



Newsletter of "The Professionals"
Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Battalion 1st Marines

www.FirstMarines.org



Volume 7 Issue 1

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Officers & Trustees



Message from the President

Brothers, Family and Friends of 2/1

Wow!! What a reunion!! For those of you who were unable to make it, this Newsletter is chock full of info on it including some of the picture. We have over 1400 more pictures on the website and to view them go to, www.FirstMarines.org,

All in all, it was by far one of our best, if the best reunions we have ever had.

This year's reunion was dedicated to our Combat Corpsmen. In all the years we've been getting together as a band of brothers we have never taken the time to recognize the special bond we have with our Docs. Every event or gathering we held this year included some recognition of those men, without whom we could not have survived our time in the bush they way we did, our Brothers – our Corpsmen. I think everyone of us has at least one Doc we can recall 'being there' when it mattered most (personally I want to give a 'shout out to my friend Bob 'Doc' Greding – Foxtrot '65-'66, "I hope all is well with you and your lovely bride, Valerie") And because they played such a major role for all of us in combat, the officers/trustees selected 2009 to be the year 2/1 said thanks to our Corpsmen.

Our banquet was filled to capacity, so much so, the hotel had to add two additional tables and bring in more chairs for the overflow attendance, and it definitely surpassed previous banquets. Our speaker was Capt Mark Oleson, MD, HQMC, Deputy Director of the Office of the Medical Officer of the Marine Corps. Capt. Oleson did a yeoman's job (pardon the pun) filling in for his boss Read Admiral Richard R. Jeffries, the Medical Officer of the Marine Corps, who was called to duty dealing with the Afghanistan build up. During the Birthday cutting ceremony, we included not only the oldest and youngest Marine, but we also asked the oldest and youngest Corpsman to be a part of the cake cutting. We topped off the banquet with the playing of a new musical march written and played by the United States Marine Corps Drum & Bugle Corps., called "Corpsman Up". It's an inspirational march dedicated to all Corpsmen and was very fitting for our evening (A special thank you to Sgt. Miles USMC Drum & Bugle Corps for providing us with enough Corpsman Up CD's for all attendees.) As the tune ended all 2/1 Corpsmen (seventeen in total) were called up to the stage and thanked for being with us. The banquet room erupted in applause as all in the room stood to recognize and say thanks to the Corpsmen that stood up. Oooh Raah!!

Of special note, over the past many years our Fallen Comrade Ceremony was led by our Brother Joe Mazzariello, and with his passing a few short weeks prior to the reunion, our yearly moment of honoring our Fallen Brothers held more significance to us all.

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Message from the President Continued

In recognition of our comrades the pass since our return from 'Nam, at all future reunions, the single dinner setting at the empty table signifying the absence of our KIA/MIA brothers, will be additionally adorned with one of our Nations Flag. The tri-folded flag, which has flown over the Capitol of the United States, will be included in our Fallen Comrade table in honor of those 2/1 Brothers that have reported to their final duty station.

We were additionally honored that Joe's lovely wife Jackie, her brother Louie Vertone, Joe's Daughter Danielle and her fiancé Anthony Falva, drove from New York to be with his 2/1 Brothers for the reunion. Due to his commitments to the NYPD, Joe's son, Joe Jr. was unable to attend but was present in heart. To the Mazzariello family your 2/1 family says, 'Thanks for being with us.'

The annual business meeting was full and we had one hundred sixteen 2/1 Brothers sign in for the reunion but as the Secretary's report shows, some were UA from the meeting. Hmmmmmmmm....., where were you Gents?

The 2/1 brotherhood in attendance this year covered just about every rank, from Private to Lieutenant General and everyone seemed to get along just fine, go figure! The agenda was quite full and a lot was accomplished. A new fund was approved to continue our efforts to use association monies to help Marine's and Marine families in need. The new fund will be called the 'Espirit De Corps' Fund (Thanks Vinnie Burdziuk for recommending such a fitting name) and up to 10% of the annual un-restricted donations to the association will be allocated to the fund. For clarification on how the unrestricted fund works, our Treasurer Mario Sagastume will be explaining it with his report in the next Newsletter. The membership approved locations for future reunions, including 2012 & 2013. In 2012 we will be returning to the west coast, but not to our usual haunts in Oceanside, our next California reunion will be in Mission Bay at the Bahia Resort. And in 2013 we will be returning to the same hotel as our 2009 reunion, the Holiday Inn Rosslyn/Key Bridge. Be sure to look at the 2010 reunion registration information elsewhere in this Newsletter. The membership also elected two new Trustees to fill the vacancies that occurred with Joe's passing and the expiration of the term of Phil Odom, (A special THANK YOU is owed to Phil for his hard work during his tour as a Trustee, especially his outstanding contribution to our Houston Reunion) Bruce Oliver and Gary Gordon were each elected to four year terms as trustees, welcome to the team gents.

As you look through the pictures on the website www.FirstMarines.org, over 1400 taken by Ken Harding alone, thanks Ken for a job well done. You will see from Ken's photos that there was something going on pretty much all day every day. The hospitality suite was active all day long, the energy and good cheer made for good times. Thanks to Mike Valdez our hard working reunion chairman for, again, managing the constantly busy hospitality part of the reunion, and thanks to Randy LaVerne for stepping up and giving his all with Hospitality Suite, (a special shout out Thank You to Norma Valdez, Mike's gracious wife, for all her efforts to keep things organized.) And we can't forget "Jim Page Movie Night", this year our movie was the D.I; starring Jack Webb and every chair in the room was full. Thanks again to Foxtrot Company Commander Col Jim Page USMC ret., your movie time is appreciated by all. When you add in, what seemed as an always crowded, PX which sold out of most of the items on hand, (2/1 owes a special thanks to Archie & Anne Williner for again donating dozens of MARINE logo items of clothing to the PX for sale and to give away during the raffle) Reunion 2009 was one happening event.

Our pilgrimage to the Wall was, as always, heart wrenching, somber and cathartic. Thank you Doc Moyer for helping us honor our Fallen Brother Marines & Corpsmen by placing our 'We Remember' plaque at the center point of that hallowed Vietnam Memorial ground. A Big thank you to our volunteer shuttle bus drivers MGYSGT Frank Odzimowski and Ron Dunning for getting folks to and fro safely from the Wall and the National Museum of the Marine Corps later in the week. Scuttlebutt has it that Top Ski is the go to guy as the newly created association Transportation Committee. And finally thanks to the family members and friends and all 2/1 brothers that lent a hand in so many ways it's hard to name everyone.

The last leg of our reunion, on our last day together, was the visit to the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, VA... What a place! A must see for all. We were honored to have Lt/Gen. G.R. Ron Christmas (USMC ret.) and President of Marine Corps Heritage Foundation join us and give a little talk about the museum and our Marine Corps History.

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Thanks to our brother Domenic DeRose, Lt/Gen. Christmas has asked us to send him information concerning our Battalion's tour in 'Nam. He will take this to the Board of Directors of the National Museum and the Marine Corps History Division for inclusion in the museum's content. As a result, your officers and directors are hard at work on something appropriate to send to the General and we will report to the membership when a decision is made. In addition the officers and directors voted unanimously to extend Honorary Life Membership in our association to Ron and his bride Sherry, welcome aboard Lt/Gen Christmas and Lady Sherry.

All in all the best reunion in my book and I'm hoping that next year will be even better.

Semper Fidelis, Paul Mangan, President 2nd Bn 1st Marines, Foxtrot '65-'66



Wings of Hope

Vietnam Veterans 2nd Battalion 1st Marines presented a copy of *Wings of Hope* by artist Todd Krasovetz to The Office of the Medical Officer of the Marine Corps honoring all naval combat corpsmen. Captain Mark C. Olesen MC USN, Assistant MOMC and Guest speaker accepted the painting.

The original painting "Wings of Hope" was unveiled Sept. 21, 2001 at the Naval Hospital, Camp Pendleton, CA. The painting depicts a fallen service member carrying his weapon being pulled to safety by a medical corpsman. "When I began this painting in March 2001, I didn't know that this painting would be so appropriate for today, especially after 9/11 and Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom," Krasovetz said. "Wings of Hope" symbolizes the strength and brotherhood of the services. Even though, the models were from the U.S. Navy, they can represent any member of the armed forces. Soldiers, airmen, sailors, and Marines risk their lives in



the protection of freedom and to save their fellow service members.

You can see more on Krasovetz at: <http://www.official-military-art.com>

Phil Leslie - Vice President, 2nd Bn 1st Marines

MINUTES OF THE 2009 MEMBERS MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 0830 by President Paul Mangan.

Introductory remarks were made, a welcome given to the members and all first time attendees. There were 60 members in attendance as well as the members of the Board of Trustees and the Officers of the organization.

Minutes of the 2008 Members Meeting

Secretary Ben Dickson was introduced and an offering was made to read the minutes. A motion was presented to approve the minutes as posted in the newsletter Vol.6, issue 1. A second was received and vote taken. It was approved to accept the minutes as posted.

Treasurers Report

Mario Sagastume was introduced. He submitted a balance sheet and financial sheet detailing the finances of the organization. Discussion of the status of the treasury totals was given with the highlight being the donations from our last mailing generating over \$14,000.00 given by the members. Mario stressed the generosity of the members had exceeded the expectations of the trustees and board noting the members now were all accepted with no requirements for dues. A copy of the financials and balance sheet are available to all members upon request to Mario. Our dealings with the finances entrusted to trustees and the board are transparent and available to all members. A motion was made to accept the report as read and a 2nd was given. A vote was taken and approved that the report be accepted as given.

Presidents Message and Report

Paul welcomed everyone again to the meeting and expressed his gratitude to the board, trustees, and members for the efforts put forth this year to make the reunion a success.

Agenda items:

1. Conference calls: a discussion of the implementation of a system of conference meetings was given. They began in early January and were done by computer. That was switched to a phone system in the early spring. There has been almost 100% participation by the board and trustees. It has enhanced the quality and progress of the tasks needed to plan the reunion and greatly increased the efficiency of the results. Your reunion is a concrete example of the work done at these meetings. Paul stressed that anyone is free to listen in to these meetings and participate, and if requested will be given the codes to join the calls. The trustees and board will still be making a midwinter meeting to fine tune the details of the organization and implementation of the mission statement. Results and details of these meetings will be posted in a newsletter or on the website.

2. Paul reviewed the locations for the upcoming reunions and opened the discussion of the reunion for 2012. 2010 had been approved for San Antonio, Texas. 2011 had been approved for Memphis, Tennessee. These sites are locked in and further details will be given when the negotiations for prices and dates are approved. They will be given to the members in an update or newsletter as they become available. Paul has done the research on San Diego. The Oceanside site was not well received by the members last year. Paul has gone to many sites in the area and found the Mission Bay Resort on Balboa Island as a good candidate. It has amenities that are favorable to transportation, food, families, sightseeing, and shopping. It is in close proximity to Camp Pendleton and the airport. With a beach and many perks, it is well suited to our needs. The resort is being very generous on prices even though it is high season for vacation, and necessary meeting facilities are not available at any of the other nearby venues. A discussion by the members followed with questions about add-ons, taxes, and prices. Paul discussed the prices and they are the lowest for what we will get compared to the other resorts, and can be locked in now to avoid major price increases. A motion was made to go forward with the site for the 2013 reunion at San Diego, Mission Bay at the Bahia Resort. A second was given and a vote approved the motion.

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MINUTES OF THE 2009 MEMBERS MEETING CONTINUED

3. Paul discussed what to do with the money generated by the members. Do we want to designate funds to be set aside to help others? Discussion followed about our reserves, designated funds, unrestricted funds and goals for such funds. Mario stated that we are in good shape financially, and at present are covering our expenses. It was discussed as to what we can and cannot do with our funds due to our tax status. Mario explained that designated funds are those that a member specifically says what he wants them to be for, i.e. books, shelters, banquet costs, etc. The undesignated funds are those that a member gives to help whatever the board and trustees feel is required or needed: i.e. donations to wounded warriors, Vets shelter, etc.. A motion was made to set aside up to 10% of undesignated funds to be used in a fund whose name will be determined at a later date. A second was given and a vote approved the measure.

4. Elections of Officers and Trustees: The membership also elected two new Trustees to fill the vacancies that occurred with Joe's passing and the expiration of the term of Phil Odom, (A special THANK YOU is owed to Phil for his hard work during his tour as a Trustee, especially his outstanding contribution to our Houston Reunion) Bruce Oliver and Gary Gordon were each elected to four year terms as trustees, welcome to the team gens.

Old Business

Thanks for all the work Phil put into the ID cards.

Vinnie gave us an update on the website details. We are getting 28 hits a day which adds up to approx. 10,000 per year. He will be setting up a new site map to make browsing the site easier. A list of brothers we have lost will be posted to help those searching for men.

Vinnie was given a huge thank you and round of applause for all of his efforts.

A member asked about the books, repayment to Mr. Novak and how that is progressing. Paul and Mario have been in direct contact with Dave and have worked out details that he is ok with to pay down and pay off the debt we owe to him.

New Business

No new business was brought up.

A motion was made to adjourn. A second was given and approved by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned.



Ben Dickson - Fox 68-69 - Secretary - Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Bn 1st Marines

Help Needed

Andy Baker is trying to locate Samuel "Robbie" Robinson, who was in his company and platoon. USMC 2/1 Hotel, 2nd platoon, '67 and '68. He was from Gary, Indiana. Does anyone know how to get in contact or find out who to contact for more information on finding him? There are others who also would like to get in touch with him.

bluegoose323@charter.net

From Doc Hill

Sandy Carlson is still in the Nursing Home unit at Phoenix VA. He did get home for Christmas day which made him feel good. He sure would like to hear from anyone. He feels lonely. **Sandy's Cell phone: 480-223-7723**

Message from the Webmaster



We have had a banner year in what we have accomplished over the year with our 2/1 website. And with our November reunion we have added 1400 pictures to share with our members, family and friends of 2/1.

We are currently adding some changes to our homepage to make it easier to navigate and find what your searching for. Already we have added a "WHATS NEW" link which is very noticeable due to the flashing icon. Anything added to our website is on that page with a link to the new item...

You will also notice that our eMail Update Newsletters will be linked so, for those that are not currently on the mailing list they can get the Update directly from the website. Also, some of our members have not been able to receive the eMail Updates due to their mail server mistaking it as spam... Now they can just go on-line to view it.

The next up-coming change will be a SITE MAP. This will allow you to go to the exact page you want without navigating our menu-system... We feel this will benefit those who are researching our website and will help increase the traffic to us via the spidering that the internet uses.

We will also be keeping a database of our deceased members to help those searching for Marines / Corpsmen they served with. If you know of someone who has passed will you please send me their name(s) and all information you have to help build our database. Any information will help so if you only have the name and year don't hesitate to send it in to us. Looking forward to working with all of you this coming year. **Vin@1stMarines.org**

Semper Fi, Vinnie Burdziuk H&S 1966

Message from Gary Gordon

I would like to thank our 2/1 membership for allowing me to serve as a trustee in our organization. After attending my first reunion five years ago it has been exciting for me to see the progression of our association. I think we have wonderful leadership and I look forward to working with our board for the next three years.



A project that I plan to continue in the coming year is to work on updating our current Membership Roster. Currently we have about 1,400 members on our roster. Many of these men and women have moved and/ or had telephone changes made over the past several years. It is possible that some of our members have lost track of us over the years. In the year to come we plan to update our roster by contacting as many of our members as possible. We hope to reduce our mailing cost and to have a more effective communication link for our membership. We will also redirect members to our outstanding web site and encourage participation in our reunions.

We are looking to work in a "squad" type format with volunteers looking for correct information on a state by state basis. We have used many of the free people search sites that exist and I have been working with an inexpensive people search program to determine its value in our search. I welcome any information that will allow us to complete this mission efficiently.

Anyone who would like to work with us on this project that has free long distance phone call capability and access to the internet, please e-mail me at: **GLGordon21@yahoo.com**. I will be setting up an e-mail working group soon to continue with this project. I'm looking for a few good men to join us. I offer thanks to those who have provided their time so far.

Gary Gordon H&S 68-69

Message from Mike Valdez

The 2009 Washington D.C. reunion is behind us and it is time to start thinking about next year. First, I would like to thank Randy LaVerne (H Company, 66-67) for all of his help in Washington. Randy was up early every day helping me keep the hospitality room stocked, cleaned and organized. I would also like to thank many of the members who left money in the tip jar. There was approximately \$400 deposited and that money was used to buy more drinks and snacks. FYI, the jar was never an intended fixture. It just materialized from one of the many empty snack containers and money just started appearing. Since this turned out to be a good way to keep the kegs flowing, I am sure we will use this idea again next year.

As most of you know, next year's reunion will be in San Antonio, Texas. Although there are plenty of places to visit and sites to see, there will be a need for the hospitality room. If you have any suggestions for improvements, (snacks, drinks, presentation) please contact me via email: mvaldez@windstream.net with your ideas. As usual, we are always looking for "A Few Good Men." If you would like to volunteer some of your time to help with the hospitality room or any other activities, please let me know. The amount of time you would have to devote would be about one hour per day.

Mike Valdez 713-822-1165 MValdez@windstream.net

Message from Bruce Oliver

First and foremost I would like to thank the membership for giving me the privilege of serving 2/1 as a trustee. My first reunion was back in 1993 when we were a smaller contingent of younger marines. At that time we stayed up all night and told war stories. Now, we sit around till 2200 talking about the medications we're on, bragging about our grandkids and asking each other to repeat that because we can't hear. So be it. . .

It came to me as an inspiration as I have had my own problems in the last few months and needed someone to talk to. I met a friend who served in the Marines, pre-Vietnam, and was talking to him about this and that. As we were leaving our watering hole, he handed me his phone number and said that he was always available if I needed someone to talk to. So with that: **Just a Reminder!**



Sometimes we all need to talk. If you are having problems or are worried about something, pick up the phone and call one of your buddies. And, if you can't get thru to them, then call anyone of us. If you don't have a phone number, email us and we will call you back. Too many Marines, young and old, feel alone and they aren't. As Marines we are part of a family and your brother Marines understand what you have been through and how it impacts your life everyday.

Semper Fidelis really does mean something. It means being here for each other.

Bruce "Ollie" Oliver - Trustee - olliegolf21@gmail.com



I was at the reunion this year and thought you may like this picture I took at the Korean War Memorial of one of our brothers and one of our future Marine!

Semper Fi, Darold Strickler

Fox 2/1

October 67 to April 68

DaroldStrick@cox.net

Scuttlebutt by John (Doc) Weed

Do you know about D.I.C.? It stands for Dependents Indemnity Compensation. When a Service Connected veteran receiving service connected disability payments dies all service connected payments stop. The surviving spouse may be eligible for D.I.C. which currently is about \$1100 per month. D.I.C. is not automatic and must be filed for using a Veteran Service Officer or VA Vet Rep. There are three ways in which the spouse may be eligible: 1) the veteran dies of a service connected illness (regardless of the percent disabled); 2) the veteran was 100% service connected for 10 years uninterrupted (cause of death does not matter); 3) the veteran was 100% service connected and listed as permanent and total (any time period and cause of death does not matter).

Go to www.va.gov and hyperlink to D.I.C. or search VA web site for D.I.C. That web site on D.I.C. will discuss eligibility and provide the form used for filing for D.I.C. The Veteran Service Officer or VA Vet Rep will also need a copy of the death certificate and possibly a letter from the Physician stating what the cause of death on the death certificate is and that it is the same as the listed service connected disability of the deceased vet.

We have no dues and, although always gratefully accepted, you need not send a Donation to become a member.

All Memberships are for life and our operating expenses are paid by Donations from our members and member purchases from our PX. Donations are Tax Exempt under 501 (c) 3 - Non Profit.

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Please return this form along with your Tax Deductible
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