



River Patrol Force Brown Water Log



Gamewardens of Vietnam Association, Inc.

Volume 1 Issue 2

Brown Water Log

Winter Quarter

Newsletter Editor: WW Cater. Material for inclusion should be received by the first of March, June, September, and December to be included in the next newsletter. Mail all information to: WW Cater -- 4420 Sunrise Drive, Casper WY 82604-5106 or email to: wwcater@attbi.com

From the President's



John
Woody

Corner

Hello to everyone. This is my first newsletter to Gamewardens of Vietnam. For those of you who were at the Reunion 2002, we all had a wonderful time. It was great to get together again and renew old acquaintances and friendships. It is our hope here in San Antonio that everyone is here in 2004.

I want to thank Steve Watson on behalf of all of us for his superb Leadership during the past four years. **Thanks, Steve for everything.** Jim Davys has delivered a plaque from the GWVN to Steve for his services. Steve continues to serve GWVN as our On-Site representative for Vietnam Unit Memorial and Small Boat Display in San Diego.

I also want to thank Ron and Denise Laratta on behalf of all of us for the excellent Reunion in New Orleans. I believe that there were over 290 members and family in attendance. The Inter-Continental Hotel accommodations placed us within walking distance of the French Quarter. The food was outstanding at every corner.

We learned that alligators prefer marshmallows to people and you can never have too many marshmallows in the bayous. The city bus tour gave us a real appreciation for New Orleans culture and architecture. We ate at Bubba Gumps, ate and danced at Michuals, and had a very nice spread at the National Dinner in the Inter-Continental where our speaker was, Richard A. Wannemacher, of the Veterans Administration.

And, when we thought that we had done everything, we went on Saturday, to Stennis Space Center, for a barbeque at Special Boat Unit 22. There, we had a dedication to those who were not with us anymore and observed the SBU unit in demonstrations of their latest hardware. They operated their boats for us and put on a live extraction for us with the SEAL detachment. Then, gave us rides on the boats through the bayou. Forty knots in the bayou is neat. These would make the greatest bass boats in the world. It was a unique time to let our families see what is at stake when we where in action. Go the TF-116 Web site for a look at the plaque given to us by SBU-22.

Plans are underway here in San Antonio for the Reunion of 2004. Glen Fry is leading this effort with my assistance. He has contacted the San Antonio Convention Center who sent our request for lodging to the hotel system. He has tentively selected the Menger Hotel. This hotel is one of the historic sites and is next to the Alamo and San Antonio Riverwalk.

We will meet with the hotel management early next month to finalize a contract. The tentively hotel rate is \$89.00 per day. We will send additional information as it becomes available. The dates are August 5, 6, 7, and 8 2004. It is our hope to keep everyone informed up to the minute through the TF-116 Web site and with mailings.

The National Board of Directors approved several actions during the Business Meeting including the following:

1. Solicited nominations for President, and vice-President for East Coast as both positions to become open
2. Reviewed the Scholarship Fund status. Scholarship to remain at \$500
3. Discontinue physical copy mailing of the quarterly newsletter
4. Attempt Recovery of West Coast Chapter files, equipment and finance data from Ralph Fries
5. James Morgan to be legal advisor
6. Charles Benninghoff to be membership chairman

General Meeting

1. Texas Tech Vietnam Center presentation
2. GWVN will donate GW items to Texas Tech
3. GWVN owns the TF-116 logo copyright

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President's Corner (cont.)

General Meeting (cont.)

4. Newsletter to be discontinued as hard copy due to cost, will continue as electronic copy on TF-116 Web site.

5. Election of National President and East Coast Vice President

6. W. W. Cater replace Ron Laratta as board member

7. 2006 Reunion to be in Denver with Dave Ajax and W. W. Cater to setup

8. 2004 Reunion in San Antonio with John Woody and Glen Fry to setup

9. Reunion Dinner change to 2006 Reunion to a Cruise

The Texas Tech Vietnam Center presentation showed our group its overview of what it is doing to archive the entire Vietnam conflict experience. Stephen Maxner, Oral Historian, explained how that the Center is documenting individual experiences of everyone who served in country to preserve that experience. This is an excellent method of saving one's memory for all time.

GWVN has several boxes of documents and other memorabilia that Jim Davy will review and send to Texas Tech Vietnam Center. Each document will be preserved and entered into an on-line space that credits GWVN. This will preserve our heritage in TF-116 and be available for review by all of us as well as the public.

The current Board of Directors continues in place with the exception of President and VP East Coast. I, John Woody, was nominated and elected as President for the next term. Walt Fenton was elected as VP East Coast. Welcome Walt! W. W. Cater replaces Ron Laratta on the Board of Directors. H. W. Sherman was reelected to the Board of Directors. Thanks Bill and H. W. for continuing to represent us.

The scholarship fund is in good shape. We have approximately \$40,000.00 in the bank.

We voted to discontinue the mailed copy of the quarterly National newsletter due to its high cost of production and mailing. It costs approximately \$1,000.00 per mailing to get the newsletter printed and mailed. It was determined that we could save \$4,000.00 per year by using the www.tf116.org Web site as our distribution point. The newsletters are posted there any way and this method will allow us to distribute the information for everyone. We will be able to log-on to the Web site and read the newsletter and print a copy from there if we want it. Let me know how you feel about this. The financial savings will be a big help to our overall financial status.

The TF-116 logo copyright belongs to GWVN.

At the Reunion Dinner, several members brought up the idea to hold the 2006 Reunion as an offshore cruise. The General Meeting was reopened and a motion was made and seconded and voice vote passed this change to the 2006 Reunion. Galveston, TX has a large number of cruise lines that operate in the Gulf of Mexico year around. The vote now stands that I will look into a four-day cruise package for the 2006 Reunion. Currently these packages are advertised at approximately \$240.00 to \$290.00 per person, double occupancy.

These cruises normally have one day at sea, then go to Calica, Mexico, then to Cozumel, Mexico and then one day at sea back to Galveston. Group rates are usually a bit better. Everything except insurance and liquor are included. Additional third or fourth persons per cabin are from \$130.00 to \$160.00.

Galveston is a good central starting point for the national membership spread.

A little about me; I served in Vietnam during two periods, from March 66 to October 66 with Special Warfare Mobile Support Team One, Danang, and, November 67 to July 68 with Special Warfare Officer-in-Charge, Mobile Support Team Two assigned to TF-116. I served for five and one-half years on active duty as a Reserve officer. I continued as a Naval Reserve Officer until my retirement in '91 with 28 years service. I am currently in the computer business.

It is my intention to continue the direction that has been carried before me and help all of us transition to the future. This organization is over thirty years old and it is time to plan for that future. I want to continue our support of the Vietnam Unit Memorial and Small Boat Display. That is the current hot topic to find solutions to at the moment. There may be some changes to the By-Laws that need revision. It is my intention to bring those to discussions by e-mail on the Internet so that by the Reunion in San Antonio, we can have a good discussion and make changes that may be necessary.

I am open to questions concerning computers, e-mail, and the Internet as that is my specialty in my current business environment.

The new mailbox address is:

Gamewardens of Vietnam

P. O. Box 701786

San Antonio, TX 78270

Call Toll Free: (866) 220 7477

Email: President@tf116.org

Let me know your concerns about the organization.

John Woody

**Thank You ,Thank You ,
Thank You !!!**

Ron and Denise Laratta, Gamewardens of Vietnam Assoc. would like to thank you for hosting **Reunion 2002**.

You did a wonderful job of organizing and keeping things moving smoothly.

Ron says we have a lost and found of a pair Louisiana Key Chains at the New Orleans Reunion. Please email Ron at rflaratta@juno.com and he will send them to you.

Ron and Denise would like to thank all of you for the wonderful e-mails and phone calls they have received since the reunion. They are glad you all had a good time and it was their pleasure to have planned it.

They had the honor of being invited back to SBU-22 on Monday after the reunion for a dedication of their new buildings. Senator Trent Lott was present, as well as a lot of brass with "gold stuff" all over the place, but very few medals!

They again demonstrated the hot extraction - but ours was better! They used less ammo because "They had gone **over their budget** on Saturday"! And NO rides!

The guys told us that they had a great time on Saturday and were glad they could show us the new equipment. They also repeated how much of an honor it was to have met the Gamewardens.

**Thanks,
Ron**

Taps : It's the song that gives us that lump in our throats and usually tears in our eyes. But, do you know the story behind the song? If not, I think you will be interested to find out about its humble beginnings.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia.

The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention. Crawling on this stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment.

When he finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern and caught his breath - numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier - his own son.

The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, the boy enlisted in the Confederate Army.

Heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son full military burial despite his enemy status.

His request was only partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son at the funeral. This was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate, but -out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform.

This wish was granted. The haunting melody, we now know as "Taps" used at military funerals was born.

*Day is done
Gone the sun
From the lakes
From the hills
From the sky
All is well
Safely rest
God is nigh*

*Fading light
Dims the sight
And a star
Gems the sky
Gleaming bright*

*From afar
Drawing nigh
Falls the night
Thanks and praise
For our days
Neath the sun
Neath the stars
Neath the sky*

*As we go
This we know
God is nigh*

cont »

Taps (cont.)

I too have felt the chills while listening to Taps, but I have never seen all the words to the song until now. I didn't even know there was more than one verse. I also never knew the story behind the song and I didn't know if you had either so I thought I'd pass it along. I now have an even deeper respect for the song that I did before.

For The True Story:

<http://www.west-point.org/taps/Taps.html>

According to military tradition, once a US Flag is lifted from the casket, it is then tilted down in front of the casket to block everyone's view. The Flag is then held up for everyone to see and taps is then played softly in the distance. This is referred to as, "Presenting The Colors."

Tradition holds that at this time the fighting spirit of the veteran then enters the Flag to find rest in God's eternal grace.

Once the Flag has been folded, both the Flag and the veteran are formally "Retired" forever.

From that point on, no one but God himself is allowed to unfold, or "Recall", the flag until Christ returns.

Now you know why vets always salute folded US Flags. Don't be surprised if you cry a little the next time you see Old Glory waving in the breeze.

Submitted by Steve Sumrall

**NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS**

This will be the last published newsletter that will be mailed out! All future issues of The Brown Water Log will be available on our website: tf116.org for you to download and/or print. For those who do not have access to the internet - contact me with your name address and zip+4 and I will mail you a copy.

**W.W. Cater - 4420 Sunrise Drive
Caspar, WY 82604-5106**

Thank you, W.W. Cater, Editor.

Donations :

THANK YOU! Gamewardens of Vietnam Association Inc. would like to thank Edward Vick for a \$500.00 contribution to our Scholarship Fund.

Mr. Vick was a member of River Division 534 and River Division 551 and was in the early days of Operation Giant Sling Shot . Ed has also written a book "Free Fire", to be published in the near future.

Ed is a former member of the New York Vietnam Veterans Memorial Commission which, under direction of NYC Mayor Edward Koch, constructed the memorial and published another book, "Dear America, Letters Home From Vietnam".

Thank you, Edward Vick

Thank you, John Herke, former member of River Divisions 531, 521, and 532, for the \$500.00 contribution to the "Website Fund".

John donated this money with a check - presented at the New Orleans National Reunion. Thank you, John, for your continuing support of Gamewardens of Vietnam Association.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship, or one of our other funds, visit our **Ship's Store Donation** page.



Our Quarterly Newsletter is now available online.

<http://www.tf116.org/newsletter.html>

Why the American Flag is folded 13 times

Have you ever noticed on TV or at military funerals that the honor guard pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the American Flag exactly 13 times?



I've known how the 21 gun salute was determined (adding the digits of 1776), but only recently learned why the flag was folded 13 times when it is lowered or when it is folded and handed to the widow at the burial of a veteran.

Here it is:

The First fold of our Flag is a symbol of life.

The Second fold is a symbol of our belief in eternal life in Jesus Christ.

The Third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veterans departing our ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The Fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance.

The Fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The Sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag

of the United States Of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.

The Seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

The Eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

The Ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith in God, their love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great has been molded.

The Tenth fold is a tribute to the father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The Eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The Twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Thirteenth fold, when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding us of our nation's motto, "In God We Trust".

After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington, and the sailors and marines who served under Captain John Paul Jones, who were followed by their comrades and shipmates in the Armed Forces of the United States, preserving for us the rights, privileges, and freedoms we enjoy today.

There are some traditions and ways of doing things which have deep meaning. You may see many flags folded in the future, and now you will know why.

Submitted by Buck Bowdoin

What's new?

PayPal.

Gamewardens Ship's Store
now accepts PayPal
payments!

Check out our **What's New**
section for the latest
products.



Northeast Chapter News :

NE Chapter meeting was held Nov 10, 2002. After ceremonies at Bourne National Cemetery, the group held their meeting. Ray Snow has provided some interesting ideas for our 2003 reunion. He would like to have it at a campground area in Vermont. Tentative day for the reunion is 21 June 03.

To current members if you receive this NE Chapter newsletter by mail and by Internet, please let Dennis know. If you have an e-mail address, and didn't receive the newsletter please forward your address to Dennis Scully.

Dennis can be contacted at the following address :

Dennis J. Scully
77 Tispaquin St.
Middleboro, MA 02346-3325
E-Mail: rivDiv534@aol.com

NOTE:

James Ward (National Secretary)
is requesting that members forward a copy of
their DD214's, dates in country, units, etc.

Please send to: James Ward
20 Sailfish Dr. - Ponte Vedra Beach
FL 32082-2054

Simple Blood Test Reveals Long-Term Risk

Nov 11, 2002 - A fast acting and inexpensive blood test could help determine who will face the biggest risk of long-term complications after a heart attack or chest pain.

New research shows the test provides a better indication of a patient's risk of death after such major heart problems than other currently available methods.

When the heart becomes overloaded, it secretes a hormone called B-type natriuretic peptide (BNP), which acts like a natural diuretic to help the heart's function return to normal. In recent years, screening for levels of BNP has become a common way for emergency room staff to diagnose heart failure quickly and start treatment faster.

But now researchers say that analyzing levels of a fragment of this hormone known as the N-terminal fragment (N-BNP) can more accurately predict long-term risks in patients with heart

attack or chest pain (angina) than looking at BNP alone.

They found that patients with the highest levels of N-BNP had twice the risk of dying than those with the lowest levels.

Their study appears in today's rapid access issue of *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*.

Study researcher Kenneth Caidahl, MD, PhD, professor of clinical physiology at the Sahlgrenska University Hospitals in Goteborg, Sweden and his colleagues measured N-BNP levels in 609 patients with heart attack or chest pain (also known as acute coronary syndromes or ACS) that were admitted to the hospital between 1995 and 2000.

After an average of about four years of follow-up, they found that N-BNP levels were significantly lower in survivors than those who had died during the study. And the risk associated with high N-BNP levels continued to be significant even after adjusting for the

patient's age or history of heart failure.

Researchers say the findings are especially significant because this marker also predicted the risk of death even among patients without any other measurable signs of damage to the heart.

In an editorial that accompanies the study, James A. de Lemos, MD, of the university of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas and David A. Morrow, MD, MPH, of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, say this resolves many important questions about the use of BNP as a indication of heart risk .

They write that the "magnitude of risk relationship associated with BNP is telling us something that we did not previously know about factors associated with risk in patients with ACS."

By: Jennifer Warner

The Facts About The St. Louis Records File

The National Archives and Records Administration is the official depository for records of military personnel separated from the United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corp, and Navy. The records are housed in three locations: the National Archives Building in Washington D.C., the Washington National Records Center in Suitland, Md, and the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St Louis, Mo. The NPRC contains records relating to :

U.S. Army officers separated after June 30, 1917, and enlisted Army personnel separated after Oct. 31, 1912.

U.S. Air Force officers and enlisted personnel separated after Sept. 1947

U.S. Naval officers separated after 1902 and naval enlisted personnel separated after 1885.

U.S. Marine Corp officers separated after 1895 and enlisted personnel separated after 1904.

U.S. Coast Guard officers separated 1928 and enlisted personnel separated after 1914.

Civilian employees of predecessor agencies (Revenue Cutter Service, Life-Saving Service, and Lighthouse Service) of the U.S. Coast Guard from 1864-1919.

The Fire :

A fire at the NPRC in St. Louis on July 12, 1973, destroyed about 80 percent of the records for Army personnel discharged between Nov 1, 1912, and Jan 1, 1960. About 75% of the records for the Air Force personnel with surnames from "Hubbard " through "Z " discharged between Sept 25, 1947 and Jan 1, 1964, were also destroyed.

What was Lost :

It is hard to determine exactly what was lost in the fire, because : There were no indexes to the blocks of records involved. The records were merely filed in alphabetical order for the following groups :

World War I : Army Sept. 7, 1939 to Nov. 1, 1912

World War II : Army Dec. 31, 1946 to Sept. 8, 1939

Post World War II : Army Dec 31, 1959 to Jan 1, 1947; Air Force : Dec 31, 1963 to Sep 25, 1947.

Millions of records, especially medical records, had been withdrawn from all three groups and loaned to the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) prior to the fire. The fact that one's records are not in NPRC does not mean the records were not destroyed in the fire.

[Cont. pg 8 »](#)

Golden Pen Award

It was a normal Thursday morning business meeting at our real-estate office. No big deal. Before the meeting we hung around the bagel table as usual, with our coffee. He stood aside, looking a little shy and awkward and very young, a new face in a room of extroverted sales people. An average looking guy, maybe 5'-8". A clean-cut, sweet faced kid. I went over to chat with him. Maybe he was a new salesman?

He said he was just back from Kabul, Afghanistan. A Marine. Our office (and a local school) had been supportive by sending letters to him and other troops, which he had posted on the American Embassy door in Kabul. He stood guard there for four months and was shot at daily.

He had come to our office to thank us for our support, and all of the letters during those scary times. I couldn't believe my ears. He wanted to thank us? We should be thanking him. But how? How can I ever show him my appreciation?

At the end of the sales meeting, he stepped quietly forward, no incredible hulk. As a matter of fact, he looked for all the world 15 years old to me. (The older I get the younger they look) This young Marine, this cleaned faced boy, had no qualms stepping up to the plate and dodging bullets so that I might enjoy the freedom to live a peaceful life in the land of the free. No matter the risk.

[Cont. pg 8 »](#)

Records File (cont.)

Reconstruction of Lost Records : If a veteran is advised that his or her records may have been lost in the fire, he or she may send photo copies of any documents they possess to the NPRC, particularly separation documents. The address is **National Personnel Records Center, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Blvd., St Louis, MO 63132.** This enables the NPRC to re-establish files by adding those documents to the computerized index and filing them permanently.

Alternate Sources of Military Service Data: In the event a veteran does not have any records in his possession, the essential military service data maybe available from a number of alternate sources.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) maintains records on veterans whose military records were affected by the fire if the veteran filed a claim prior to July 1973.

Service information may also be found in various kinds of "organizational" records such as unit morning reports, payrolls and military orders on file at the NPRC or other National Archives and Records Administration facilities.

There also is a great deal of information available in records of the State Adjutants General, and other state veterans service offices.

By using alternate sources, NPRC may often be able to reconstruct a veteran's beginning and ending dates of active service, while in service, time lost while on active duty, and periods of hospitalization. NPRC is usually able to issue NA Form 103038, "Certification of Military Service", considered the equivalent of a Form DD 214, "Report of Separation From Active Duty, for the purposes of establishing eligibility for veterans benefits.

Necessary Information for File Reconstruction :

The key to reconstructing military data is to give the NPRC enough specific information so staff can properly search various sources.

Required information is as follows;

- Full name used during military service
- Branch of Service
- Approximate dates of service
- Service number
- Place of entry into service
- Last unit of assignment , and
- Place of Discharge

Submitted by: R Morgan

Golden Pen Award (cont.)

Suddenly, the most stressful concerns of my life seemed as nothing, my complacency flew right out the window with his every word. Somewhere, he had taken the words honor, courage and commitment into his very soul and laid his life on the line daily for me and us. A man of principle. He wants to do it . Relishes it. And he came to thank us? For a few letters?

I fought back the tears as he spoke briefly and softly. He walked forward to our manager and placed a properly folded American flag in his hands. It had flown over the Embassy. He said thanks again.

You could hear a pin drop. As I looked around I saw red faces everywhere fighting back tears. In a heartbeat, my disillusionment with young people today quickly vanished. In ordinary homes, in ordinary towns, kids like him are growing up proud to be American and willing to die for it.

Wow! We'll frame the flag and put it in the lobby. But I realize I rubbed shoulders with greatness in the flesh and in the twinkling of an eye my life is forever changed. His name is Michael Menedez, a corporal in the USMC.

We are a great nation. We know because the makings of it walked into my office that day.

Ann Baker - Huntington Beach

H appy H oliday

Wishes for all

National Newsletter Editor

WW Cater