for several weeks and was the prelude to the 40-day siege of Khe Sahn Air Base. The plan for this hike to Hill 881 South was to take minivans up through a treacherous mountain pass to the peak of Hill 881 North, then on foot, hike down through dense and steep mountain jungle terrain, cross a stream, and climb to the top of Hill 881 South to find the perimeter that Doug's brother spent several weeks on. Then they would retrace their steps down into the steep ravine and return by the same route.

It had rained all the previous night and would rain most of the day. The ride up in the minivans was through extremely dense fog and visibility was about 5 feet. Reaching the top of 881 South, six of our party, including myself, opted to stay with the minivans at the summit. The rest of the party moved out for the difficult hike in slippery conditions. After they left, we urged the drivers to take us just around the corner to a spot where the view

Dennis Coulter was among the hikers and he will recount the rest of the story.

Dennis' words: "The Hill Fights" (AKA the first Battle of Khe Sanh) occurred 27 April, 1967- 11 May, 1967. The battle was between The United States Marine Corp and PAVN 325C Division. The battle occurred on several hill masses NW of Khe Sanh Combat Base."

"On 12 March, 2023 nine members of our tour departed the minivans to climb and descend 881 North then climb 881 South to reunite with the rest of our tour. The 881 hikes were described as the most strenuous hikes we would have on our trip. The weather that morning was wet, windy, and chilly. It was the only wet day on our trip. The hills are named for their height in meters above sea level."

"After our group was together again the plan was to find the location where the brother Doug Woolverton, one of our group, had served in 1967. We were to have a brief ceremony and then depart. Our Chief Bush Guide determined what he thought was the location, just a brief hike down a trail. Off we went including some without the fitness level of a strenuous hike. Soon, the short hike was a long, strenuous hike through jungle-like terrain. Two people fell and suffered minor injuries. Their only choice was to tough it out."

"We came to a stream between 881N and 881S. The rain had stopped. It was at this point the Guide decided we had passed the intended site and we started back up. As we neared the Summit, the Guide declared we had reached the spot intended for the Ceremony. We paid tribute to Doug's brother."

"This was my second return to Northern I Corps. The first was in March, 2018 with this same Group, Vietnam Battlefield Tours. The second return was March, 2023. I am open to discuss another return. Each time we began as a group of strangers. By the end of the tour, we were brothers and sisters."

Those of us who stayed back with the vans occupied ourselves by exploring the edges of the jungle growth when the rain let up and with lively conversation, when the sudden outbursts of rain drove us back to the cover of the vans. As we waited, I turned on my GPS—and to my surprise—we were parked at the peak of 881 South. I mentioned this to the others and they seemed to doubt what I was telling them. Eventually, I would be proven correct.

What had happened was this. VBT had been to the summit of 881 North many times and also made the hike down into the valley and up the other side to 881 South as well. Due to Covid, VBT had not been back to Vietnam since 2019 and—in that time—the Vietnamese government had mucked out a maze of gravel roads over the entire mountain range for access to the twenty-five or so windmills they had erected.

After several hours, the hikers returned and we were told that the summit was just a few meters to our right—exactly where I had told everyone the summit was. We found the old perimeter trenches and a small dump site with spent ammo, flak jacket panels and other discarded clothing & web gear.

Days 13 & 14

Three Days in the Life of Bill Stilwagen

Bill Stilwagen was one of our tour guides and he had several stories. Bill was stationed at Marble Mountain Airbase as a chopper door-gunner and he and his crew, were a ready reaction team on May 4, 1970. They got a call from the ROK Marines (Republic of Korea) that they were stranded on Chestnut Island—given its name because of its shape. They were also in a vicious firefight with the Viet Cong. As the chopper approached, neither group was visible because of the 10-foot-tall elephant grass covering the whole island. Since it was a hot LZ, they had to come in fast and hard, but the South Korean translator mixed up the coordinates and directed them into the center of the Viet Cong. They were receiving fire from all directions; the pilot was shot three times in the leg and the co-pilot took over. As they lifted off, an RPG (rocket propelled grenade) struck the bulkhead of the helicopter and decapitated the crew chief. Shrapnel from the RPG hit Bill in the arm, and he could feel his flight jacket filling with blood as he fired his fifty-caliber machinegun. They then lifted off and found the correct Korean position, rescuing the ROK Marines. Quite a few were wounded and needed to be taken to the 95th Evac hospital. When they lifted off, they saw an unbelievable scene. When the helicopter had mistakenly landed directly on the VC position, the Viet Cong were so astonished that they panicked and ran to the river's edge, dove in, and began swimming to the far shore. They now had Cobra gunships for security and their guns and rockets laid waste to the whole enemy force. As Bill's copter struggled to stay aloft, aviation fuel leaked from multiple bullet holes, the craft was shaking wildly, and they decided to go directly to their home base instead. Seeing Marble Mountain, they had hope that they would make it. When they spotted the revetment of their unit area, both turbines stopped and the spinning rotor blades died out twenty feet off the ground. The chopper slammed heavily onto the PSP (perforated steel planking), but there were no further injuries. The second chopper dropped in behind, they transferred the wounded and then flew to the 95th Evac. Bill's arm had stopped bleeding and he opted not to go to the 95th. By some quirky coincidence, it was the same day that four protesting students were killed by National Guardsmen in Ohio at Kent State University.

As he was walking back to his hootch with his 50-cal and two ammo boxes, a Marine seeing Bill and his 50-cal, asked him if he would go on another mission, this time a medivac. Bill agreed to go as a second gunner, climbed aboard the idling craft, and dropped his gun swivel into the pintle. They took off and headed toward Hai Van Pass. Evidently, a Vietnamese man had driven through the guard rail, descending the Hai Van Pass Road. They spotted the overturned vehicle, landed, and brought him to the hospital.

Again, they returned to the Marble Mountain airstrip, landed, and taxied to the hangar. Again, Bill shouldered his empty machinegun and was walking across the PSP when he saw two other CH-46 helicopters idling on the strip with Cobras readying to lift off. As he walked in to hangar, he saw the squadron boss who did not look happy. "Where have you been? You are MIA." "No, I'm not," Bill replied, "I'm right here."

Evidently, the corpsman from the Chestnut Island mission had reported five wounded and there were only four taken to the hospital. The squadron boss then took Bill to the hospital but the doctors were too busy to treat such a superficial shrapnel wound, and years later back in the States, a small piece of shrapnel was removed from Bill's arm. The next day Bill, was ordered to stand in front of the commanding officer—never a good thing—to explain himself. The commander's first question to Bill was, "What do you have to say for yourself"? At stiff attention, Bill's reply was, "I was killing the enemy sir," just like Chesty Puller before us once said, "Move forward and kill the enemy". The commander—a little dumbfounded—dismissed him and he was not court martialed or busted.

On May 23, 1970 he and his chopper crew were tasked with performing mundane missions. Two helicopters flew out of the Marble Mountain air facility, loaded with mail bags and a sensor team. That day, they were making the rounds of firebases and camps in the area. They dropped the sensor team on top of Hill 425 to set up a network to prevent American artillery from hitting their own airplanes. This network would send a signal to the fire direction officer, and artillery would be halted until the plane or chopper passed by. It was a very boring day, and they were without Cobra gunships as escorts.

Then a radio communication came in from Sunrise, the small installation atop Hill 425 where they had just dropped the sensor team that a recon team near the top had been compromised (detected) by a group of about 150 Viet Cong and were chasing the marines down the hill. Immediately, two marines were overcome with heat exhaustion and that slowed them considerably as the Viet Cong were closing. A Birdog pilot in a small observation Cessna could see that the VC 2-man point element was almost on top of the team and radioed for them to blend into the underbrush. On the pilot's cue, the team fired and killed one and wounded the other. Slowed further now, the sensor team had two sick marines, a VC body, and a prisoner. Bill's 5-man chopper crew voted unanimously to attempt the rescue, even though it was against regulations to go in unaided by either another helicopter to observe or a pair of Cobras for security.

Captain Blades, the chopper pilot responded to Sunrise that they were coming for the team and instructed them not to give away their position with smoke, but to flash a mirror. They saw the mirror flash as they descended and landed amongst a strewn mass of boulders as the 5 men with a VC body and a prisoner dashed up the rear ramp. As they rose out of this morass, they saw well over 100 enemy soldiers very close. Bill emptied a 100-round belt into them with his 50-caliber machinegun. Heads, arms and legs were separating and flying in every direction. The recon team and VC were dropped off on Hill 119 and that was the end of it.

The Restaurants

Some of the best food I have ever tasted was served at a daily and nightly basis—all in the range of 5-stars. The 50 or so meals that we ate there were all some of the best I have ever eaten. The midday and evening meals were all 9-course—two to three hours of eating—and breakfasts were massive buffets with a hundred choices. And—I did not gain an ounce of weight. The hotels were pristine and the service was grand everywhere. Vietnam caters to tourists.

One warning—don't drink the tap water anywhere in country. Bottled water only.



29. Slow hand salute for the 30KIAs
18 from—or attached to—Alpha 1/61



37. Bru children and their mothers at the village of A Doi
on the Laotian border about 600 meters from Phu Noi



32. Locating the approximate position of my 1969 foxhole with a
compass heading of a remembered land form in
the distance by comparing one of my old photos.

53. Photo of Gallagher Ridge the day after the November Battle



REMEMBERING THE DRAFT



Past National Commander Dennis Joyner during and after his service in Vietnam.

50 years after last draft, registration remains the law

By Chris Mayhew

It's been 50 years since the last military draft. Still, the requirement for all male citizens and immigrants to register remains, and the contributions of draftees are not forgotten.

The United States used drafts during the Civil War, World War I and World War II, as well as from 1947 until the final draft call on Dec. 7, 1972. Since then, the military has filled its ranks with volunteers.

DAV's membership includes many individuals who served in Vietnam, Korea and elsewhere after being compelled to serve by a draft notice. Past National Commander Dennis Joyner was one of more than 1.8 million draftees to serve during the Vietnam War.

On Dec. 10, 1968, Joyner reported for duty in the Army. At 20 years old, he had lost his student deferment when he dropped out of college and took a job. Joyner said he didn't want to go to Vietnam, but he also knew that he was registered with the Selective Service System.

"A letter was sent to the house, an Uncle Sam letter, saying 'Dear Dennis, we want you,'" he said. "The only thought I had was 'OK, I've been called; I go. There was no other thought whatsoever. My father was in the military and World War II, so I went."

Joyner arrived in Vietnam in May 1968, with eight weeks of basic training and three weeks of infantry training under his belt.

While on patrol in Vietnam's Mekong Delta, he stepped on a land mine. The explosion left him a triple amputee.

"I was only there 32 days when I got hit," Joyner said. The first draft lottery of the Vietnam War was held

on Dec. 1, 1969, at which time Joyner was still in an Army hospital recovering.

"I actually watched the first draft lottery at the military hospital at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey," he said.

The lotteries near the end of the Vietnam War were held via a random drawing of a container with 366 capsules—one for each possible birthdate in a year. Each date drawn was given a sequential number, and the closer to No. 1 your birthday was, the more likely it was that you would be drafted.

The 17,671 draftees killed in the Vietnam War comprised a little over 30% of all of the 58,220 military members killed in that conflict.

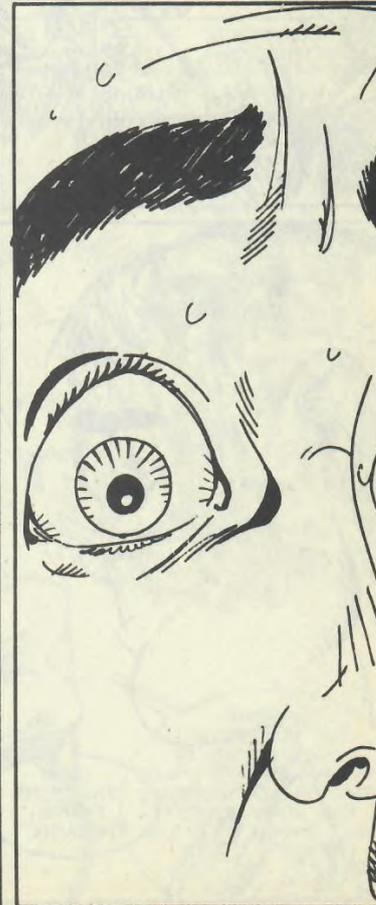
Although there is not an active draft, registration with the Selective Service System, an independent federal agency, remains federal law. In 2022, approximately 15.5 million men ages 18–25 registered, according to an agency spokesperson.

"We serve as a vital tier of support for Department of Defense's personnel needs in times of national crisis," said Joel C. Spangenberg, acting director of the Selective Service System.

The all-volunteer military fulfills the country's missions today, yet selective service registrations make the agency ready to hold a draft if the president and Congress deem one necessary.

"Our ability to defend our nation with an all-volunteer force is a luxury that not all generations have known. And the burden of service has at times been tremendous for those called to multiple combat tours. But regardless of whether someone volunteered or was drafted, we must honor all who answered the call of duty," said National Commander Joe Parsetich. "Their sacrifices were as important—and their blood was as red—as anyone's." ■







ROB!
IS THAT
YOU?



HE'S BACK
HERE. THEY'RE
BOTH BACK
HERE.



NICE JOB, MARKS.
A LITTLE JOHN
WAYNE THOUGH,
DON'T YOU
THINK?



GOT
THE JOB
DONE,
THOUGH.



RIGHT
ABOUT
THAT.



THINK YOU
COULD GIVE
ME A LITTLE
HELP?



HOW ARE YOU FEELING?



I'LL MAKE IT. WE'LL ALL MAKE IT. THIRD TIME WASN'T THE CHARM AFTER ALL.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?



I TOLD YOU TOP AND I WENT BACK MORE THAN 15 MONTHS. WELL, I DIDN'T START AS HIS ORDERLY ROOM ASSISTANT.



ONCE UPON A TIME, I WAS A LINE TROOP TOO--LIKE YOU. AND TOP WAS A MERE STAFF SERGEANT. WE WERE WALKING PATROL DOWN A PATH JUST LIKE THIS ONE, AND I WAS ON THE POINT...

THE VC WEREN'T AS SLICK THEN. THEY DIDN'T KNOW ENOUGH TO LET THE POINT MAN GO BY AND RAKE THE REST. THEY REALLY LET ME HAVE IT.

"I GOT HIT PRETTY BAD, AND JIM-BO, THAT'S WHAT WE CALLED TOP BACK THEN, JUST CHARGED RIGHT IN AND CUT THOSE VC TO PIECES."



TIME I GOT OUT OF THE HOSPITAL, JIMBO HAD MADE FIRST SERGEANT AT THE 23RD. I RE-UPPED FOR ANOTHER TOUR AND GOT STATIONED WITH HIM. COUPLE OF MONTHS LATER, I GOT HIT BY A SNIPER NOT TWENTY KLIKCS FROM THE BASE ...



THE ARMY FIGURES THAT THIRD TIME'S THE CHARM. IF YOU GET TWO PURPLE HEARTS, THEY PUT YOU ON A DESK. SO I ENDED UP AS JIMBO'S FLUNKY. AND THE WAR CHANGED HIM. MADE HIM MERCENARY, GRABBY, SOUR ... I DON'T KNOW.

BUT HE'S STILL YOUR FRIEND.

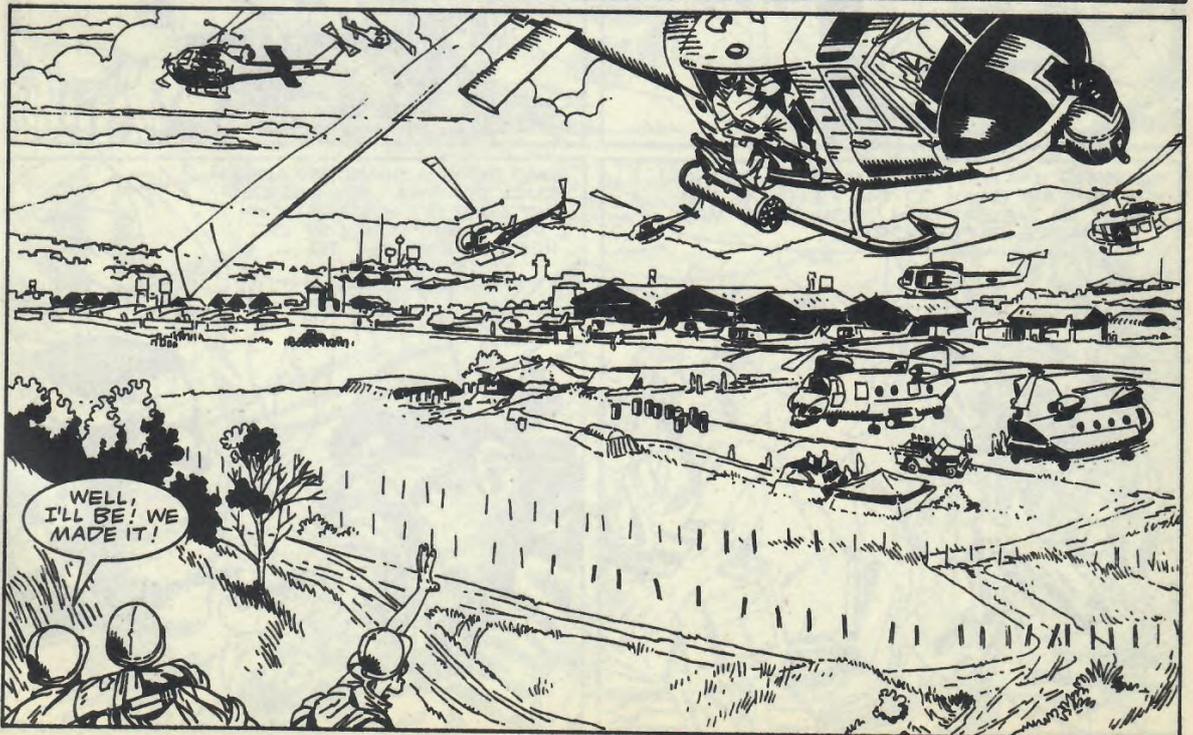


YEAH, I GUESS HE IS. WONDER WHAT HE'LL DO NOW THAT I'VE COPPED NUMBER THREE ?



LET'S WORRY ABOUT THAT AFTER WE GET HOME, SHALL WE ? NOW, IF WE GO THIS WAY TOMORROW ...

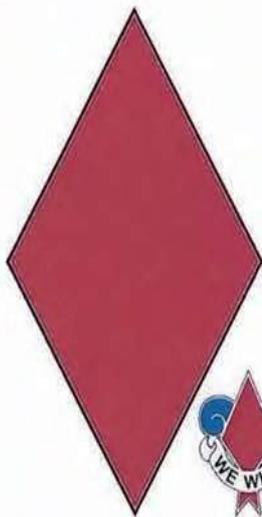




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 UNITED STATES ARMY

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Address _____

City _____

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I served in _____

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