

THE

RED DIAMOND

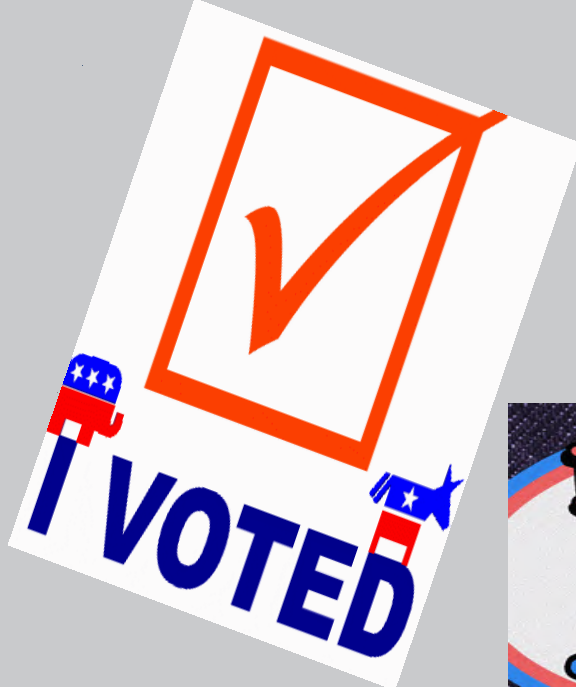


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"WE WILL"

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT LARRY BURNETT

First I want to thank Bud for a wonderful Society Reunion in Harrisburg, Penn. Was great to see old friends and to meet some new Red Devil Brothers from all over the country. Hope and pray everyone made it home safe. Wife and I truly enjoyed ourselves and so happy our daughter drove us there and back.

Great job Bud. Hotel was great as was the tours. I had never been to neither of the places before but I thought Gettysburg was very interesting and amazing at what the soldiers endured and the bravery that they went through. As I said before, I am glad the reunion wasn't the following week. As many would of had a terrible time getting back home.

Hope to see everyone in KC, Mo. next year. So set your calendar for Sept 18, 25 to Sept 22, 25 and feel free to come a day or two early and if you choose stay a day or two later. So soon as I can I will let everyone know more about the KC Reunion as for the tours.

Not really much more to say. Wife is doing a lot better. Finally over the radiation effects buy still trying to get her the right meds that she will be taking. I never really understood all that is involved with her cancer. So much more than my Prostrate cancer ever was. I have been free of it since 2007. Don't be shy about it. The alternative isn't good. Get your checkups now if you haven't already. Much easier to treat when caught early.

If some of you haven't noticed. I been having a terrible time with posting on the Society website. Could have to do with my page that I've had for a long time. I believe it was hacked. With help from my kids I have a new one. So am having to send out all new friend requests. That in itself is tricky for me. Most have been responding "We are already friends. So I just deleted it." But best to be safe than sorry.

Larry Burnett

Shot over and splash

WORD FROM OUR 1ST VICE PRESIDENT LEE AANONSON

As I write this article, I am attending a reunion at Ft. Benning/Ft Moore GA. I attended the NCO training course ("Shake and Bake") here in 1968. I'm not sure how long their reunions have been held. I heard about them from Bud Russell a couple of years ago but haven't been able to attend one until this year. I met guys from a lot of the other units that were in Viet Nam and some that were lucky enough to not have spent a year a year there. All in all, what a great bunch of people, many of whom met here for the first time.

I feel the same about the men and women of the Society of the Fifth Division. Also, a great bunch of people, helpful and friendly beyond description! I was fortunate to see an ad in the American Legion magazine or maybe it was the VFW magazine for their reunion a few years ago. There I first so many of you and we became friends. I met up with Jay Balderson who was a class mate of mine at Ft. Benning and assigned to the 1/11 of the Fifth Inf. Division and went over to Viet Nam with the Division in July of 1968. We hadn't seen each other since. Then Fifty years later we bump into each other at the annual reunion and became friends again. Through that reunion I met many other men that served with the Fifth after we left. It was also because of that reunion that I reached out and reconnected with another great Veteran Alan Ogawa. I was able to reminisce with him about some common experiences we went through together over there. After I left the unit Allan went through some very rough actions and shared some of those experiences with me. He and Jay are two of my Heros.

The point I'm trying to get at is these reunions are a vehicle for getting back some of the memories we lost over the years and learning from others that went through the same things. Some of us saw some very horrific things and some maybe not as much, but we can all agree that "All gave some and some gave All". When we get together, may we never forget those that gave All.

Let's always remember to treat each other with respect and extend the hand of friendship and forgiveness, no matter what each believes. We all served and love our country and made sacrifices in one way or another to that end. We are all brothers. "No man goes his way alone. That which we send into the lives of others, comes back into our own". Life is an Adventure and everyday is a Gift. Reach Out. God Bless and Keep you All from harm.

Lee Aaronson



Greetings from the Second Vice President, Dennis Coulter

I am honored to have been elected your Second Vice President for 2024-25. This office is dedicated to preparing for another annual reunion. This time, it is the reunion for 2027-28.

Many of you know me from being The Society Quartermaster for the last several years. My other history is this. I enlisted in The Army for two years in February, 1969 when I was 18. I attended Basic, AIT, and OJT MP training at Fort Ord. Late August, 1969 my orders came down for Vietnam. I reported as ordered and landed in Vietnam mid-September.

The first eight months of my deployment was based out of Dong Ha. Our assignment was to patrol west of Dong Ha in the daytime and Dong Ha City at night. A couple of the senior squad members such as Ray Naughton and Dennis Bringham taught me a lot. As they rotated out or into other assignments, I became one of the senior members of that squad. Late September, 1969 I rotated out and received the 150-day drop.

Four years later I had earned a degree in Physical Education from Southwest Missouri State University. I became a Program Director and later Executive Director at The Springfield YMCA. Along the way I met my wife, Terrie. We have now been married 44 years. We have two sons and five grandchildren.

A few years later, a career change took me to State Farm Insurance. At the time of my retirement in 2012, I was an Agency Field Executive assigned in Southeast Kansas. We moved back to Springfield to be near family. It is early into preparation for the 2027-28 reunion. Likely that reunion will be in Missouri. Hotels that meet our requirements are sometimes hard to find. More on that location in another issue.

Welcome home!



A Sermon from our Chaplain Ron VanBeek

Chaplain Message - Christian

Text: I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. Luke 19:40

Today we focus on the fateful day, that the bribing High Priest, met the True High Priest, and condemned Him, The Son of God, to death on the Cross. Never has there been a greater injustice, but all this sin did not happen in a vacuum. For 400 years God's Word had been forsaken more and more, each year.

Yes, how greatly Christendom, and the office of the high priest had deteriorated into sin, during that 400 years of silence, the time period between the Old Testament and the New Testament. This was the time of the 2nd Temple, which differed so radically from the time of the 1st Temple. Yes, We read of How the old men still alive, who had seen the Glory of the 1st Temple, wept bitterly as the 2nd Temple was dedicated, for it was such an inferior building, compared to the 1st Temple. However, In a mysterious way, this 2nd Temple would actually be more Glorious than the 1st, because Jesus, The Son of God, would walk into this Temple.

But, it was not just the physical appearance of the inferiority of the 2nd Temple, but how much more important it was that the Spiritual condition of the 2nd Temple was so reduced from what it once was, and from what God intended it to be. Yes, during the time of the 400 years, before the birth of Christ, God sent no prophet to the Christendom of Israel, to instruct them and warn them. None. Yes, They still had God's Word, but sadly, Christendom was reduced to small, scattered flocks hiding in caves, mountains and isolated places, and it seemed as if God had abandon the Christian church.

But, sadly the reality was that, the Christian Church had abandon God. They had sinned and forsaken God and His Word. No, God had not moved; for His Word is immutable, and not one jot or tittle can fall from it. But, it actually was the Church, who had moved away from God. Christendom had sadly invented their own man-made religion, and syncretically mixed heathenism, with God's Word, which greatly offends Him.

From history, we read of horrific things happening during these 400 years, for the nation of Israel was a tiny nation, ruled by giant empires around them, like the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, Greeks and Romans. Yes, Israel were like a play ball, bounced hither and thither, as the tides of these empires changed so often. Sadly, Israel constantly had to pay huge taxes and tribute, to one nation or another, as they rose to power. Naturally, this great political instability led to great abuses, at every level, but especially Christianity.

Sadly, history tells us that most of the Temple's high priests and high religious offices, during that time, held their religious office simply because they paid the highest bribes to the King in Power. Fortunately, the Maccabees, were the one great exception to this purchasing of a church office, Simony. For example, under King Herod, who ruled for Rome during the time when Jesus walk for 33 years on earth, 68 of the Sanhedrin, the Ruling Body of The Church had purchased their Christian office, and had no spiritual insight, to occupy the Seat of Moses. Moreover, five of the High Priests, during that time, openly purchase their high Christian office, and ruled over The Church. Yes, tragically these High Priest, included Annas, and Ciaphas, who condemned Jesus to death, whom Jesus called devils.

TAPS

Gene Kelly died 8/27/23 A Co. - 1/61

2. Joe Ed Gorskie died 1/19/24

D Co - 1/11

3. Charles Wilson died 7/1/24 HHC - Flame Platoon

4. Terry E. Schaffer died 8/16/24 5th Division

5. Michael Turk Johnson died 8/22/24 D - 1/11

6. Mike Johnson died 8/9/24 D - 1/11

7. Bobby Morton died 8/26/24 B Co. 1/61

8. Ken Taggard died 8/26/24 D Co. 1/11

9. Glen A. Bowers died 7/1/24 A Trp 4th Squad- 12th Calvary

10. Angeline Young died 4/16/22 Wife - Past President

Robert A. Young

75th Ranger Battalion; P Co. - Helicopter Shot Down upon insertion; all 8 perished - Dec. 21, 1969 - (3 from Pennsylvania)

a. Roy J. Burke

b. David Leon Barber

c. Thomas Joseph Dowd

Flags Folded for:

11. Laurance Anthony Cunningham - E-6; C Co.

Daughter Linda Cunningham present

12. Richard Dennis Joy - KIA - 6/20/69 - B. Co. 1/61 - Mary Ellen Joy/ Albrecht, sister present

13. Gene Kelly - A Co. - 1/61

Lou Pepi present

14. Raymond U. Schlamp died 9/11/45 WWII - KIA - MIA -

Body found but not officially identified for 79 years

Private First Class - Company G. - 2nd Battalion - 11th Infantry 5th Infantry - KIA near Dornot, France - age 28 - His remains

found, identified by DNA and reburied in Dubuque, IA on March

12, 2024, beside his mother.

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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Marie Burnett wife of our 1st Vice President Larry



VENTING

from the Editor
of The Red Diamond

DID YOU SEE THE FRONT PAGE
THE COVER OF THE RED
DIAMOND. MAYBE YOU SHOULD
LOOK AGAIN. THERE IS A RIGHT,
AS AN AMERICAN, LIVING IN A
FREE COUNTRY THAT YOU
SHOULD NEVER EVER TAKE
FOR GRANTED. WITHOUT THIS
RIGHT, I CAN NOT IMAGINE
WHAT I WOULD BE DOING. I
FOR ONE KNOW THAT ALL
THINGS ARE NOT PERFECT
BUT UNTIL SOMEONE COMES
UP WITH SOMETHING BETTER
GET OFF YOUR REAR END AND

READ PAGE 1

Hi all!

I wanted to share a newspaper story about Dan Santagata from yesterday's NY Post. He is doing well. We are having a party for him in a few weeks. He really enjoyed this spontaneous request from the NY Post! His actual birthday is 8/23. We'll be with them then and have an ice cream cake!

thanks,
keith hopkins (dan's stepson)

On Monday, August 19, 2024, 10:21 PM, Nancy Mueller <nancybill1028@aol.com> wrote:

Dear Sir. This is to inform the division that my most beloved mother Angeline Young has passed away.. Sorry this is so late with this announcement. Mom died April 16, 2022 at the age of 97. My father, the late Robert A. Young was Past President in 1997 to 1978. Mom and dad so enjoyed the reunions.

We even attended many reunions with them. It was the highlight of their life. Again I am sorry for delay in sending this announcement. Best regards from Nancy C. Mueller

My name is Gary Fox. I am a lifetime member. While reviewing some items I had saved concerning my time with A 1/61. I discovered an article the Red Diamond that was published when it was still in hard copy.

It is on page 13 of the November 2014 issue. I'm not sure of the author. On the bottom of the page in bold writing it starts with Dan Saarsfield. It is about an operation on which on our tracks was driven into a stream and stuck. It states " When Captain Gallagher rode up and saw us dead in the water, he asked who told us to cross at such a poor ford. In unison we both said, "HIM" as we pointed at the FO, 1LT Keven McGrath." I was one of Captain Gallaghers RTOs. I remember an instance like this. I assure you it was not 1Lt Kevin McGrath. I do not recall his name but, it was the FO who McGrath replaced. I would appreciate if you would please publish a correction.

I was there and Captain Gallagher did have me and some other GIs throw the Lt into the stream. There is some other mistakes in the article.

Gentlemen, we are sold out on the license plates. Please remove this item from the Quartermaster online and Red Diamond pages. Thanks for all you do.

During the reunion on Friday we didn't do the Hershey tour. Instead, Ernie and Jane Balentine, my wife, Andy, and I took a taxi into Harrisburg, the capital of Pennsylvania. The PA Capital Building is considered to be one of the most beautiful in the country... for good reason. Being Friday, it was open to the public and we walked around on a self guided tour that included senate chambers taking gorgeous pictures throughout. From the Capitol we crossed the street to a museum of Pennsylvania History that spans from dinosaurs to modern times. We saw only a fraction, focusing on Native Americans, the coal and steel industries and turnpike construction. Because Ernie and I had VA ID we got in free and our wives only paid the \$6 senior rate.

We had a wonderful time at the reunion. The Gettysburg tour was excellent. By the way, does everyone realize how close Harrisburg is to the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant? Remember that close call? We had a great view from the air flying in. Hopefully we'll all be able to meet again next year in Kansas city.

Stan Shaffer
5/4 Arty A Btry

'REST IN PEACE WITH THE WARRIORS:'

Michigan infantryman saved 100 soldiers in Vietnam

BY RON VAN BEEK May 26, 2024

This stone marks the gravesite of Michael P. McQueer.

I first met Michael Patrick McQueer on his first day in Vietnam, as he joined the 5th Infantry Division. He had been living a happy life with his extended family, since birth, in his home community of Traverse City, Michigan. At 18, he volunteered to serve in the U.S. Army to help win the Vietnam War. His life was changed forever.

D Company was positioned near the demilitarized zone, or DMZ, as far north as you could go in free South Vietnam. Two miles in the distance, we could see the huge red

Communist North Vietnam flag waving, marking North Vietnam's southern border, and armed with 5,000 border guards, the 27th NVA Regiment. We, with our 100 soldiers, were then encamped on Mutter's Ridge, the famous rocky mountainous ridge in I Corp, that stretched along the

Special to the Record-Eagle/Ron Van Beek

DMZ. In that small, hostile area, more bullets, bombs, artillery, grenades, claymores, etc. were fired and more American soldiers died in combat than any other place in Vietnam.

Michael came to our company on the resupply helicopter, near the end of the day. His appearance made an impression on us because, for a moment, we could picture in him the typical America, and the ideal situation we dreamed of one day returning to: The Glorious America, which he had just departed from hours ago.

Our company, D Company, had fought the enemy for nearly 70 days in the mud and the jungle in brutal, no-holds-barred, deadly battles. D Company had fought the elements and the enemy, without a break, without a hot meal, without a shower, without a change of clothing, without relief. Day and night, we endured unspeakable hardship, sleepless nights, hordes of mosquitoes, without most of the elementary comforts of life, and we were exhausted, out of food, out of ammunition, short of men and frightened of the huge battle that was coming.

Michael squeezed in with our company resupply of C-rations, supplies, bullets, bombs grenades, etc. The Huey helicopter came in fast and hot, spending a minimal amount of seconds on the ground. A touch-and-go maneuver, allowing just enough time to throw everything off — for Army intelligence had routinely informed us there were 5,000 enemy soldiers, armed with huge weapons, hidden near us and in the terrain all around us.

Enemy soldiers very much wanted each of us Americans dead for the \$13000 bounty their government gave them. To shoot down a helicopter was the ultimate enemy prize.

Seeing Michael leap out of that helicopter, the epitome of an All-American, sent a shock through me. I can still remember seeing him, even though it is now 55 years later. Here was a young, handsome soldier, full of life, fresh from America, the picture of health and everything

American. He was clean-cut. He was wearing a brand-new uniform. He was freshly shaved. He had a short haircut something radically different from us 100 men who had become one with the jungle, barely above animals in our daily battle to survive. He was muscular and handsome, proud to be a soldier, eager to contribute his fair share, determined to help America fight communists and win this horrible war.

He was a sight for sore eyes.

My first impression was, "Oh, you poor kid. You are just a kid." (I was 19). He had just landed in the worst place in Vietnam at the worst possible time in the worst possible situation as a new soldier, just as a major battle was forming all around us. Nearly 1,500 new soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam, and nearly 1,000 were killed on their last day in Vietnam. War is always brutal, and there was no safe place in Vietnam at any time during that war. Inexperience was the most deadly factor, which so often contributed to many deaths in combat. War allows no mistakes, and the Vietnam War was no exception.

It wasn't just me who was shocked seeing Michael. All 100 of us in D Company must have stopped for they hadn't seen a normal human being coming from the "world," America, in such a long time. The strange sight of such a fresh, young, clean-cut normal human was something D Company hadn't expected, and every one of our 100 men must have briefly thought, "Wow, I hope this fresh young kid makes it," before they went back to work, building up our protective defensive perimeter. We watched out for each other.

But Michael must have been the most shocked as he looked around in wonder and amazement at his strange new home. He saw 100 pathetic, war-weary men; muddy, bloody, sick, exhausted soldiers. Our uniforms were torn, filthy, rotting off our backs, as we bore the battle scars, effects and wear and tear of fighting nearly 70 days against a relentless enemy in the unforgiving jungle without a break.

He must have thought, "What kind of group, what kind of situation, did I just join? They look more like animals than men." He was right. Often, infantrymen, fighting daily for survival, do become like animals, fighting against the elements, fighting against the ever-present enemy, fighting for our own lives while fighting for our beloved country and, most of all, for our loved ones back home in America.

Night was coming fast, and we had to quickly dig in to get ready for any enemy assault that might be coming for we were in "very bad country." It was decided since Michael was the newest soldier, fresh from America, to place him and his dug foxhole in a position in the safest place on our perimeter. Everyone remembered their first night of combat in Vietnam, where each of us was fearing the worst, imagining the worst and convinced we saw the enemy creeping up on us.

To survive your first night in Vietnam as an infantryman was celebrated, as now you only had 364 more days and nights to go. Every new morning was a victory, and every day religiously counted off on our short-time calendars. His foxhole was placed near a thick thicket, where it would be the most difficult for the enemy to come through. As night fell, we tried to welcome him into D Company with a quick "hello," a friendly pat and a kind word, but his fears must have been great. Being in a strange country, to kill other human beings and being shot at by other humans does that to any soldier.

Combat is the ultimate hunting game that has no comparison.

Now, it was quiet; night had settled in fast with its ominous forbearing, as everyone was listening for danger. It was a few hours later, in the pitch dark, Michael came crawling up to the lieutenant and said in a controlled whisper, "I got movement of men coming at me; I can hear them coming."

We all heard this and smiled to ourselves, thinking, "Sure, Michael, you got movement below you." We had put him in the safest place in our perimeter. Anyone coming through that thicket would make a ton of noise. Who doesn't imagine this in their first night? The lieutenant patted him on the back to calm his nerves. He gently reassured him to go back to his position and listen more closely. He said, "Michael, everyone imagines they have enemy soldiers coming at them on their first night in Vietnam. Come back if you hear any more noise."

Humbled, Michael crawled back to his foxhole. But, 20 minutes later, he crawled back and says more loudly, more urgently, "I got movement of men in front of me." He got sent back again, but then 5 minutes later, he is back again, nearly hysterical with fear. He said, "I tell you, there are enemy soldiers coming at my foxhole. I can hear them. I am going to start shooting." The lieutenant, now irritated, said sternly, "Michael, I will crawl back with you, with our new starlight scope, and take a look, but you have to calm down and realize everybody hears things in their first night."

A starlight scope was the newest invention of the Army at that time. It could greatly magnify the light of the stars so that you could look through it in pitch darkness and see pea green shadows of approaching enemy soldiers.

The lieutenant crawled to Michael's foxhole and lifted up the starlight scope, took one look, dropped it and shouted loudly to all 100 men, "Fire, fire, fire." Every one of our soldiers opened up with every weapon we had and poured gunfire and explosives into the dark night in front of us. After we are almost out of bullets, finally, the captain calls for a cease-fire, and we spent the rest of the night on edge on 100% alert. Constant artillery echoed around us, as we attempted to kill those retreating. It was a very tense night, with no sleep. In the morning, at first light, we saw that we had killed seven enemy soldiers only a few feet in front of our guns; they had dragged many more bodies away during the night. An alert Michael McQueer had saved us that night. The enemy soldiers had fooled all of us veterans. They had already been hiding in that thicket.

Michael McQueer became a hero on his first night in Vietnam. By his diligent watchfulness, he had alerted our leaders and saved our 100 men of D Company from certain death.

Unknown to us, these enemy soldiers were hiding inside that thicket where we had placed

Michael's foxhole. The enemy was hiding, waiting for an opportunity to execute their "Flower Blossom" strategy, where they would penetrate into the perimeter in one spot, get inside of the circle of men and trap the perimeter from both inside and outside, with explosives, bullets and RPGs. It is one of the deadliest military strategies and it was often successful. Only because of Michael's alertness and resolve did most of the 100 men return to America at the end of their tour, including me.

But Michael McQueer didn't have long to be a hero. Two days later, we were encamped on Hill 162, which was supposed to be our last day in the field, where we would be helicoptered back to our base camp for a few days' rest. All we had to do was to move over to Hill 161, which was a quarter of a mile away. Michael was going to walk at the head of the column that day. We were hesitant to put him in that vulnerable position, as point man, because he was so new, but he insisted that he was going to pull his load, just like every other soldier.

It was 9 a.m., we had just had breakfast, and we were looking forward to going back for a rest at our home basecamp at the end of this day, after 70 straight days in the field. All 100 men were saddling up with their equipment and weapons, heading for our destination in a single line, when suddenly machine gun fire and AK-47 bullets raked our company. The enemy, the 27th NVA Regiment, during the night has set up an ambush, rightly judging that we were going to that destination. Michael McQueer, in the head of this column, and 21-year-old Sgt. Ruben Carbajal of El Paso, Texas, were killed immediately.

We had bumped into the front line of the 27th NVA Regiment that was forming for another battle two days later, which is another story. We fought all day on Hill 162, hitting the enemy with everything we had. Planes dove in with bombs, gunships raked the area, grenades, machine-gun fire bombarded that whole area as we fought to defeat their attack and retrieve Michael and Ruben's bodies. Finally, we assaulted Hill 161 and drove the enemy back enough to bring their bullet-riddled bodies back. This was only the first day of a vicious three-day battle, but that's another story for another day.

Fifty-five years later, as I am writing this narrative, I can feel the fear and still see the faces of Michael and Ruben on that awful morning as they walked past my foxhole, heading toward Hill 161. In a strange mixup of orders, Ruben had walked in my place that fateful morning.

In the way of God's Providence, Michael and Ruben would die in that firefight, but I would miraculously live to write about this battle 55 years later. Michael McQueer was a hero on his first night in Vietnam. A Michigan hero.

Michael Patrick McQueer was born April 14, 1951, and died Nov. 11, 1969. He is buried at the Grand Traverse Memorial Gardens. His name is inscribed on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. at location 16W/59.

At our last 5th Infantry Division reunion, we folded and dedicated an American flag, which we hope to present to the McQueer family on this coming Monday, Memorial Day.

About the author: Ron Van Beek is the national chaplain for the United States Army's Society of the Fifth Division.

All - I presented Joe with his Man of the Year award tonight along with his shirt and hat. To say the least he was very surprised and very grateful for this recognition.

Bob

"No free man shall ever be debarred the use of arms." - Thomas Jefferson

Sent from my iPad

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While around one in three people in the U.S. over the age of 75 are taking statins to lower cholesterol and reduce risk of heart attack, the benefits for older adults without heart disease are not fully understood. The PREVENTABLE trial was established to help answer this question.

This is expected to be the largest-ever health study in older adults with a goal of understanding whether statins can help us live healthily longer. VA is recruiting volunteers nationwide for this trial at select VA facilities across the country. More than 40 VA hospitals are joining 100 sites across the nation to enroll 20,000 participants.

You are invited to join PREVENTABLE to update treatment guidelines and determine if statins can help adults aged 75 and over without cardiovascular disease live better by preventing dementia, disability and heart disease. The study designed to evaluate statins' effectiveness under real-life conditions, making participation easy for research volunteers.

As a research study participant, you will help us:

Assess the usefulness of statins for prolonging healthy life years and primary cardiovascular prevention in adults over age 75.

Understand the usefulness of statins in addressing other common conditions, such as mild cognitive impairment, dementia and physical disability.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. You will go through an informed-consent process that ensures you understand the risks and benefits of joining before committing to this study.

What should you expect if you decide to participate?

Participating in PREVENTABLE is easy. You can enroll remotely, receive the study drug via mail and complete follow-up visits by phone. It's important for you to know the study will last approximately five years.

If you join the trial, you will:

Have blood drawn.

Do brief memory and physical tests.

Have one annual follow-up phone call.

Be randomized to take the study drug or the placebo.

Take one pill daily.

You can join the study or learn more (in English and Spanish) by calling 833-385-3899 or by visiting the study website.

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

— Amended 25 September 2022 —

— ARTICLE 1 —

"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 afore mentioned 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.

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Society of the Fifth Division, U.S. Army
Minutes of General Business Meeting
Sunday, September 22, 2024, Harrisburg, PA

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 Bud Wagner at the Red Lion Inn & Suites, 4751 Lindle Rd, Harrisburg, PA. President Wagner welcomed everyone and thanked all the volunteers for all their work and efforts in assuring we all had a successful annual reunion.

The Invocation was made by National Chaplain Ron Van Beek and Past National President Gary Haverman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The National Secretary Scott Murrah was absent & excused and the Roll Call was taken by President Wagner, with the following officers present: National President Bud Wagner, National First Vice President Larry Burnett, National Second Vice President Lee Aanonsen, 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 Hal Roller, in his first year on the Board as a Past National President, Past National President Gary Haverman in his second year on the Board as a Past National President and Quartermaster Dennis Coulter.

Absent & excused from the business meeting were National Secretary Scott Murrah and Web Administrator Joe Boman.

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

Officer Reports

National President: Bud Wagner welcomed everyone and thanked all the volunteers for all their work and efforts in assuring we all had a successful annual reunion. President Wagner was most grateful and he continued to emphasize his appreciation throughout the meeting.

National First 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 International Airport, 8801 NW 112th Street, Kansas City, MO 64153. The hotel phone number is: 816-801-4012. Larry stated that the discounted room rates will be available for early arrivals & after reunion departures. Larry will begin looking for recommendations from Armed Forces Reunion for Friday and Saturday tours. Larry shared that his wife Marie has completed her medical treatments and is on the road to recovery.

National Second Vice President: Lee Aanonsen reported that he prefers the 2026 reunion will be held somewhere in the Green Bay, WI area. Planning the hotel location is somewhat dependent on the football schedule for the National Football Conference Green Bay Packers. Lee is investigating various options at this time. It was suggested by Past National President Hall Roller that Lee might consider the September reunion dates to occur during the week, which appeared to be received favorably.

On the lighter side, since there were many variations to the pronunciation of Lee's last name "Aanonsen" Lee suggested that we try to remember the aspirin "Anacin (NSAID) Pain

Reliever" tablet. While "Anacin" relieves headaches, Lee Aanonsen (pronounced the same way) usually gives headaches! Lee's comparison created a burst of laughter! Lee also noted that if you receive a cell phone call from someone named "Dad's iPhone", it's Lee and be sure to answer. Lee stated that his daughter set up Lee's iPhone which created another burst of laughter!

National Secretary: no report.

National Treasurer: George Shoener reported an update on the Society finances: the Society has a checking balance of \$49,883.82 and an investment savings account balance of \$58,393.81 for a total balance of \$108,277.63. The Society staggers the maturity of the CDs so that they continually come due and give us the benefit to move with the market condition. 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 annually.

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 stated that Society Member Phil Bienvenue visited and reviewed the archives as a member of the Archive Preservation Committee co-chaired by Society members Lou Pepi and Bob Dudley. Roger assured the membership that he would always protect the Society's current archives.

National Chaplain: Ron Van Beek reported that Veteran Suicide Prevention continues to be our mission. 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 and assure the veterans that life is worth living. Ron continues during the year to visit and talk about suicide prevention in schools and churches. Ron must rely on the families of our deceased members and Society members to advise Ron when members pass away. Otherwise, Ron would have no way of knowing to include these veterans in the annual Memorial of the Roses Ceremony.

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.

Phil noted that the November 2023 issue of the Red Diamond contained the Minutes from the September 10, 2023 Society General Business Meeting and the issue also contained a copy of the Society's Constitution. Phil also stated that Society's Best Practices Planning Guide is available to any member who is considering leadership positions in the Society. The Guide was started in 2007 and reflects a compilation of information provided by Past Presidents, other Officers and others. Phil also encouraged attendance to the annual two-hour slide presentation of the Society's 5th Division Killed in Action, held from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon.

National Editor: Dave Kocan reported that being Editor is a fun job. Dave said "send your articles in and I'll get them published". Dave appreciates everyone's support in getting articles in on time. When sending pictures, please include captions and Dave will copy & paste

exactly as articles are submitted. Mike Sperling & Lou Pepi noted that Dave's responsibility as Editor is critically important and the Society saves in excess of \$13,000/year by publishing the Red Diamond electronically. Dave still mails about 20+ hard-copies of the Red Diamond each quarter to those without computers, etc. Dave sends a notice for continuation to the hard-copy users each year and if you don't respond to Dave's notice, he will drop your name for the hard-copy mailing list. The Red Diamond publication is a life-line for communicating in the Society. The front cover of every issue reflects the due date for articles for the next issue.

Past National President Hal Roller (in his first year as Past National President on the Executive Board): No Report as Past National President but Hal will have a report as the Nominating Committee Chairman.

Past National President Gary Haverman: (in his second year as Past National President on the Executive Board): Gary commented that he is completing five years in the Society Leadership positions and it has been a wonderful experience and opportunity and he thanked everyone for their continued support during his five years in the Leadership. Gary encouraged all members to participate in the Society Leadership.

Society Nominating Committee: Past National President Hal Roller, in his first year as Past National President on the Executive Board is the Nominating Committee Chairman.

Hal presented the propose Slate of Officers for the Society year 2024 – 2025 as follows:

Elected Positions:

National President – Larry Burnett

National First Vice President – Lee Aanonsen

National Second Vice President – Dennis Coulter

National Secretary – Scott Murrah

National Treasurer – George Shoener

National Historian – Roger Allen

National Chaplain – Ron Van Book

National Judge Advocate – Steve Wheat

National Editor – Dave Kocan

Past National President – Bud Wagner (first year as Executive Board member and incoming Nominating Committee Chairman)

Past National President Hal Roller (2nd year as Executive Board member and incoming Installation Officer)

Appointed Positions:

National Quartermaster – Dennis Coulter

National Web Administrator – Joe Boman

Nominations from the floor were called for three times. No floor nominations were offered. A motion was made that the slate of officers as presented be accepted. Motion was seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Society Archives Preservation Committee: Co-chairmen Lou Pepi and Bob Dudley gave a comprehensive update on their work to date on researching a plan of options for Dissolution of the Society in the event in years forward where it might be necessary to consider.

Additionally, committee member Phil Bienvenue visited National Historian Roger Allen and Phil reviewed the Society archives in its entirety.

Lou Pepi and Bob Dudley update included:

- If war were to occur, the 5th Division is likely to be on the short list of Divisions to be reactivated and thus creating a possible new class of prospective Society members.
- Center for Military History (CMH) could be a possible depository.
- Digitizing all Society Historical records (e.g. maps, books, documents, photos, etc.) could be costly but would make access to the archives more available and place into warehouse facility for safe keeping and electronic access.
- WW I Museum, Kansas City, MO would consider accepting Society documents related to WW I only.
- There have been conversations with Archival Depositories but these conversations are at early stages. It would be costly to digitize all Society records.
- The Society's collection of military documents and photos by soldiers are priceless.
- There may be Colleges that maintain military records that might offer assistance in digitizing records.
- Part of the research is to contact Archival Depositories with military concentrations.
- The Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA) is also looking at archiving all its documents, may offer a road map on how to proceed. Another possible for the Society.
- The Fifth Division was Inactivated and Reflagged as the 2nd Armor Division. The 5th Division was not Deactivated.
- The findings from the Committee will be summarized and sent to the Executive Board for possible next steps and/or actions.

Scholarship Program for the Society of the Fifth Division: George Shoener made a motion to approve a Scholarship Program for the Society of the Fifth Division (revised June 1, 2024) as presented in the comprehensive Scholarship Program Guide distributed by George Shoener at the meeting. The same proposed Scholarship Program was published in the August 2024 issue of the Red Diamond. The intent and spirit of the Scholarship Program is to benefit the children and grandchildren of all members, if qualified. George highlighted key factors in the Guide:

1. Criteria for Eligibility
2. Additional Criteria and Information
3. How to Apply
4. Judging, Determination and Notification of Scholarship Winners
5. The Scholarship Program
6. The Application

George indicated that while he would volunteer to serve as Treasurer of the Scholarship Program committee, someone must volunteer to be Chairperson of the Program who would also select members of the new committee. George was hopeful that someone would quickly step forward to lead this committee.

The motion to Approve a Scholarship Program for the Society of the Fifth Division was seconded and approved by the membership after discussion.

Quarter Master: Dennis Coulter reported quartermaster sales during the past year was about \$1,100 and sales so far for this reunion is already over \$2,000. Trucker hats suggested by J.J. Jackson are selling well. Dennis can do Special Orders (e.g. shirts with pockets, etc.) using the Special Orders form. Dennis displayed a Flag encased in a Flag Box

and suggested that we consider presenting Encased Flags to Memorial Service recipients. The additional costs for the Flag Box are marginal. Dennis purchases the American Flags from USA Flags, Kansas City, MO.

Special Report:

Web Administrator: Bob Dudley 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 and has made significant improvements over the years to the Society website.

Old Business: There was no Old Business.

New Business: Approved Scholarship Program for the Society of the Fifth Division (see description above).

For the Good of the Society:

1. To show appreciation for all the pro-bono work performed by Web Administrator Joe Boman, Bob Dudley suggested the Society gift Joe with a Society shirt and hat. The membership overwhelmingly agreed.
2. Robb Robertson reminded everyone that there continue to be rogue vendors on Facebook trying to sell Society merchandise. We should call them out when we can.
3. J.J. Jackson suggested we return to using the traditional Sign-In sheets by respective Regiment designation. Roger Allen will assure the Sign-In sheets will be available for the Kansas City reunion.
4. Lee Aanonsen inquired about the 2025 Fort Jackson weekend reunion for the 61st Mech Infantry Regiment and other invited members. Some inquiries will be made to the 61st Mech Infantry Regiment leadership at Fort Jackson to determine if these annual gatherings will continue to be hosted.

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 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Philip Maniscalco, National Judge Advocate

Acting as Secretary for National Secretary Scott Murrah

The vagina changes with age, just like the rest of your body. Hormonal changes over time affect the way your vagina feels, functions, and looks. These hormones are suppressed during prepuberty. An increase in estrogen causes the vulva (external female genitals) to change during puberty, or sexual maturation, around age 10–14. Pubic hair begins to grow and becomes thicker and curlier as you age.¹

Your body starts producing less estrogen as you enter perimenopause during your 40s and 50s. Perimenopause is the transition period before menopause. Most people enter menopause around age 52. Decreased estrogen may cause vaginal dryness and painful sex.² You may also notice lower libido due to fatigue, pain, and stress post-menopause.³

You can typically manage these changes at home, but reach out to a healthcare provider if you are concerned about vaginal changes or have discomfort. Read on to learn how your vagina changes with age and how to manage these changes.

The sharing of any non-VA information does not constitute an endorsement of products and services on the part of VA. Veterans should verify the information with the organization offering.

TERRA Search Promise has been completing POW/MIA research, recovery and repatriation missions since October 2020. Joining this unique mission allows Veterans to explore their service-connected past while influencing their own future.

“It is an honor for us to be involved in the global effort to bring our fallen comrades home to rest. We have a very real stake in the game,” said PJ Dermer, retired colonel and Terra Search Promise founder.

There are a variety of areas to serve from historical research to deployment. If your interests lie in military history, cultural and physical geography, archaeology, anthropology, project management, complex planning, logistics or leadership dynamics, please visit the Terra Search website for more information.

In fiscal year 2023, some 25,000 volunteers served more than 3.5 million hours at VA. Volunteers are a priceless asset to Veterans and VA.

Volunteering is good for your health, and it can enhance your overall mental, social and physical well-being. Volunteering also helps build stronger community connections, encourages physical activity and movement, and can alleviate loneliness, reduce depression and increase positive thinking.

Check out volunteer opportunities at your nearest VA .

As technology advances, scammers are becoming smarter in their attacks. VA is committed to protecting Veterans' benefits against fraudulent activity and raising awareness of the various cyber scams impacting Veterans and their beneficiaries.

Staying informed of evolving fraud tactics is important to protect yourself and your benefits. One of the newest ways fraudsters engage in cyber attacks is by using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, collectively referred to as generative AI and Large Language Models (LLM). These are systems that can create synthetic text (A type of data that is created using machine learning algorithms to generate new content that is similar in structure to existing data), images, source code and other forms of media at an incredible speed. Depending on the prompts given by the user, the outputs can range from realistic to stylized (Realistic outputs refer to lifelike and accurate models, while stylized outputs emphasize exaggerated features and depart from real-world accuracy). LLMs are an essential part of deep learning, which is the foundation of ChatGPT and other Natural Language Processing technologies currently receiving widespread attention. Veterans should be aware of this technology and its potential for accessing their personally identifiable information and potentially compromise their benefit payments.

Examples of generative AI scams

Creating fake identities or impersonating real people to access secure information and claims for benefits.
Developing convincing voice or video messages to be used in engineering attacks, such as making fraudulent changes to direct deposit information.

Automating phishing attacks by creating mass fake emails or text messages to trick Veterans into giving away sensitive information.

Veterans should be aware of cyber scams targeting their benefits, including phishing, identity theft, spoofing, email scams, ransomware, forgery, and wire and mail fraud.

VA recommends following these tips to practice safe online behavior and prevent fraud:

Screen emails carefully, and only open emails from senders you know and trust. Delete and block emails from unknown or suspicious senders.

Be cautious of popups and links on websites, emails and texts that can be used to infect your device with harmful malware.

Limit the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) you post online, such as your address, date of birth, workplace, or kinship details.

Delete old social media accounts and limit your online presence and available biographical information.

Maximize privacy settings on all active social media accounts to protect information from unknown users.

Do not accept friend or connection requests from individuals with only an online presence. Only add friends or connections you know and trust in real life, not those who you have only met online.

Download strong antivirus software to protect yourself from malware attacks.

Be aware of signs of a malware infection. If your computer runs unusually slowly or frequently crashes without explanation, it may be an indication it is infected with malware.

Never send bank information or payment to "online friends" or others. Scammers may threaten to destroy your files or data if you do not send

payment or banking information. If you are a victim of ransomware, do not respond to any threat and report the incident immediately.

VA is working to combat cyber threats and better safeguard Veterans' benefits. These actions include enhancing security around direct deposit changes, collaborating with Federal partner agencies, and developing communications to increase awareness around cyber fraud.

VA provides essential tools and resources to help you protect your data. To boost your cybersecurity awareness and safeguard your data, watch VA's Protecting Veteran Information video.

If you miss a VA benefits payment, identify a discrepancy in payments, or find suspicious activity with your direct deposit account, contact VA immediately at 1-800-827-1000. You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

To learn more about protecting Veterans from fraud, visit www.va.gov/VSAFE.

The use of the cricket on 6 June 1944 was the idea of Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, 101st Airborne Division ("Screaming Eagles") commander. Having jumped in Sicily with the 82d Airborne Division, he understood that his paratroopers would land in the dark, scattered among hedgerows in Normandy. The cricket would be used as a recognition device by the soldiers. Each paratrooper received a small, tin, child's toy that clicked when pressed. Once on the ground, a soldier could click once to signal that they were an American paratrooper. Two clicks in return meant a fellow Screaming Eagle was nearby. Once the paratroopers located each other, they could advance on their objectives. It took great courage for a paratrooper to use his cricket. Seventy-nine years later, these small toys are a reminder of the bravery and personal initiative of the paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division. General Taylor remembers landing in the hedgerows and hearing rustling. He drew his weapon and his cricket and clicked once. "Then I heard the click. That was the most pleasant sound I ever heard in the entire war."

To learn more about the Pratt Museum, visit <https://history.army.mil/museums/fieldMuseums/fortCampbell/index.html>.



Vietnam

The "agreement" ending the war and restoring peace in Vietnam was signed on January 27, 1973. This "Peace with Honor" agreement gave the North Vietnamese every substantial demand they wanted. At the end of "Operation Homecoming" in March 1973 and the release of only 591 American POW's, the families and friends of the men still missing were told to be patient. They were assured by U.S. officials that secret efforts to secure the release of those who remained alive and unaccounted for were continuing. Then on April 12, 1973, Dr. Roger Shields, then Chief Pentagon spokesman on the POW/MIA issue announced, "There is no reason to believe any American's missing remain alive in Indochina". With this announcement, the fate of more than 2500 American POWs was all but sealed. This statement became the official policy of the U.S. government. However, classified and unclassified documents confirm one startling fact; the Department of Defense in 1973, concluded beyond a reasonable doubt that several hundred living American POWs remained in captivity in Southeast Asia. This was one full year after DoD representatives said publicly that no American POWs remained alive in Southeast Asia. Once again, as in World II and Korea, U.S. officials began to deny the existence of live American POWs under the control of a communist government.

The Reality:

It is exceedingly difficult for the American public to believe that the government of the United States would leave live American soldiers in the hands of their enemy captors.

However, the evidence that American POWs are alive and remain in captivity today is not only overwhelming but compelling as well. The heartbreaking tragedy of this issue is that U.S. officials including our elected representatives are doing nothing substantive to bring these men home. Instead, officials of the State of Defense Departments continue to feed the American public a steady diet of distortions, half-truths, obfuscation and deceptions regarding the true facts of the POW/MIA issue. These agencies are so skilled at disseminating misinformation and confusing the issue that its easier for them to lie than to speak the truth. Under any circumstances, it is clear that if our government officials truly wanted to bring our POWs home, they would be home.

Since bringing American POWs home involves undoing official policy or the big lie and admitting mistakes, something not permitted inside the Washington DC beltway, these men who served their country during the Vietnam war continue to suffer and pay the price.



Similar to the 19th-century fort concept, fire support bases in Vietnam could reinforce each other across long distances with powerful effects.

FIREBASES

WHAT WAS THE CONCEPT BEHIND FIRE SUPPORT BASES IN VIETNAM?

By David T. Zabecki

Vietnam was a non-linear war. There were no front lines with enemies on one side and friendlies on the other. Tactical problems could become very complex, with the enemy potentially in any or all directions. It was vital to be able to observe and fire 360 degrees all-around. Although atypical of most 20th-century warfare, those conditions were not necessarily unique to military history. Perhaps the closest American experience was the Indian

TACTICS

Wars of the 19th century—with isolated forts established to control certain areas and provide security to overland travel routes and civilian settlements in the sector. One solution to the Vietnam War tactical problem was the fire support base (or firebase). Most 19th-century forts were isolated and had to be self-sufficient. Thanks to 20th-century technology, the firebases used by the allies in Vietnam could communicate with each other instantly and could be resupplied and reinforced by air.

The fire support base was a combined infantry-artillery position that sometimes included armor. Depending on the planned duration of the position, firebases could be dug-in heavily and reinforced with engineer assets. Perhaps the greatest strength of the firebases was their ability to cover each other with mutually supporting fires over great distances. It is a long-standing principle of firepower that massing fires is the most effective way to use artillery. Through the 19th century, the only way to mass fires was to physically group the guns together on the ground. Between World Wars I and II, improved communications combined with innovative advances in fire direction control techniques made it possible to mass fires instantly on enemy targets from many widely-dispersed guns. Firebases could reinforce the fires of their own internal guns with the guns of any or all other firebases within artillery range. It was a powerful multiplier effect.

The size, composition, and positional duration of a firebase depended on the planning factors of mission, enemy, terrain, and troop availability. Some firebases were very large and held positions for months or longer. Other fire-

bases were relatively small and remained in position for days or weeks. A smaller firebase might consist of a company of infantry with a two-gun artillery platoon in the center of the position. A larger firebase might consist of two or three infantry companies, or possibly an entire battalion. The artillery would consist of an entire six-gun battery. Instead of being positioned in the normal staggered line, the guns were deployed in a star position, with the base piece at the center and the other five guns forming the points of the star to provide rapid and effective fire in any direction. Smaller firebases with two or four howitzers deployed their guns when possible in square or triangle formations. Firebases on flatter terrain were usually round, and those on ridges generally were rectangular due to terrain. Most larger firebases contained a helicopter landing pad for resupply and medical evacuation. When a firebase deployed forward, the guns often were moved by air.

The firebases were not merely passive defensive positions. Infantry patrols aggressively pushed out from the perimeter, day and night, but usually stayed within the guns' maximum effective range fan—roughly 11,000 meters for 105mm howitzers and 14,000 meters for 155mm howitzers. When a patrol made contact, it could call for fire support not only from the guns of its own firebase but those of any other firebase in range.

The firebases, of course, invited attack. One gun inside the firebase usually fired illumination rounds to deprive attackers of the cover of darkness. Other guns delivered fires where needed outward from the perimeter. Firing close to friendly troops could be complex because of the large bursting radius of HE ammunition. The solution to that problem was the M-546 Antipersonnel Round for the 105mm howitzer. Popularly called the "Beehive Round," it fired 8,000 steel flechettes, triggered by a time fuze set to detonate just outside the perimeter. A green star cluster hand flare fired just before the Beehive warned troops on the perimeter to take cover.

Between 1961 and 1973, U.S. and allied forces established more than 8,000 fire support bases in Vietnam; only a small fraction existed at any given time. Some of the war's fiercest battles were fought over firebases, including Firebase Ripcord in Thua Thien Province (July 1-23, 1970); Firebase Mary Ann in Quang Tin Province (March 28, 1970); and Firebase Gold in Tay Ninh Province (March 21, 1967). Neither the VC nor the NVA ever managed to overrun a U.S. forces firebase. ▼

Battle Creek VA's recreation therapy service has partnered with West Michigan Sail for its third season of therapeutic sailing activities on Lake Michigan.

The goal of the aquatic adventure is to help provide Veterans experiencing the effects of PTSD, anxiety and depression a reprieve, as well as finding new ways to enjoy life with new activities.

"Introducing Veterans to leisurely activities is important because a lot of them that come through our program aren't engaged in leisure and are very isolative, so a big thing we work on is expanding their engagement and creating a better quality of life," said Heather Fleming, PTSD recreation therapist. "With West Michigan Sail, they are able to engage with sailing for free, and we help make it something accessible and to be able to bring back home with them even after they've been discharged."

Calmly accepting one's feelings

Veterans sailing; recreation therapy

"They could spend all day out there."

Research dating back to 2019—led by Dr. William Marchand, a Salt Lake City VA psychiatrist—began with 25 Veterans with mental health conditions or substance use disorder. It shows a positive affect with patients. The act of being engaged in sailing is a practice of mindfulness which involves focusing on the present moment while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations.

People with PTSD can have several distressing and persistent symptoms, including re-experiencing trauma through flashbacks or nightmares and emotional numbness. They can also have sleep problems, difficulties in relationships, sudden anger, and drug and alcohol misuse.

"One thing I've noticed with the last few trips that we've done is that Veterans always talk about how calm they are after they get off the water and how they could spend all day out there because it's decompressing and relaxing," Fleming said.

For Army Veteran Brandon Akerman, the effect was felt very quickly and clearly.

"It's a nice opportunity to relax your brain and decrease the stress because our lives are so busy. We've been trying to compensate for whatever's going on that this lets us relax and remember that there's other things out there to do and enjoy life with and take a break," Akerman said.

The event that Akerman was part of involved a diverse group of five other Veterans. During their time on the 30 ft. sailboat, they were given hands-on training with line-handling, nautical terminology and were each given an opportunity to take the helm to steer the boat.

For many Veterans, getting together outside of a clinical environment as a group also offers a chance for conversation and comradery with others with similar experiences. This can also lend to recovery efforts that recreation therapy aims to deliver.

Recreational therapy is part of VA's broad rehabilitation program, offering Veterans an opportunity to learn adaptive sports and recreational activities. Programs like this can also include surfing, adaptive fitness, kayaking, cycling, yoga and meditation, in addition to sailing.



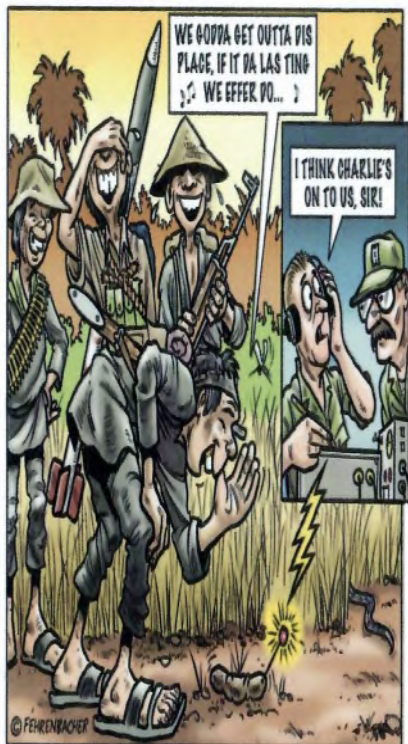
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IN-COUNTRY



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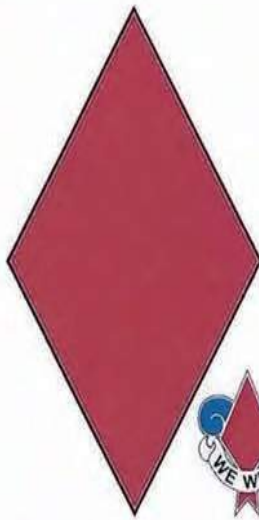
Hi Mom,
 Boot camp is fine, but I think our drill sergeant is a little hard of hearing. Every time we say something, he yells "I can't hear you!"



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QUARTERMASTER REPORT

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

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Fifth Infantry Division Challenge Coin

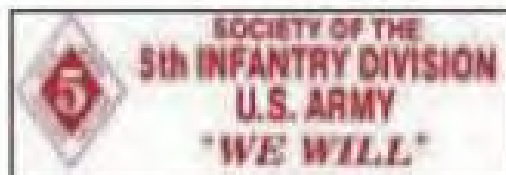


Fifth "Infantry" Division Challenge Coin (front and back shown): \$10.00 ea. Antique gold (sandblasted texture) w/epoxy finish; 1 1/2" x 3/4" Detail is exquisite. This is the only authorized Challenge Coin issued by the Society of the Fifth Division. \$4.00 S&H

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