



River Currents

A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 3
Fall, 2021

Message From the Radio Shack



Harry Hahn

We certainly hope that you were able to attend the reunion in St. Louis. Everyone had a great time. The venue was terrific, with several restaurants within walking distance in the plaza. We had two bus-loads of people attending the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Perryville. Our memorial service was well attended. The highlight was the presentation of the "Riverine Force" documentary trailer and sizzle reel by Arballo Entertainment. We are anticipating more good news from Jeff and Shannon Arballo before years end. It's not too late to donate. All the necessary info is on our website and here in this newsletter.

As promised at the reunion, I have negotiated and executed a contract with Loews Coronado, CA for September 2022. This will be a "Gathering of the Troops." We anticipate a similar program to what we had scheduled for last year, but not able to attend due to COVID-19. That included a Swift boat ride in San Diego Bay.

As Veteran's Day draws close, remember that the MRFA will hold a gathering and placement of wreaths at the Vietnam Memorial Wall in DC on the morning of November 11th. More on this in the newsletter.

Harry Hahn, President,
SparksRivRon13@aol.com

Message From Vice President Bob "Doc" Pries

I had a good night's sleep (that means only getting up four times), but I am still exhausted. However, I am okay with being tired because I just spent the past six days with my brothers of the Mobile Riverine Force. I am thrilled to spend time with them, so being exhausted is fine with me.

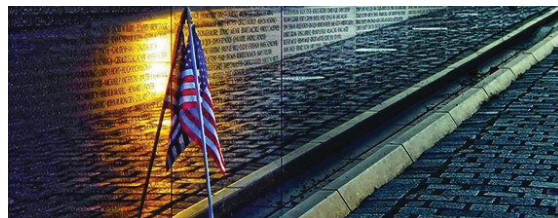


Shannon Arballo and Bob "Doc" Pries

It is so good to see men who served in Vietnam together come together at our reunions. We laugh, smile, and tell tales (that seem to have grown over the years). The love for one another and camaraderie are so evident and energizing. Fifty plus years later, the bonds are unbroken.

So, I may be tired, but I'm still smiling. My thanks to my MRFA Brothers and wives and friends for our wonderful reunion. You put a big smile on my old mug.

To quote Michael Norman in his book "These Good Men": "As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades...such good men."



The MRFA and 9th Infantry Division will be placing wreaths at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. on Veterans Day, Thursday, November 11,

2021. We will be gathering at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial at 8:30 A.M. on the 11th, and proceed to The Wall at 9:00 A.M.

We have blocked forty (40) rooms at the Arlington Court Suites, a Clarion Collection Hotel, in Arlington, Virginia for November 8th - 11th (check out on 11/12). Room rates are \$109.00 (plus tax) for a single and \$119.00 (plus tax) for double a per night.

continued on page 2

**Your membership
expiration date is
printed on your
River Currents just
above your name
and address.**



Message From Vice President Bob “Doc” Pries

continued from page 1

For reservations, call 1-703-524-4000 ext. “0”. Please state our group name as “MRFA” and give your dates of arrival and departure. If you plan to stay at this hotel, you must make your reservations under our group code prior to the cutoff date of October 9, 2021.

The MRFA and 9th Infantry Division will have a hospitality room available on November 8th - 11th.

Come join us as we honor our fallen Brothers on Veterans Day 2021.

We look forward to seeing you in D.C.

The Arlington Court Suites, a Clarion Collection Hotel, is located at 1200 N Courthouse Rd, Arlington, Virginia 22201. More information is available at <http://www.arlingtoncourthotel.com/>

For more information, you may contact: Bob (Doc) Pries, Vice President, Phone: (513) 659-4974
Email: pries247@gmail.com

Message From Frank Jones, MRFA Treasurer/Membership Chairman, and Reunion Coordinator

We had another great reunion even with Covid and many health issues. I want to thank all of the board members, volunteers and hotel staff for a great reunion. The reunion couldn't be successful without all of you. Bravo Zulu! Hopefully we will all get back together in St. Louis in 2023. Stay healthy!!



Bravo Zulu!



Mobile Riverine Force Association Membership Application Form

- ☐ New Member ☐ Associate Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Sponsor
☐ Donation ☐ CCB-18 ☐ Mobile Museum
☐ Change of address below.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

- ☐ Postal Delivery ☐ Go Green with Email

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- ☐ WW-II ☐ Korea ☐ Vietnam

☐ Army Member
Unit (Division, Brigade, Battalion, Company, Platoon, Battery)

☐ Navy Member
Unit (Ship, Boat Hull Numbers, Navy Activity/Detachment, etc.)

Dates Served in Unit (mm/yr - mm/yr) _____ to _____

MEMBERSHIP RATES

- ☐ 1 Year \$20 ☐ 3 Years \$50

DONATION

☐ _____

To become a member, mail your check or money order (payable To MRFA) to Frank Jones, MRFA Membership Chairman, 9 San Marino Pkwy, Fenton, MO 63026-7513



Raffle Winners



The winner of the Henry gun raffle, donated by Bruce Graff, was Michael Dorris, Oklahoma City, OK. Bruce is also our Trailer Museum Curator!

The winner of Esther Lightwine's quilt was Cathleen Hanna, Wilmette, IL

The winner of Mable Springer's quilt was Janice Boblitt

The winners of the 25/25 were: Joan Flann, Lee Summit, MO, and John Weiss

Other donors to our raffles included Randy Peat, Chris Sater, Ralph Boblitt, and Harley Timmerman. We thank each of them!



Message From Jeff and Shannon Arballo, of Arballo Entertainment

On behalf of Jeff and I, Arballo Entertainment, we couldn't have had a more enjoyable and memorable time at the Reunion in St. Louis a few weeks ago. We consider it a privilege and honor that so many chose to sit down with us and share their story in an interview for use in the Mobile Riverine Force documentary. The hardest part for us, emotionally, is knowing that there were some that wished to be interviewed as well, but we simply ran out of time. With that said, our hearts are full of gratitude at the time shared with so many new friends.

We hope and pray that the finished Documentary will not only be an honor to each of the Soldiers and Sailors of the Mobile Riverine Force, for their service, tremendous personal sacrifice and unbelievable accomplishments and a blessing to their families, but that it will educate all Americans as well. With that said, we are beyond thrilled to share that KPBS, San Diego's local Public Broadcast Station, has committed to airing the finished Documentary on television upon completion. This is HUGE and so very exciting!! Yes, Jeff and I may have done the "Happy Dance" upon receiving this fantastic news!!

KPBS will serve as our Supporting Station as we seek to secure National Distribution of this special Documentary, a story our Nation needs to hear! Please find attached a letter of intent written by John Decker, KPBS. We are so honored and grateful to have, once again, John Decker's support, which is something we are thankful for and do not take for granted. We share a mutual respect and trust for one another, which is special.

With this exciting news, time is of the essence and our fundraising efforts are more critical than ever. Producing a high-quality television production comes at a tremendous cost. We'd like to thank those of you who have

already generously contributed to the Documentary production. Without the support that has been extended to us, we would not have been able to accomplish what we have, so thank you! With the support of KPBS, we are now immediately seeking Corporate Sponsorship/Underwriters for this film. Corporate Sponsorship provides a very special advertising opportunity for a Company as their name, at a minimum, will be displayed on all PBS Broadcasts of the Mobile Riverine Force Documentary. Please feel free to direct any questions regarding Corporate Sponsorship to arballoentertainment@gmail.com or feel

free to call us at (760)809-4558 as we are happy to answer all questions you may have.

We are still collecting original photos and film for use in the film, so please do reach out if you would like to contribute.

We are at the beginning a great adventure together and we do believe that the best is yet to come!

Take care and stay healthy and well,
Jeff and Shannon Arballo
Arballo Entertainment



KPBS Public Media
5200 Campanile Drive
San Diego State University
San Diego, CA 92182-5400

(619) 594-1515
(619) 594-3812 fax
www.kpbs.org

October 2021

Re: *The Mobile Riverine Force* documentary

To Whom It May Concern:

The Mobile Riverine Force documentary tells the forgotten story of a determined group of brave soldiers and sailors who fought in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War. Their courage and sacrifice were rewarded with 11 Medals of Honor, numerous Navy Crosses, Bronze Stars, Silver Stars and many other medals of valor. The one thing that this brave fighting force has not received is the chance to have their story told.

KPBS is fully in support of Shannon & Jeff Arballo and this new documentary, *The Mobile Riverine Force*. We are excited to support this film with production funding, broadcast commitments, and in-kind support. The Arballos have had great success with their previous film *Scramble the Seawolves*, and we expect this new film to reach the same level of success.

I encourage you to help support this film in any way you can. Rarely are we given an opportunity to tell a brand-new story about a war for which so much has already been told. *The Mobile Riverine Force* documentary will add an important chapter to the story of the Vietnam War and bring honor to the men and women who fought so bravely for our country.

Please contact me if you have further questions.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Decker".

John Decker
Int. AGM Content



Mobile Riverine Force Association
www.mrfa.org



**My Contribution to the development of a Documentary Film
 Mobile Riverine Force - Vietnam**

The following Donation Levels are available for your financial contribution to the development of a Documentary Movie on the Mobile Riverine Force – Vietnam.....please choose one!

- ☐ **Bronze Level** - \$25 "Thank You Letter" as well as Name in Credits on the DVD
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- ☐ **Gold Level** - \$250 "Thank You Letter", Name in Credits on DVD, Copy of DVD and a MRFA Challenge Coin
- ☐ **Platinum Level** - \$1000 plus "Thank You Letter", Name in Credits on DVD, Copy of DVD, a MRFA Challenge Coin and a Signed Movie Poster.

Please make your check payable to **MRFA**. Then mail this form and your check to:

Frank Jones
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Fenton, MO 63026-7513

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Thank you for your participation!

The Officers and Board Members of the
 Mobile Riverine Force Association

Lt. Col. Jim Forsberg, A.K.A. “The Admiral”

There is one unforgettable, “young at heart,” “Old Reliable” that I always look forward to seeing at the MRFA Reunions. That’s Lt. Colonel James Forsberg, of B Co., 2/60, who served with us from 7/67, to 6/68. Of course, many of us simply refer to him as “The Admiral,” since he joined us in the “Riv Ron” room, in a past reunion, because he favored our refreshments. It is always touching to see his men check in on him, and make sure he is well. His memories of his tour are fascinating, his sense of humor is engaging, and his outlook on life is refreshing.

While some are concerned with how far away any particular drive or flight it is to a reunion, Jim simply hopped in his car and drove to the Sheraton Westport Plaza Chalet, from his home in Auburn, California. It is a distance of over 1,900 miles. “The Admiral,” (really Lt. Colonel) took a leisurely three days to arrive. When he left the reunion, he drove to Little Rock, Arkansas, as a side trip, before traveling to Oklahoma, to visit his daughter and to check on the ’33 and ’34 Ford Roadsters he is bringing back to life. From there, he traveled on to his home in Auburn, California! This evening, October 7th, I called Jim, to get a couple details from him and to ask him if I could mention his age. He replied that it was fine, and that I could even lie, because, as he said; “I know how you Navy guys are!” He said his daughter had just taken him out to Red Lobster to celebrate his 87th birthday!

Jim indicated he is looking forward to attending our “Gathering of the Troops” next year, in San Diego!



One day, “The Admiral,” I, and Steve Benner (with the striped shirt), D Co., 6/31, who served with the 9th Infantry from 4/70 to 9/70, had a great conversation in the RivRon Room.

It seems that in many of the earlier reunions, there was more separation of the Navy guys and the Army guys, perhaps because we were each so enthusiastic to find old friends and filling in the blanks of faded memories of things that happened to us when we were together in Vietnam, but at this stage of our lives, it is wonderful for all of us to meet in the same room, and learn more about the histories, the stories, and the perspectives of our “Brothers From Another Service.” Jim confessed that he kind of helped lead that melding, a point I heartily concur with. One thing is for sure. We ARE all brothers. “The Admiral,” Lt. Col James Forsberg helped us all remember that.

Survey Question; “Did your tour of duty in Vietnam effect your outlook on life, and/ or how you lived your life? If so, how?”

Reb Turner. *I served two years and two months, 1st ID, 9th ID and II Corps. I was wounded three times. Blown up by a Chinese anti-tank mine, and shot down in a UH – 1. I figured if I survived all that I had nothing to lose so I enjoyed the rest of my life. I have lived life, well. I’m retired now and still enjoy life. I was Infantry for twenty years.*

Johnny Durham. *O in C, PCF 26, Jan 67/Jan68. I would not take anything for the experience and would hope to never do it again. Whenever I start to sweat the small stuff, I just remind myself that nobody is shooting at me, or trying to kill me, today. I hope it made me a better and more patient person. GO NAVY!*

John Rubin, EN2, YRBM16, 70-71. *My experience in the Navy made me realize how truly blessed I am to be an American. After seeing how the Vietnamese lived and what they had to deal with on a daily basis, I just couldn’t fathom having to live a life like they did at that time. My wife and I have taught our 3 children patriotism and to value life and liberty.*

Richard Kopec. *Hell, yes it did. When you realize you’re an expendable asset to the government you form your habits accordingly. Mine was to take care of me mentally but mostly physically. I’m happy I did as I’m 73 and in pretty good health physically which I can depend on to overcome the mental trauma.*

continued on next page

Contact the Editor

If you have questions, stories, or comments for “River Currents,” please e-mail Terry Sater, at terry.s8er@yahoo.com Not all stories can be published. All must be family friendly. We want a good balance of Army and Navy stories, so please participate!

Contact Changes

Please send Frank Jones any changes in address, phone number or e-mail addresses so that he can keep our database updated.

His address is:

9 San Marino Parkway, Fenton, MO 63026
Frank’s e-mail address is mrfatango48@gmail.com

Tom Scott, FTG2 on USS Colleton APB-36, December 1966 – March 1968. *Yes, my tour of duty did change my life. While on board the USS Colleton the chaplain gave me a copy of “The Good News for Modern Man” a modern English version of the New Testament. I read it from cover to cover. It changed my life to want to live the life that Jesus modeled for us: one of loving and serving your neighbor. I changed my post-navy college plans from hotel and restaurant administration to sociology and social work. I ended up getting a Masters Degree in health care policy at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration and spending my career, first, helping communities build modern emergency medical services systems and then expanding access to affordable homes for low-income families.*

Bond Hanson, Army. *I was married before Vietnam. After I came back, we went back to the party scene, but life was empty. Somebody had given me a Bible when I was a kid but I hadn't read it. I thought maybe the answer might be the Bible, and Jesus so I read it and kept reading it. I think that I might have pulled the plug if I hadn't.*

Ralph Boblitt. *I had a different position with the MRF than most sailors had. I was a Yeoman trained as a 50 gunner. When they found out I could type I was assigned to 112 Staff. Which meant I had all the after-action reports, Purple Heart list and the deceased lists. A lot of these men I had trained with and knew personally. Not so much by name, but by looks. This affected me when I got out. I carried a lot of guilt around for years. Luckily I had some jobs where my bosses kind of left me alone and I worked a lot of hours. I have to admit I drank a lot more than I ever did. I have been married five times, but I can now say I have slowed the drinking way down and have been married for twelve years. Funny thing is it's the same lady that I was engaged to when I went to Vietnam. I knew I wasn't the same person I was before. It took a lot of years of counseling and two stints of therapy at two different PTSD clinics to get to where I am today. The Reunions have helped a lot, too.*

Thom Ayers. Co B 4/47, 68/69. *Serving was always on my list. Being drafted just changed the timing. My father was a*

Navy Corpsman but I didn't want to join the Navy because I can't swim....so I ended up in the Army as part of the MRF.....I was proud to serve, and I guess I made it because fear is a great motivator. I tried to learn all I could so I could survive. I tried my best so I could survive. I was cautious and focused and frightened as hell so I could survive. I depended on my fellow combatants, and in return tried my best to be dependable for them so I could survive.....and with luck I did.

How did serving in Vietnam affect me? I am focused, dedicated, energetic, live every day like a battle plan. A trip to the grocery store is not an errand....it's a mission. A vacation is not a lazy week.....it's a planned patrol. And sometimes that aggressive traffic on the road is not another driver...it's the enemy....but I stop.....and reflect...I'm not in a war zone.....but I once was.....other than that I don't think it affected me at all.

Jerry Hyde. USS Askari (ARL-30). '67/'68. *How could it NOT affect my life??? The effect was profound. Up until then, I didn't know that my country could be so wrong.*

Roger Sandeen. 2nd Platoon, D, 3/47, 9th Infantry Division from 1/69 to 7/69. *Yes! I was WIA and initially saved by our platoon medic and then the medical personnel at Dong Tam. I figured God had a plan for me after Vietnam. As a result, I have dedicated my life to serving and helping others especially veterans through several non-profits.*

Pat Hartley. USS Mercer 68-69. *My wife said I was more sarcastic. I don't believe everything our government says and I prefer having other Vietnam vets for friends.*

Stan Melton “Dragon Fly Tango 5” Plank Owner ATC 91-5 Jan-Dec 1967. *Going from a quiet college graduate working in Public Accounting one day to Great Lakes & directly into RivRon 9 from boot camp (Coronado, Vallejo NIOTC & SERE) had a profound effect on my life complete with severe PTSD. My escape was becoming a workaholic having 2 & 3 jobs at the same time & serving as Commander or President of many veterans service organizations like Commander District 6 TN American Legion's largest district & professional*

groups such as the Institute of Internal Auditors. Patriotism, serving Veterans & Church mission work all reflect a positive attitude as a result of my military service. I would do it again tomorrow if needed.

James Wollner. 2nd Airboat Platoon. *There are several life lessons that I learned or solidified my attitude in my service in Vietnam. Initially is the importance of friendship. The friendships of my VN brothers have lasted over the last 50 + years and will continue till the day I die. Next is family, because without the letters they have written to me, life really could be fleeting. The next life lesson was getting an education. Vietnam, if nothing else, taught me life can be short so make the best of what you want for your future. Lastly is starting a family so you can impart the wisdom of your experiences hoping your children and others will understand what sacrifice, honor, integrity and love of country really means.*

Stephen Benedict. *I know my tour made me more serious and anxious to return home to finish college. I also decided to become more involved in political issues and candidates. While I can't say I became a pacifist I certainly became an opponent of the Vietnam War and participated in many demonstrations. I also believe that the experience of spending that dangerous year on the other side of the world with some people I would become life-long friends with, while life in the US in 1968 seemed to be falling apart, became one of the focal points of life.*

Wendell Affield. ATC 112-11, Feb-August 1968. *I was cox'n on Tango 112-11, wounded in an ambush and medevaced home. My memoir, “Muddy Jungle Rivers” (2012) opened amazing doors to me. Written Exposure Therapy (WET) is a powerful therapeutic tool to organize splintered memories. Over the years I have spoken to hundreds of veterans about PTSD. I am just in the process of teaching four workshops to veterans who struggle with trauma memories—contracted through the Vet Center in Fargo, ND. I focus on one of the most under-discussed areas of PTSD; Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) and the worlds that open to us when we embrace it. I encourage all our members to Google “PTG and veterans.”*

FIRE SUPPORT BASE CUDGEL

November 18, 1967

From the Old Reliable News

29 November 1967

As we began to dig our foxholes a 9th Division helicopter touched down with the final resupply of ammunition for the night.

The smell of freshly turned earth filled the Mekong Delta clearing as the helicopter lifted off and hovered momentarily over this 3rd. Brigade fire support base.

Specialist Four John Moses, 31, Jackson, Miss., a clerk in the personnel section of the 5th Mechanized Battalion, 60th Infantry, and I were debating about the size of our foxhole as the helicopter disappeared into the darkening Vietnam sky.

Moses looked up and threw a shovel full of dirt from the hole. Sweat streaked down his face. "I don't like this place one bit," he said staring into the jungle surrounding the fire base.

West of Fire Base Cudgel flowed one of the many tidal rivers that wind through the western part of Dinh Tuong Province. On the south, a smaller canal borders the camp.

By midnight the rising Delta water table had filled the foxhole with six inches of water and forced us to find sleeping quarters above ground. About two hours later, the sound of explosions and people dashing for cover awakened me. I pulled the blanket from my face just in time to see a tracer ricochet in front of me.

Something big was happening.

Machine gun fire was coming in low and heavy. I started to low-crawl to the foxhole, but didn't dare climb over the parapet we had built around the pit. For twenty minutes I hugged the ground. Biting a blade of elephant grass, I waited until the enemy fire shifted to another part of the camp. The second it did, I was in the foxhole.

The crack of enemy weapons fire seemed endless. The sound of mortar rounds exploding continued almost unceasingly.

Artillery pieces of Batteries C and D, 2nd Battalion, 4th Artillery quickly countered the attacking enemy. Mighty 105 howitzers were leveled to fire point-blank barrages.

The enemy was that close. With dawn came the dust-off helicopters. They carried away five dead and 38 wounded American soldiers.

Details of what happened unfolded as the infantrymen and artillerymen talked about the fierce two hours of combat that had taken place early that morning. The 156-man fire base had been attacked by two companies of Viet Cong. The two companies had tried unsuccessfully to overrun the American position.

Private First-Class George Pardner, 19, a grenadier with the Recon Platoon, 5th/60th recalled the details of the clash:

"Our platoon had dug fox-holes on the west side of the river and everything was quiet until about 2a.m. That's when they hit us with everything. Man, they were close, "Pardner of Rochester, N.Y., continued. "They were no more than 25 meters from our positions and were trying to throw grenades on us."

"We kept tossing grenades back at them and firing. I set off a claymore mine and we could hear them screaming and

running all over the place."

"You could hear them talking, that's how close they were," added Recon Platoon leader, First Lieutenant Lee B. Alley, 21, of Laramie, Wyoming. "They hit us with automatic weapons and carbine fire."

Company C, 5th/60th encountered enemy wave attacks from the river.

Weapons squad leader, Sergeant Robert Frazier, 20, of Hamlet, Indiana, said, "I don't know if they were in boats or if they were swimming, but they kept streaming from the water."

"They fired rockets at us from across the river," said Staff Sergeant William Chandler, 25, of Lovelady, Texas. "You name it – they had it."

"If they weren't hard core," Chandler added, "I don't want to mess with anything harder."

"What had happened during the morning hours of Saturday, Nov. 18th, was an attack, first from the south and then from the west," said Lieutenant Colonel William R. Steele, commander of the 5th/60th. An estimated three companies of the 261st Viet Cong Battalion took part.

The firepower of the leveled howitzers along with the infantrymen and supporting air strikes and armed helicopters had beaten back the enemy charge.

Our MRFA Historian, Mike Harris, sent these photos of Dong Tam (on the left), as it appeared during construction for the Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division, and Dong Tam as it appears, today (on the right)!



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UP006 9th Inf Div Vietnam Veteran



UP007 RAF TF 117



UP008 RAF One



UP009 VCCC (blue)



UP010 VCCC (brown)



UP011 VCCC (silver)



UP012 Combat Boat Captain



UP013 Combat Boat Crewman



UP014 RivRon 9



UP015 RAD 91



UP016 RAD 92



UP017 RAD 111



UP018 RAD 112



UP019 River Squadron 13



UP020 RAD 131



UP021 RAD 132



UP022 RivRon XV



UP023 RAD 152



UP024 Riv Div 153



UP025 MRF 3/47



UP026 3rd/60th Inf



UP027 39th Inf



UP028 47th Inf



UP029 USS Benewah APB-35



UP030 USS Colleton APB-36



UP031 USS Mercer APB-39



UP032 USS Nueces APB-40



UP033 USS Benewah Logo



UP034 USS Mercer Logo



UP035 River Raiders



UP036 River Rat



UP039 Brown Water Navy



UP041 MRF Vietnam Veteran



UP042 RAS 13

EXAMPLES:

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JP003 MRF Mekong Delta



JP004 9th Inf Div Vietnam



JP005 9th Inf Div Vietnam Veteran

Member **Robert G. Thacker** passed away on September 17, 2021. While in Vietnam he served with 2nd Platoon, 15th Combat Engineers, 9th Infantry Division from March 1968 to August 1969. Robert is survived by his wife Glenna.

Member **Edward J. "EJ" Toth** passed away on August 23, 2021. Ed served onboard the USS Askari (ARL-30) from 1952-55 during the Korean War. He was a huge supporter of the MRFA having joined in the early 1990's. Ed attended most of the reunions through the years. He is survived by his wife, Virgene. They were married for 65 years. – "Ed was a good man and a proud Korean War veteran. He truly enjoyed supporting and being a part of the MRFA." – Albert Moore

Member **HMCS Thomas Joseph Sanko** (USN Ret.) passed away on



August 15, 2021. While in Vietnam he served onboard the USS Benewah (APB-35) from October 1966 to December 1967. Chief Sanko also served during the Korean War and retired from the U.S. Navy in 1971. He is survived by his wife Mary.

Member **William Alexander "Bill" Cunningham**



passed away on June 14, 2021 at Riverside Doctors Hospital in Williamsburg. While in Vietnam Lieutenant Cunningham served with Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division as Company Commander from March 1968 to September 1968. Before discharge Bill was advanced to the rank of Major. He was preceded in death by his wife Cheryl. – "As a Great Friend, Bill and I

TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One

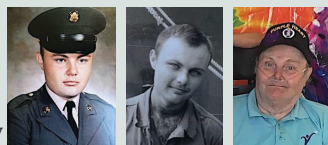
met when I was twenty and he was 27. We were very compatible from the beginning and developed a deep trust and fellowship while in Vietnam. We did not see each other for about 35 years or so and ran into each other at one of our reunions. We instantly reconnected and developed a deep friendship and bond. It is so rare to have many true friends in life and I was truly fortunate for Bill to be one of those true friends. We will remember and miss him." – Dave Hanna – LT Cunningham's RT

Member **Commander Joseph W. "Joe" Streuli** (USN Ret.)



passed away on July 17, 2021. While in Vietnam he served as Commander Coastal Division 13 – Commander Task Group 115.3.7 from November 1968 to November 1969.

Member **Steven Ray "Steve" Rapp**



passed away on June 4, 2021. While in Vietnam he served with Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division from November 1968 to July 1969 when he was seriously wounded and medevacked back to the U.S. with life-threatening injuries. He lived the rest of his life as a paraplegic

Member **Randy Eugene Butt**

passed away on April 26, 2021. While in Vietnam he served onboard the USS Mark (AKL-12) in 1968-69 and the USS Sphinx (ARL-24) in 1969. Later he served in the U.S. Air Force from 1970-72



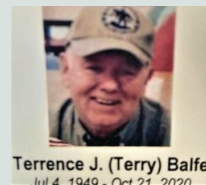
Chief **David Gleen** (USN Ret.) passed away on February 11, 2021. While in Vietnam he served onboard the USS Askari (ARL-30) from December 1967 to September 1968. Chief Gleen and his wife, Gwen, passed only 3 weeks apart



Member **William H. "Bill" Jeffers** passed away on May 31, 2021. While in Vietnam he served onboard the USS White River (LSMR-536) as a GMG3 from December 1966 to December 1968. – "He was a proud Member of the MRFA since 1997. Bill attended his first M.R.F.A. reunion in 1997 and many, many more. He was a gentle giant and will be missed." – Bill Brennan (USS White River)

Member **Keith Kucera** passed on 10/8/2020. He was living in Oxnard, CA. His wife Andrea still lives in Oxnard.

Member **Terry Balfe**



passed away on Oct 21, 2020 due to complications from TBI's he suffered in Viet Nam on Feb 26th-27, 1968. He served in Viet Nam 67/68. He was in Co B, 3rd of the 60th, 9th Infantry Div. Terry and his wife Barbe were married 48 years and had two sons and a daughter. His wife, Barbe, said; "We started to go to the reunions in 2010 and it did a world of good for Terry to reunite with the brave men he served with. He was truly blessed with having you all back in his life."

Member **Keith Kucera** passed on 10/8/2020. He was living in Oxnard, CA. His wife Andrea still lives in Oxnard.



Mobile Riverine Force Association

9 San Marino Parkway

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