



Newsletter of "The Ghost Battalion"

Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Bn 1st Marines

www.FirstMarines.org



Volume 20 Issue 1

February 2022

Message from the President



Brothers, Family, and Friends of 2D BN 1st Marines

Another year is upon us. The COVID sure put a dent in our daily activities this past year but hopefully the worst is behind us, and we will be able to resume our normal lives.

At our reunion this past November in D.C. we commemorated the return to CONUS of the 2nd Battalion 1st Marines from Vietnam after five years of combat operations. It's hard to believe that was fifty years ago. Time has marched onward and in its relentless advance, it has taken some toll on all of us. However, the memories of honor, courage, and Brotherhood have not diminished. They sustain us still and will for the all the days of our lives.

At the Banquet this year we paid tribute to one of our own Marine Warriors, Colonel Billy R. Duncan – Texas Pete. The tribute included a video message from General Jim Jones, the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps and lifelong friend of Col. Duncan. A plaque was presented to Colonel Duncan for his exemplary service to the Corps, America, our Vietnam Veterans organization, and his family.

We have just entered a contract with the Fort Worth Hilton for our 2022 Reunion. We are excited about the property and plan our visit with them in April to firm up all the details. The reunion will take place in Fort Worth, Texas from November 9 to November 13, 2022. We will keep you informed through the website and newsletters as we finalize plans for the reunion.

On behalf of the Trustees, stay safe and healthy and we hope to see many of you at the Fort Worth Texas reunion in November.

Semper Fidelis, Tony Kilroy

MESSAGE FROM D. BATES

Ron Bates from Fox Company 68-69 (TAPS 4 June 2021) will have a
Burial Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery
on April 01, 2022 at 10:00am

Ben Dickson (Fox 68-69) will be the backup as the Chaplin for the
Funeral Service. Any questions please contact:
D. Bates at: 719-275-4428

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Membership Minutes November 14, 2021**Minutes**

Vietnam Veterans of 2D BN 1st Marines Inc
Annual Business Minutes – Arlington Virginia
November 14, 2021

Meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance than called to order by Vice President Tony Kilroy (Fox 69-70).

- 1) Treasures Report presented by **Mario Sagastume** (Fox 67). Our Balance Sheet Fiscal Year goes from October 1st 2020 to September 30th 2021. Petty cash \$56.45. General Balance \$27,000.00 in Checking Account. Inventory \$3,800.00. Total assets \$30,800.00. Prepaid Deposit to the hotel was \$5,000.00 and what we owe will be deducted from our bill at end of Banquet. Our Total Assets \$35,000.00. Liabilities are paid within the year. We sold 2 bricks \$600.00 which were added as a liability and \$420.00 check was written to the Heritage Museum. Deferred Revenue \$850.00 money collected for meals since 9:30am. We have also collected \$540.00 for the bus ride which was put in Liabilities and when we pay it will be adjusted. This last year we had a loss of \$3,500.00 and you will see it when we do the income statement. We had to adjust some PX sales and Raffle money. In 2019 we sold \$2,158.00 in tickets and from what we spent we made \$300.00 on the raffle. We collected \$12,095.00 and paid out \$10,000.00 so we made \$2,095.00. Mario said we are not in the business of making money (we have no stock holders) but make our reunions affordable to the members. We had a good gross profit before we had the expenses. \$788.00 went to Plaques that were awarded. And we pay a percentage of our proceeds when members pay us through PayPal. We had a deficit for the Hospitality Suite of \$154.00. At Reunions we purchase Liability Insurance and supplies for our printer. We also have pretty good expenses for the Newsletter, Post Cards, Get Well and Taps Cards. We also had some travel expenses \$220.00 to send Jesse Tipton to 29 Palms as our representative to a function there and paid for a hotel room night. We had 2 charitable contributions \$1,000.00 to Doc Adams and \$1,000.00 to a Scholarship Fund. We had (2) Years of Website Expenses (not counting printing costs) \$2,200.00. If you have any questions, I'd be happy to explain it.
- 2) **DISCUSSION ON OUR MEMORIAL BRICKS.** **Dale Williams** (Fox 69-70) held a discussion with members about our memorial bricks. We make \$90.00 a brick and it guarantees your brick gets placed at our monument. Its for Members, Family and Friends of 2/1. Order Form can be downloaded from our website homepage.
- 3) **Trustees Report.** **Vin Burdziuk** (H&S 66) Reported on our Website and Card Program. 2001 we had 676,650 visitors to our website. We had 39 new postings of membership submissions. We mailed out a Newsletter and Post Cards to all our members, family and friends of 2/1. (We have 1,144 in our mailing list). We sent out 41 Email Newsletter Updates. Our membership was sent and we posted 19 TAPS Cards for our members who had passed. We sent 5 family Sympathy Cards for family members who have passed, and 7 Get Well Cards and a 90th Birthday Card for Colonel Bill Duncan. The cost for our Domain Names for the year was \$319.12. Cost for our Website, Blog, Newsletter and Backup for the website was \$687.20. Total cost for the Card Program for the year was \$75.00. Total printing cost for our post-cards was \$989.51. For a Total of \$2,070.83 for 2021.
- 4) **Vice President Tony Kilroy** (Fox 69-70) made it known that half of our website cost is for printing. And presented an option to receive our printed Newsletters and Post Cards by email to save money. Also, for our ID Name Cards we had 40 members order them who never came to the reunion. Where it cost us to have them made, we should charge a deposit for them which is refundable when you come to the reunion.

Membership Minutes Continued November 14, 2021

- 5) **Hospitality Room. Jesse Tipton** (H&S 65-66) Normally we have cashews and peanuts etc. but because of the circumstances with Covid we couldn't do it. I've always asked if there was something you wanted me to add for the Hospitality Room. We had requests for more Diet Soda's. If there is something we need next year let me know? On our left-over items please take some home as we can't have any stuff leftover as I can't take it back home. We found that this year people are not drinking as much beer but the water is going well.

Jose Perez (Golf 69-70) said we try to meet every-ones request. Its hard to drive around D.C. so we pick up our supplies over at Cosco and over at Henderson Hall. At Cosco we found the most popular beer and they come in cases. At Henderson Hall they have better selection but come in 6 and 12 packs and they have a better selection if Wine. So, it's a matter of running around to find everything. Jesse takes care of the snacks and everything and I take care of the beverages and Coffee. Every city is different so the items are different. \$875.49 was spent on beverages. Donations brought in \$807.00. We pay for the snacks and beverages out of our own pocket and through the donations we pay ourselves back.

Jesse Tipton is from Los Angeles and is close to Camp Pendleton and has got real close to the 2/1 Marines in Camp Horno. Jesse said he is close to the Sgt Major and on October 29th went down and represented us at the Ceremony for the Marines that were killed in Afghanistan. I wore my Red Jacket so they knew who we were and they appreciated me being there. The Gold Star Families were there along with the Commandant of the Marine Corps and Sgt Major of the Marine Corps was there. It was a private Ceremony but I was invited. **Tim Stanton** (Echo 70) and myself coordinate and help assist Marines at Camp Horno and they appreciate us supporting them.

- 6) **There was a question about membership and not being listed.** Replies were from **Vice President Tony Kilroy** (Fox 69-70) and **Mario Sagastume** (Fox 67). Tony said he would get together with the member after the meeting. Mario said that there are other groups out there but as an organization we are the VIETNAM VETERANS OF 2D BN 1ST MARINES that's our name. All of you know that as for our membership because of your time in Vietnam with 2/1 you don't have to sign up to be a member, you don't have to apply to be a member, you don't have to pay to be a member. We all earned our membership with Blood Sweat & Tears in a far away land. We ask for donations when we feel the need and you guys are always very generous. So, whether you want to or not. If you served with 2/1 or supported 2/1 in operations you are an automatic member.

Jesse Tipton (H&S 65-66) said that Echo 2/1 has an organization and that he and **Tom Isenburg** (Echo 65-66) has gone to a couple of their Reunions in Prescott Arizona. Some of their members I've seen there have come here. So, there are other groups like Hotel 2/1 are all out there. But, they are not our organization.

- 7) **Old Business. Vice President Tony Kilroy** (Fox 69-70) A couple of years ago we decided we were going to stop donations and will use the funds to manage and reduce our costs so our members can participate in the banquet and our excursions and things like that. We could save \$50 to \$100 per member based on if they have their wife or guest with them. We have pledged \$1000.00 to Doc Adams every year. Doc Adams agreed that will end. Our membership is dwindling and we need to make sure our money is maintained. **Paul Mangan** (Fox 65-66) asked that the membership vote on this and it was passed. Member asked why attendance was low this year. The Covid changed 44 members minds on not coming after they signed up to attend. Also, the last 12 months we lost 19 members who has passed on.

- 8) **New Business and Nominations.** This year we several nominations for Board of Trustee Seats and a Secretary. Bruce Oliver (Golf 68-69), Doc Paul Stein (Golf 68-69), Jose Perez (Golf 69-70) and Jesse Tipton's (H&S 65-66) positions are open and the Secretary position needs to be filled. Nominations were made for the membership to vote on.

Membership Minutes Continued November 14, 2021

Members Nominated for (4) Year Term and Voted in Are:

Secretary **Wieslaw (Vin) Burdziuk** (H&S 66), Trustee **Lansdale (Dale) Williams** (Fox 69-70), Trustee **Roy Greenleaf** (Fox 67-69), Trustee **Jesse Tipton** (H&S 65-66), **Jose Perez** (Golf 69-70), Vice President **Tim Dunn** (Hotel 68) stepped down from President, **Tony Kilroy** (Fox 69-70) stepped up to President from Vice President. (Done According to Bylaws).

- 9) **Discussion of Future Reunions.** **Tony Kilroy** (Fox 69-70) Fort Worth, Texas **2022** Nov 9 - 13. In **2023** San Diego, California Nov 8 - 12.
2024 is open for discussion. Milwaukee, Charleston, Savannah, Tampa and Branson were under nomination. **Milwaukee was chosen for 2024** Reunion it will be in September. 11 – 15 as of now. For **2025** we will be back in DC. It will be in May so we can attend 8th & I Evening Parade.

- 10) **A drawing was done for Banquet Table Assignments.**

- 11) **Sergeant Tyler Vargas Andrews Visit on Saturday November 13, 2021**



On Saturday November 13, 2021 Colonel Bill Duncan, 2/1 President Tony Kilroy, Doc Paul Stein, and Doc Dale Ferguson, visited Sergeant Tyler Vargas Andrews and his mother Tiffany Andrews at the Walter Reed Hospital in Bethesda MD.

Tyler was the Marine who was injured in Kabul and we met his mother and his brother. And we went over there with the feeling and idea that we were going to try and cheer him up and make him feel better but it turned out to be the opposite.

That young man was so inspiring to us that we left there just full of joy. It was amazing what this kid has gone through. He lost his right arm at the elbow and lost his left leg at the hip which there is no prosthesis for that.

Tyler told us how it all happened. He was a Marine Sniper doing Over-Watch and after his duty was over, he came down to help his fellow 2/1 Marines passing out water and getting people through the gate. It was 110 degrees and he was down there to help like every good Marine and he remembers the blast.

He remembers laying there in excruciating pain and Tyler remembers the Corpsman saving his life. It had to be so difficult for him. He has been through 29 operations since that happened so far. Tyler will be there at Walter Reed till, into January, February.

And an interesting note is that Colonel Duncan's grandson was the Orthopedic Surgeon that amputated his arm. It was amazing how this whole turn of events came through. And so, the surgeons mother lives here in Alexandria and has invited Sergeant Vargas Andrews, his mom and the other two children that she has for Thanksgiving dinner and they have accepted.

Membership Minutes Continued November 14, 2021

This young man was just an inspiration to us, he really was, and we talked a little about this stuff and we will have to take him under our wing whether it be cards, texts, or whatever to let him know that the 2/1 Brotherhood is with him all the time.

We brought him 3 shirts and he was ecstatic about it. He said he didn't have any shirts like that and hasn't since Boot Camp and he was very happy about it. We gave him 2 Vietnam Veterans coins and he loved it.

Doc Ferguson gave him a coin that he has been carrying around for 15 years. When he gave him that coin he asked he give it to the Corpsman that saved his life. That coin will carry on to pay forward, basically.

It was just so exciting to see this kid. It was amazing. So, along with the other Marines that were killed and wounded who need our help, prayers and just knowing that we are there for them at any time.

Mario Sagastume, Doc Ferguson and Michael Braxton do not live too far from their home, and they have their phone numbers so if they need anything or whatever Jesse Tipton who is the Liaison at Camp Pendelton can help out.

As a side note the Commandant came to see Tyler and he was flabbergasted that here he was E-5 and the Commandant is talking to him like he's his brother. So, that was really cool.

Mario Sagastume said he will find out where the rest of the Marines are. So, if anyone has connections get their names and where they are we can look at our roster and see who lives close to them to pay them a visit.

When Colonel Duncan talked to Tyler it was a sight to be seen. An old warrior and a young warrior. Tyler didn't look at us as a bunch of old guys sitting around. He looks at us as Combat Marines and Combat Corpsman. You can really tell he believed it too! That its a Brotherhood of the Marine Corps and that he was all in.

* Below from **Tony Kilroy** (Fox 69-70) *

- 12) **Cake Detail.** Right now we have Earl Smith, Andy Anderson was going to do it and didn't come to the reunion. We needed 3 volunteers for the Cake Detail. We got Doc Ferguson and two more volunteers.
- 13) At the end of our presentation Instead of a speaker we are going to Honor Colonel Duncan at our Banquet who is 91 years old. We will Honor him and present the Colonel with a plaque. We have a Video that General Jones made for us honoring Bill Duncan. And have a Dedication Video with pictures from previous Reunions and more. We will also mention Phil Leslie and his contribution as president for all his years here.
- 14) For every (40) room nights we get (1) Free Room. So, what we'll do is have a drawing out of the box and whose ticket we pull out gets one Free night for your stay here.
- 15) Motion was made to adjourn for pictures.

Semper Fi
Vinnie Burdziuk
Secretary

DOC DAVID JOHNSON - HOTEL COMPANY 67- 68

Doc David Johnson Book was Updated and has 338 pages. Doc is offering his book FREE to our members.

It is in PDF format that works on any computer. You can download Doc's book from link below:

<https://2ndbn1stmarines.org/books/DocJohnson.pdf>

2/1 Change of Command Ceremony January 20, 2022



On Thursday afternoon January 20, 2022 two of our brothers **Tim Stanton & Jesse Tipton** were invited to and attended the change of command for the 2nd Battalion First Marine Regiment at the landing pad at CAMP HORNO on board CAMPEN. It was a cloudless windy day and clearly showed the camp in all of its glory. Lt Colonel Brad Whited relinquished the reigns of the BN after an extended 2 years of leadership full of great leadership moments and leading the BN through the angst of life lost on August 26, 2021 when 10 members of our Battalion were lost to a terrorist attack at the airport in Kabul while our Marines were helping in the evacuation. LtCol Whited shared in his current state of sadness in moving on in his career after leading "such an outstanding group of Marines and patriots" he spoke eloquently of feeling pride in knowing the Battalion will be in great leadership hands with the incoming commanding officer Lt Colonel Glenn Baker. The Lt Colonel comes from a background ripe with ground experience with the infantry, recon and MSOB actions with 7 deployments. When quizzed by Jesse and Tim as to his incoming knowledge of 2/1 he passed muster with great background and historical information of our great fighting unit. He also indicated great motivation with linking up with our organization to continue our mission of continuing legacy.



Jesse Tipton with new CO LtCol Baker

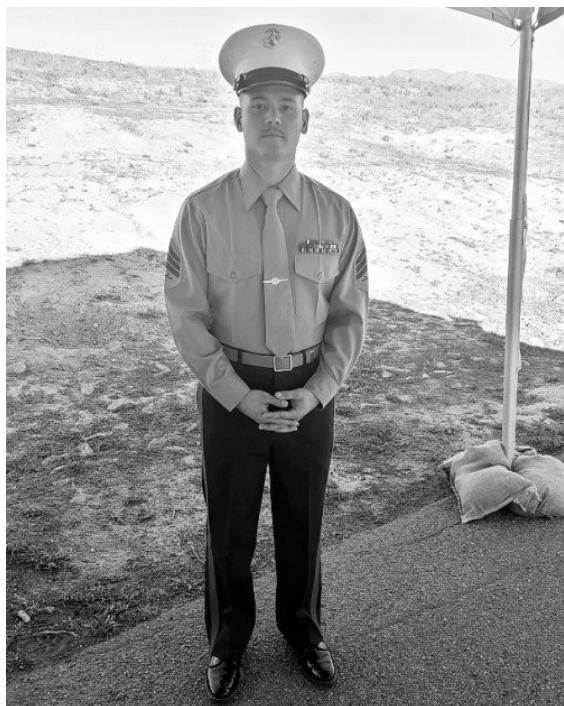


Jesse & LtCol Brad Whited



Regimental Memorial Garden showing that it is being cared for and is in good shape.



Sergeant John T. Spitzmiller 2/1's NCO of the Year

SGT JOHN T SPITZMILLER
1st Squad Leader, 1st Platoon
Company G
2D Battalion, 1st Marines

Sergeant John T. Spitzmiller enlisted in the Marine Corps in July 2017 and attended recruit training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, South Carolina. Upon completion of his basic training, Private First Class Spitzmiller reported to the School of Infantry West, Camp Pendleton, California where he received the MOS of 0311 Rifleman.

In June 2018, Private First Class Spitzmiller was promoted to Lance Corporal and reported to 2d Battalion 1st Marines, Golf Company.

In November 2018, Lance Corporal Spitzmiller graduated from Assault Climbers as a Lance Corporal. In January 2019, Lance Corporal Spitzmiller graduated from Scout Swimmers and was appointed as the Chief Scout Swimmer for Golf Company as a Lance Corporal.

In April 2019, Lance Corporal Spitzmiller deployed on the 31st MEU with V2/1 Golf Company, 1st Platoon, 2nd squad as a rifleman. Lance Corporal Spitzmiller was also a qualified Chief Scout Swimmer and Assault Climber to help assist Golf Company for any operations while apart on the 31st MEU. While deployed, Lance Corporal Spitzmiller received a NAM for actions as Chief Scout Swimmer and Assault Climber during the work-up and deployment. In September of 2019, Lance Corporal Spitzmiller was meritoriously promoted to the rank of Corporal.

Upon return in November 2019, Corporal Spitzmiller was assigned the billet of Squad Leader in 1st Platoon. In May 2020, Corporal Spitzmiller attended Advanced Infantry Marine Course, and Graduated second in his class.

In April 2021, Corporal Spitzmiller deployed on the Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force-Crisis-Response 21.2, Jordan, as 2nd Squad, Squad Leader, 1st Platoon Golf Company. While deployed Corporal Spitzmiller participated in Operation ALLIES REFUGE at Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA), Kabul, Afghanistan.

In August 2021, Corporal Spitzmiller was meritoriously selected to the rank of Sergeant, but accepted regular promotion to the rank of sergeant.

In January 2022, Sergeant Spitzmiller was selected as the 1st Marine Division NCO of the year for calendar year 2021.

Sergeant Spitzmiller's personal awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and Purple Heart for wounds received in action in HKIA.

*** Vietnam Veterans of 2D BN 1st Marines will award Sgt Spitzmiller with a Plaque & NCO Sword ***

Memorial Bricks - Enclose One Form for Each Brick Ordered

ENGRAVED MEMORIAL BRICKS

A double row of Engraved Memorial Bricks line the pathways of the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA. Additionally, approximately 450 bricks were placed around our monument and are available for engraving. To date 176 of these had been sold. Each engraved brick honors the donor or another person. Each brick costs \$300 and you may order as many as you like.

Vietnam Veterans of 2d Bn. 1st Marines will continue to sell bricks as long as there is space to place them at our monument. The museum installs bricks several times a year. We will submit brick orders to the museum in groups to coincide with their ordering and installation pattern.

Bricks must be paid for at the time of the order. Make check or money order payable to V V 2/1.

Engraving is limited to 3 lines of 20 characters each. A character includes all letters, punctuations and spaces. Each line must end with a full word or name (words and names will not be hyphenated and continued on the next line.)

Memorial Brick Inscription (1 form for each brick ordered.)

[illegible]**Order Placed By:**

Last Name: _____ **First Name:** _____ **Middle Initial:** _____

Address 1: _____

Address 2: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Email: _____ **Phone Number:** _____

Signature: _____

Payment Information: **Date:** _____ **Amount Paid:** _____

Authorized By: _____ Date: _____

Send this form along with payment made out to: Vietnam Veterans 2nd Bn 1st Marines
Mail to: DALE WILLIAMS - 225 HEIN DR - CLAYTON, NC 27527-5270

2021 Arlington Reunion



We paid tribute to one of our own Marine Warriors.

Colonel Billy R. Duncan – Texas Pete

The tribute included a video message from General Jim Jones, the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps and lifelong friend of Colonel Bill Duncan.



Initially, units of the battalion conducted heliborne raids into enemy-held areas. Because these assault units would suddenly appear, then disappear only to reappear in a different location, the enemy radio operators referred to the battalion as "Ghosts."

During May 1968 while operating in the Khe Sanh area, the battalion outmaneuvered elements of the North Vietnamese Army. When the NVA commander informed his HQ command that he lost contact with the battalion, he was relieved of his command. The intercepted NVA message traffic referred to 2d Battalion, 1st Marines as a "Ghost Battalion."



On our Monument is engraved on how we became the known as the Ghost Battalion.



Know Your Officers & Trustees
Vietnam Veterans of 2D Bn 1st Marines
Reunion Arlington VA 2021 November 10th - 15th



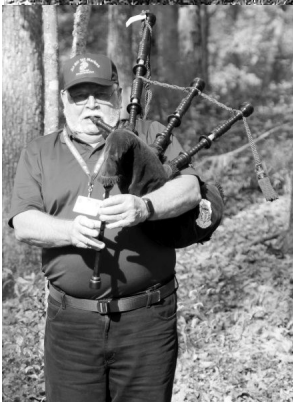
L-R Secretary Vin Burdziuk, President Tony Kilroy, Trustee Doc Paul Stein, below Doc Stein Treasurer Mario Sagastume, Trustee Jose Perez, Trustee Dale Williams, Trustee Jesse Tipton, and Trustee Roy Greenleaf

2021 Arlington Reunion**Members at our Annual Meeting November 14, 2021****Womans Group Picture after Our Banquet November 14, 2021**

Ann was very active in helping our organization in whatever needed to be done. She and her husband Archie helped in our reunions and donated merchandise to help us raise money to keep our group going. We named our Hospitality Suite in her Honor for all she has done for us.

2012 Arlington Reunion

Vietnam Veterans of 2D Bn 1st Marines
Reunion Arlington VA 2021 November 10th - 15th



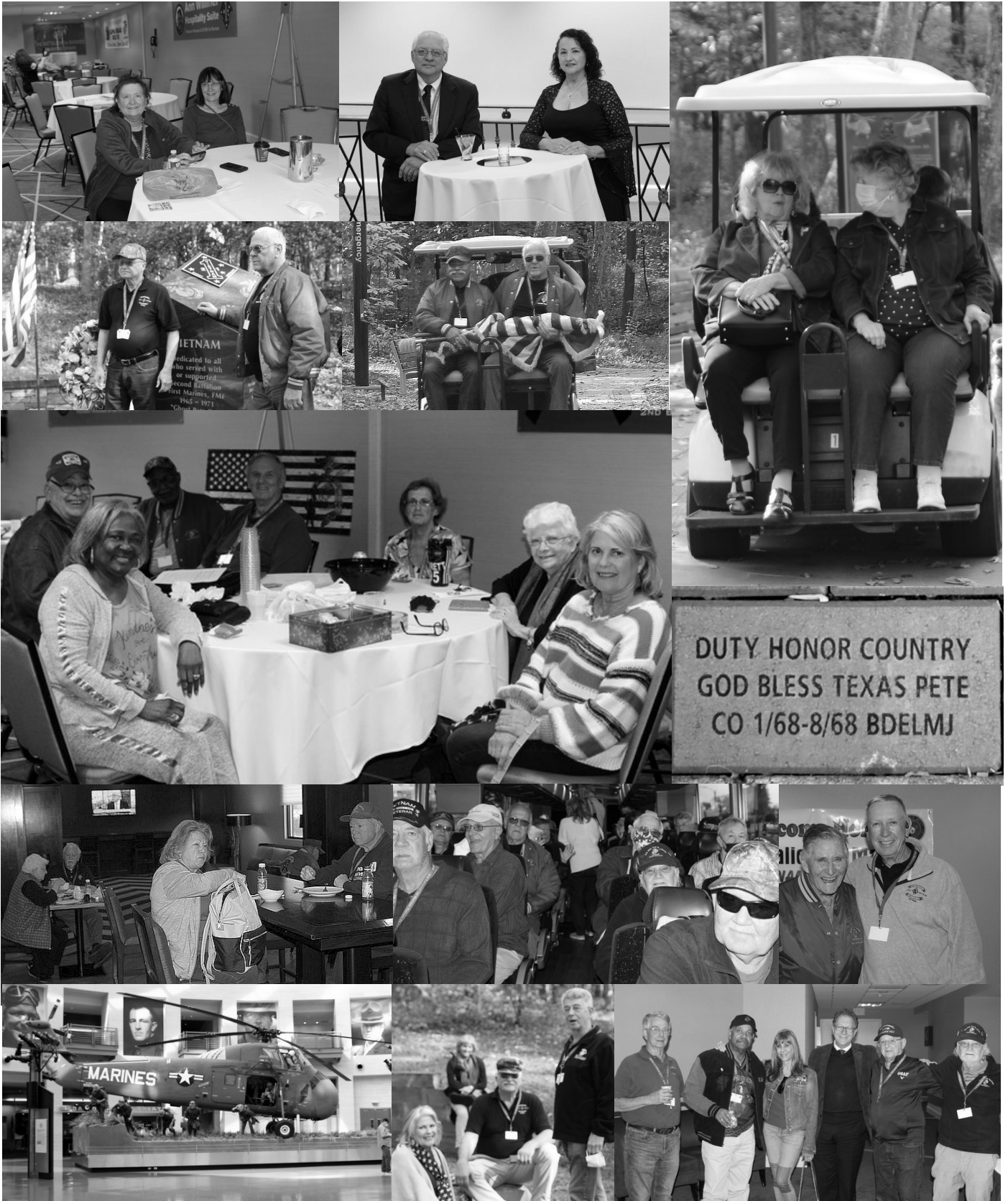
2021 Arlington Reunion



2012 Arlington Reunion



2021 Arlington Reunion



2012 Arlington Reunion





Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Bn 1st Marines
PO Box 9284
Denver, CO 80209

2022 Reunion Fort Worth, Texas <> November 9 - 13 2022

Vietnam Veterans of 2ND BN 1st Marines is Tax Exempt under IRS 501(c)3 Non-Profit

More info to follow after the Trustees Mid Year Meeting in April



www.GhostBattalion.org