



River Currents



A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 3
Fall, 2022

Message From the Radio Shack



Harry Hahn

Hello from the
Radio Shack:

We have a lot
happening in
the MRFA. Let
me get started!

We just com-
pleted a mini
reunion in

Coronado. What a great time and
success it was. Two highlights were
the trip to the Vietnam Unit Memori-
al, on the US Navy Amphibious base,
and the Swift Boat rides. We had 190
people at the reunion, which makes
it the largest San Diego mini-reunion
ever.

This September, Minnesota dedicat-
ed it's Medal of Honor Memorial
at the state capital, in St. Paul. The
MRFA was there with our Memorial
trailer, and along with me, we were
well represented with Frank Jones,
our Treasurer, Charlie Ardinger,
and Bruce Graff, Board Members.
Georgie Ardinger provided her great
assistance in setting up and tearing
down along with "Georgie" guidance.
Tom Kelley, US Navy Captain, and
Medal of Honor recipient from River
Division 15, was the guest speaker at
the event. There were four MOH re-
cipients at the event. This was the last
showing of our Museum Trailer on
the road. It will now take up perma-

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Memories of the 2022 Coronado Mini-Reunion!



Don Blankenship, Harry Hahn, and Tom Kelly

Minnesota Medal of Honor Memorial

The State of Minnesota is honoring
their Medal of Honor recipients by
erecting a memorial on the capital
grounds in St. Paul. The dedication
ceremony took place on September
22, 2022. It was attended by many
state officials, including the Gover-
nor and Lt. Governor. Our Medal
of Honor recipient and past Medal
of Honor Society President, Tom



Kelley, was a guest speaker. The MRFA contributed to the Memorial in honor of the
MRF eleven Medal of Honor recipients as it was jointly funded by state and private
funds. The MRFA Memorial Museum was present, and was open for viewing for the
attendees. This was the last official road stop for the museum as it now has its per-
manent home in the Russell Road Military Museum in Zion, Illinois. Your President,
Harry Hahn, and Treasurer, Frank Jones, were invited as guests to the VIP dinner
preceding the event. They also attended the paddle boat dinner tour the evening
after the dedication. The MRFA was well represented by River Rats, at these events,
which, in addition to MRFA Board members, included Dave and Robyn Schell, and
Harley and Sue Timmerman.

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

Message From The Radio Shack

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nent residence in the Russell Road Military Museum, Kenosha, WI where you can visit it anytime the museum is open.

November 11th, Veterans Day, will be the visit to the wall by MRFA members. Doc Pries will be organizing this as he has done every year. Complete information is available on our web page, including hotel reservation information.



Lastly, we will now set our sights on next year's reunion. The dates are Sept. 14-15-16 at the St. Louis Westport Sheraton Chalet. This is where we had it in 2021 and it was a great venue. Complete information is included in this newsletter. Although we were disappointed that the Documentary was not available this fall, due to a slow down by COVID, the Arballos have promised me that the reunion next year will air a full showing of the documentary, in St. Louis!!

Harry Hahn, President, SparksRivRon13@aol.com



Veterans Day 2022 - Washington, D.C.

The MRFA and 9th Infantry Division will be placing wreaths at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., on Veterans Day, Friday, November 11, 2022. 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.



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/>

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/>

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 2022. We look forward to seeing you in D.C.

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

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

Name _____
Street _____
City _____
State _____ Zip Code _____
Phone _____
Cell _____
E-mail _____

- ☐ 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

Getting the benefits you need and deserve from the Veterans Administration!

By Mike Harris

I fought my own personal battles with the VA from 1977 to the late 1990's. Unfortunately, there were a lot of veterans from the two previous wars who ran the VA system. Many viewed our generation as undeserving because ours was not a real "war". I beg to differ as we all do. That began to change in the late 90's when they began passing away or retiring. It was then that the VA began paying more attention to us Vietnam era veterans.

In 1986 I got shafted by the VA. I had finally chosen to be free of alcohol in 1976. After a few years of struggling with recreational drugs, I quit them as well. In 1986 I had just married for the first time in my life. A month later the VA scheduled a re-evaluation for my PTSD. I met with a psychiatrist. Not too long into the exam he asked me, "When are you going to quit sponging off the government Mr. Harris?" If I had not been a young Christian I may have leaped over the desk and hurt him. This man had immigrated from Egypt. I gathered myself and said, "You came to my country to ask me this question? I don't need you!" and walked out of the exam. Later VA dropped me from 30% to 10% because I was married and perhaps due to the fact that I didn't attack the examiner. Years later I filed a claim against the VA claiming Clear & Unmistakable Error (CUE). The claim went back to the Board of Veterans Appeals (BVA) and I was awarded all of my back pay.

I am relaying this personal story to help you understand that the VA abuse caused me to fight not only for myself, but for my fellow veterans. At first, I functioned as what I call a "Rogue Advocate". I had a deep passion to go to battle with the VA system. For a few years I indirectly advocated for my veterans by preparing all of their paperwork and forms as a sort of ghost writer. As I learned the VA system, I began to win small skirmishes and then larger battles. It was so very gratifying to see my veterans receive the EARNED benefits due them.

In 2006 I became an accredited Veteran Service Representative (VSR) with Vietnam Veterans of America (VVA). The position is different than a Veteran Service Officer (VSO) who is more highly trained. I concentrated on the VA claim process and continued winning more claims for my vets.



An advocate must learn how VA uses key wording. If VA does not see these statements, then a veteran can have his claim denied. One is: "It is as least likely as not that the veteran's disability was incurred in service." This sways the pendulum in favor of the veteran.

I would like to make some points from my personal experiences:

- 1) Do not use excuses like: "I don't deserve it" or "someone else deserves it more" or "It's not that important this late in life." VA must act to provide ALL veterans with the EARNED benefits that are due them. If you don't want to pursue a claim or claims for yourself, then do it for your spouse, your children or your grandchildren.
- 2) Utilize a VSR or VSO to assist you in the process. The best way to find a good one is to ask around the veteran community. They will know the "go to" person. If for some reason you do not feel that the individual is representing you properly then revoke their limited Power of Attorney and find a new advocate who cares about you and your claims.
- 3) Be careful when listening to what other veterans say is the truth. Rumors can prevail in the community. You need to hear it

from someone who is qualified to provide the correct answers.

- 4) If you do not agree with a VA decision then appeal it. You would not believe how many claims I won on appeal. Don't take "no" for an answer unless it is obvious.
- 5) Look out for your spouse in the process. He/she is your "dependent". Same with younger veterans with children. If you end up rated 100% disabled then he/she will most likely receive healthcare and monetary benefits before and after you pass.
- 6) It is never too late to file if you feel that your disability is related to service (service-connected). Also, if you are rated service-connected and your disability worsens, then you can re-open your claim for a higher benefit.
- 7) A veteran does not have to be rated a Scheduler 100% to earn compensation and benefits. There is also a benefit titled Total Disability due to Individual Unemployability (TDIU). This is when a veteran's disability affects him/her to the point of not being able to secure "Substantial Gainful Employment".

8) VA continues to add to the "Presumptive" conditions for Agent Orange. If you suffer from any of them and served in-country Vietnam or at other duty stations where they sprayed the chemical then by all means file a claim.

Here is a link to the "Presumptive" list: <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange/conditions/>

Here is a link on "How to File a VA Claim": <https://www.va.gov/disability/how-to-file-claim/>

If you want to request your personal military records then visit this site: <https://www.archives.gov/veterans>



**2023 MRFA & 9th Infantry Division
Reunion 9/14/23 TO 9/16/23
Registration Form
(PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY)
Must be received by 9/1/2023**



Name _____

Unit in Vietnam (one unit only) _____ Dates _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Name(s): Spouse/Girlfriend or 1st Guest _____ City _____ State _____

Name(s): Additional Guest(s) _____ City _____ State _____

_____ City _____ State _____

_____ City _____ State _____

Send my registration form to me by e-mail Yes ☐ No ☐ First reunion ☐

Registration includes member and 1 guest (Does not cover lodging, food or drinks)

MRFA Member Registration \$75 Nonmember Registration \$100 \$ _____

Late registration fee at the hotel for members Thursday and Friday \$75 or \$100

only 1PM - 2PM: (\$125) Non-Member (\$150) Must pay by check NO

CASH

Total number of other guest(s) _____ x \$ 25 ea. **Guests under 12 are free** \$ _____

Grand Total Enclosed \$ _____

Shuttle to Soldier's Memorial, Gateway Arch, St. Louis Aquarium/Wheel, West County Mall, and Hollywood Casino on a first come, first serve basis.

Please send this form with your check or money order payable to the MRFA. Mail to MRFA 2023 Reunion, C/O Frank Jones, 9 San Marino Parkway, Fenton, MO 63026 before 9/1/2023.

Full refund for cancellations will be made until 9/1/23. After this date NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE

Returned checks will be charged a \$25 processing fee.

Note: You will still have to check in at the registration desk to receive your name tag. There will be no admission to MAIN ROOM or hospitality rooms without your lanyard/name tag. NO EXCEPTIONS! REGISTRATION WILL BE OPEN ON THURSDAY, SEPT. 14, 9AM TO 5PM AND FRIDAY, SEPT. 15, 9 AM TO 1PM.

**ONLY SEND THE FLIGHT FORM IF YOU NEED ADA TRANSPORTATION!
Please fill out the 2023 MRFA Reunion Flight Form and send to Frank Jones**

MRFA 2023 Reunion Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel St. Louis, MO Sept. 14-16, 2023



Start planning now for the 2023 MRFA Reunion in St. Louis, Missouri! Check-in will be from 9:00am to 5:00pm on Thursday 9-14-23 and 9:00am to 1:00pm, on Friday 9-15-23. You will be able to start

making reservations on Oct. 1, 2022. The number to call for reservations is 888-627-7066 Monday thru Friday.

Please make sure to reference the MRFA (Mobile Riverine Force Association) when making your reservation. The cutoff date for reservations is Aug. 23, 2023. The room rate for all rooms is \$139. All registered guests will receive a breakfast buffet every morning at the hotel. As this is included with the room. It is only available for **registered** guests, for free.

The hotel will run a free daily shuttle service to and from the airport. The shuttle stops at both terminals at the hotel shuttle pickup zone, every half hour. (5:30am to 11:00pm daily) This regular airport shuttle is not ADA approved. **A flight form is included here for those who need an ADA approved shuttle for airport transportation. Please send the ADA flight form to Frank Jones.**

We have also arranged for an ADA accessible shuttle bus to transport our guests to pre-arranged locations downtown and a shopping mall. The bus will run Friday 10:00am, to 4:00pm, and Saturday 1:00pm, to 5:00 pm.

The hotel is pet friendly. A \$50 one-time cleaning fee is required. Service dogs are allowed at no charge.

There are plenty of restaurants both on and off property for lunches, and dinners.

The hotel parking is free. RV parking is allowed on the outer edges of the parking lot in the designated area only for registered guests. No AC power is provided.

Questions, contact Frank Jones at 314-303-2730, or mrfatango48@gmail.com

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!

Message From Arballo Entertainment

Hi there,

Jeff and I sincerely hope that this brief note finds you and yours healthy, hopeful, and embracing the change of the seasons.

A few weeks ago, we had the sincere honor and privilege to have attended the MRF Reunion in Coronado. Words can't describe how wonderful it was for us to share quality time and visit with familiar friends and to make some new friends as well. These are the moments that make our hearts so very happy and leave us feeling grateful!

During the Reunion we also had the opportunity to capture many more stories on film, all of which will forever be etched on our hearts and are such an important contribution to the documentary. For those of you who have willingly sat in front of the camera and shared this part of your story with us, thank you! We will hold true to our promise we made and that is to protect, respect and care for your words. I Thank you for entrusting us. Without individuals being willing to share their story with, sharing the story that we need to hear and what our Nation needs to learn, we simply would not have a film. So, it starts there first.

As we approach the end of Production, we need to make a FINAL CALL for any FILM AND PHOTOS that you would like to contribute towards the production.

Additionally, we are still actively and urgently seeking CORPORATE SPONSORS! If you own, work for or are a "friend of a friend" who you may feel has a shared interest in sharing the captivating story of the Mobile Riverine Force, please feel free to call us directly or direct them to us as we will answer all questions. In closing, we would like to thank each and every one of you that has offered your support and encouragement, financial donations and contribution of film, photos and time. We are grateful and continue to Thank God for blessing us with the opportunity to get to know you and to embark on this mission with you.

Take care,
Jeff and Shannon Arballo
Arballo Entertainment
1296 Avenida Fragata
San Marcos, CA 92069
760-809-4558



FREE SHIPPING

ON ORDERS OVER \$60

MRFA GEAR LOCKER

ORDER FORM

Qty	Model Number	Size	Unit Price	Amount
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
				\$
Subtotal				\$
Shipping (If order is over \$60, Shipping is FREE)				\$ 8.00
Grand Total				\$

Ordering is as easy as 1-2-3.

- Indicate your choice of item number (be sure to include size, if applicable), with quantity, and total amount. Add amounts for grand total to enclose.
- Make check or money order payable to: MRFA. The MRFA does not take credit cards.

3. Mail Gear Locker Order Form and check to MRFA, PO Box 271, Lake Villa, IL 60046.
 Email Harry Hahn at SparksRivRon13@AOL.com for questions.

**Products
Chairman
HARRY HAHN
President**

Name

Shipping Address

City State Zip

Phone

E-mail

**FREE
SHIPPING**
ON ORDERS OVER \$60

Bumper Stickers

Show your colors with pride. These durable vinyl bumper stickers will look great on your car or truck. Brilliant, bright detail on a weather-resistant vinyl. Help spread the word out about a great organization and maybe find someone right next door! Six great styles to choose from.

\$5.00



B001 MRFA w/ribbons (measures 11" x 3")



B002 VCCC (measures 12" x 4")



B004 Member
(measures 3" x 4")



B005 9TH Inf Div
(measures 3" x 4")

Coins

Quality crafted pewter coins are 1½" in diameter, with high quality embossing and full color detail. Thank You, Purple Heart, Army, and Navy coins have areas for engraving.

\$10.00



C001 MRFA



C003 Thank You
(2" diameter)



C004 Purple Heart



C005 Army



C006 Navy



C007 Army Hooah

Hat Pins

A great gift for any occasion. These sturdy and colorful pins will make a great addition to that special hat. Makes a great lapel pin and tie tack too! Each is quality hand-crafted pewter and comes complete with clasp. Designed exclusively for the MRFA and not available anywhere else!

\$7.00 ea



P001 MRF



P002 9th Inf Div



P003 RAD 91



P004 RAD 92



P005 RAD 111

VCCC PINS

Designed by Member Tom Nielsen(T-132-6).



VCCC001 VCCC Pin

VCCC001 VCCC Pin
Custom made 3" width Vietnam Combatant Crewman Pin
Silver Insignia on white base..

\$15.00

NEW



VCCC002 VCCC PIN

VCCC002 VCCC Pin
Custom made 1.25" width Vietnam Combatant Crewman Pin
Antique Bronze Lapel Pin

\$11.00



P006 RAD 112



P007 RAD 131



P008 RAD 132



P009 RivRon XV



P010 RAD 152



P011 Riv Div 153



P012 USS Benewah APB-35



P013 3rd/60th Inf



P014 MRF 3/60



P015 39th Inf



P016 47th Inf



P017 River Raiders



P018 River Rat



P019 Brown Water Navy



P020 White River



P021 U.S. Army



P022 U.S. Navy



P023 Vietnam Svc Medal



P024 Purple Heart

Have YOU had YOUR “Honor Flight?”

Dear Mobile Riverine Force Association Veterans and Veteran families,

Let me introduce myself! I’m Dina Bridge, wife and mother of two from Springfield, IL. I am Terry Sater’s daughter and I want to tell you about a once in a lifetime opportunity I experienced with my father this August.

I had a chance meeting three years ago with Honor Flight Coordinators in Springfield; Steve Wheeler and Joan Bartolon. They educated me on the process of nominating a veteran for Honor Flights to Washington D.C. They told me moving, personal stories of how inspiring and fulfilling it is to be able to take servicemembers to D.C., celebrate them, honor them, and watch them reminisce on their time spent serving their country.

I went home that very day, and filled out online forms to nominate my dad.

Of course, we all know what came next....The pandemic. Two years of grounded Honor Flights. Life moved on, and from time to time we’d bring it up to each other and think “someday...”

“Someday” came on August 30th! We could not have been more excited for the trip. We knew the itinerary was packed with war memorials, monuments and a museum, but there were a couple surprises in there that I, as his Guardian for the day, couldn’t wait for him to experience!

I don’t want to give away all the stops and surprises, because I want to encourage any Veteran friend or family member to nominate a Veteran TODAY, so they can experience it first-hand. I will say that I felt honored to be my dad’s Guardian on this incredibly special and moving trip. I kept thinking how amusing it was to switch roles for the first time in my life and be responsible for my dad for the day. (Although to be honest he was not entirely comfortable



with abdicating protection and security to his daughter. I’m joking. Not really.)

We took our time at the Wall. It was a priority that day, to take as much time as we could to find the names of the people that have been a part of my dad’s life long after they’ve been gone. I felt like I was visiting their grave, in a way. Some names on The Wall are as familiar to me as blood ancestors.

We were quiet. I was listening.

The Changing of the Guard in Arlington Cemetery was an amazing end to our time in D.C. A storm blew through. Standing in the rain and watching this sacred ceremony, I had goosebumps. It will never be forgotten.

Watching my dad interact with and share stories with other veterans was so great to see. He told me how much he enjoys meeting other veterans and hearing about their experiences. On this particular flight, we even had one World War II veteran and a couple Korean War veterans.

Back home, was the kind of full circle, life moment that I don’t have the words for, even now, with a month to contemplate it!

It has always been a heartbreaking visual for me, ever since I was a little girl, to think of the way my dad and his brothers were treated upon return from the Vietnam War. Traumatized, weary, and homesick, only to be received with vitriol on homeland soil is something I

can’t ever wrap my brain around.

The community came out to welcome our veterans home. My dad shook hands with hundreds of people he’s never met. They looked at his name tag. They thanked him by name. Other Vietnam veterans simply said “Welcome home, Brother.”

I would do it again in a heartbeat. If you have the opportunity to take a loved one on this trip, do it! If you are not able to do it, nominate your loved one, and a Guardian will be provided!

You can also volunteer for the Honor Flight program, if you have one in your area. There are many, many people who work together to make these trips happen.

I know in the future, I will be heading to the airport after the next flight, ready to shake hands with more Veterans coming home.

To find an Honor Flight near you, and learn more about schedules and how to sign up, go to HonorFlight.Org.

Dina Bridge

Contact Information

Honor Flight, Inc.
1405 South Fern Street, #702
Arlington, Virginia 22202
937-521-2400
9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. EST

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Honor Flight

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Robert W Schrader, LTC (Retired)
Served in Vietnam 1968-69. D Company, 9th Medical Battalion, 9th Infantry Division. Battalion Surgeon Assistant (Combat Medic) (2LT & 1LT). I had the pleasure of going on an Honor Flight with the Northern Colorado group (I live in Wyoming). My flight was on 9/12/1016. A close friend, Colonel H. Steve Smith, and I planned on attending an earlier session together, but the military gods forced us to delay our journey and a fall from a scaffold on Memorial Day ended Steve's ability to travel.

I had to travel by myself, but made new friends who supported me on Honor Flight. Although I had been to Washington many times, this trip was truly an "HONOR" and a completely humbling experience. We went to a breakfast with some family members; (my wife, two daughters, 3 of my 6 grandchildren, and my Service Dog.) We joined with our military family (fellow veterans also being honored,) who became good friends and travel companions.

The Honor Flight was escorted motorcycle mounted veterans, police, fire, and civilians. lining the roadside and the across the bridges we passed under. Salutes and flags everywhere! A standing-ovation greeted us at Denver International Airport, and when we arrived in the D.C. Airport. The crew of our chartered aircraft fought to be assigned to our crew and entertained, fed, and made each of us special vets.

There was more to see and do. We, the honored vets, got to see and experience Memorials, and military history, thanks to our volunteer guardians with us on the plane, hotel, and everyplace we were privileged to visit. Those back home had surprises and more Honor memories for each veteran!

If you ever have the opportunity to go on an Honor Flight or assist in the mission, you will be happy with the result!

Cliff Fejfar PO2, 151-4. I live here in Denver Colorado, and served as Vice-President of the Rocky Mountain Honor Flight for six years. In that time, I must have made twelve or more trips to D.C. Right now, there are over one hundred hubs of Honor Flight throughout the United States. The head office is in Ohio. Each hub operates independently of one another. Honor Flight is a total non-profit organization. By that I mean 99% of all funds raised are used for the mission of getting Veterans to DC to see their memorials. The number of trips each year and the number of Veterans that go on these trips is determined by the amount of funds that each Hub raises. All guardians and board members pay their own way. Honor Flight was initially set up to accommodate WWII Veterans. Those numbers have diminished and now it is open to Korean and Vietnam Vets. From working with the WWII vets, I have many great stories of what they did in service. If you have any questions that I can help with please email. clayvin2@q.com

Robert W. Allen, RM3, Zippo 92-11, 68/69. My Son & I was honored to take the "Honor Flight" from Cincinnati, Ohio the last of May, 2022. Visiting the Vietnam Wall and the Changing of the Guards at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was very emotional! I was the only Brown Water Navy sailor along with one Army soldier, from the 9th Infantry Division! The overwhelming part of the trip was the reception we received when we arrived back in Cincinnati! Along with all of my children, grandkids and great grandkids, there were over a hundred people greeting us as we got off the plane. Little kids, ex-military, entire families shaking our hands, saluting and

waving of Old Glory (US Flag), this was almost too much! This was a long time coming from when I came home in 1969. I am glad my son got to experience this with me. This was a very emotional and overwhelming Day! Welcome Home to All my Brothers!

Frank Jones. BM2, RivRon 15, T-48, 7/69-7/70. I went on an Honor Flight on 11/2/21. It was a great day. I took my eighteen-year-old granddaughter with me. It is a memory I will cherish for the rest of my life. My wife and I have volunteered with Honor Flight for about five years. Always good to hear all of the old stories from the vets.

Al Breininger, CSO, RivDiv 91, 1967. I had the opportunity to participate in an Honor Flight from Savannah, GA in April 2022. My advice to anyone who is eligible to participate is to put in your application, NOW! This will be the best "Welcome Home" experience you could receive other than the embrace you might have received from your mother, girlfriend, or wife when you returned home from Vietnam. You will be made to feel "Special," because you are! You served!

My guidance to those who respond that they have seen all the Monuments in Washington, DC is this. "This trip is not about the monuments - it is about YOU, the veteran who served." The monuments are only the setting or the stage. YOU are the main event. You will be welcomed, thanked, and shown the appreciation you might feel you never received.

Best wishes to all.

Al

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

From the Membership

“A HERO DIED TODAY”

Poem By Harry Hahn

JUNE 10, 2020

He joined the Navy to see the world, but the Delta was his future plan.

Today nobody knew the whole story, nor did he tell it, this old man.

His family was wrought with fear

when they heard his orders in this, his youngest years.

On a boat, on a River, didn't sound that bad, but Vietnam made those orders become no easy ride.

A Hero died today!

Off to intense training, off to Vallejo, his green uniforms were nice and sharp.

Then after months of salt, grime and river water they no longer looked that part.

A Hero died today!

He cherishes his Camo Beret, it's tassels cut and gone.

Firefights took their toll; his face was now dark and drawn.

Rockets and bullets were fired at him at almost every bend.

Somehow, he kept his spirit and protected his mates to the end.

A Hero died today!

His family wondered why they never heard all the stories of that terrible tour.

He wore his medals on few occasions but no one knew how they were earned, for sure.

A Hero died today!

When the River banks were not covered in Cong or NVA, they were cleared of vegetation by some magic dust.

That stuff would later take his Brother's away, silently, painfully, one by one, their new battle that was so unjust.

A Hero died today!

One day this hero left the country, but the country was always near.

Each loud sound and nightly dream replayed all his fears.

A Hero died today!

His hearing battered, his body torn, his ninth life aching and now old.

This hero now rests with his Brothers, their stories also never told.

A Hero died today!

TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One

Member **Donald R. Kline** passed away on November 25, 2021, after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease, caused by Agent Orange. While in Vietnam he served as a machine gunner with Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 47th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division from August 1968 to August 1969. Donald is survived by his wife Kathy.



Member **Kenneth William McGwin** passed away on July 10, 2022. While in Vietnam he served as a Machinist Mate onboard the USS Westchester County (LST-1167) from January 1968 to January 1969. Kenneth was aboard when the VC sabotaged the vessel on November 1, 1968. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal w/V for helping save two sailors who were trapped in their quarters. Kenneth is survived by his wife Dr. Julie Ann.



Member **William James Watton III** passed away on August 6, 2022. He initially served in the U.S. Army from 1961-64. After enlisting in the U.S. Navy William served in River Assault Squadron 13 – Division 132 onboard T-132-13 from May 1969 to May 1970.



In Memory Of

This section is for members who wish to sponsor the MRFA by placing a notice in memory of one of their fallen comrades. In some instances, the name of the sponsor will precede the name of the person who was KIA, or has passed on since Vietnam. It's \$25 for four issues.

Wendell Affield, for Buddha Ed Thomas, Boat Captain
Tango 112-11 (02/68-02/69)

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and Dennis Mattox 1st/501st 101st Abn. KIA 08/23/69

Orville "Lee" Daleym for Marvin Marks, WWII, USS Askari
ARL-30

Robert Flaige, for SFC Fernando Quintero KIA 02/27/68

and SP4 Robert "Bob" Jenks E Co. 3rd/60th KIA 03/03/68

Bill Frede, for BM1 Guy Dail, BM3 Johnny Maness, and
SN David Flamburis, T-112-2, 1967

John W. Gerbing, for Noel T. West A Co 4th/47th KIA
06/19/67

Susan Hanmer, for SFC Michael Hanmer RivRon 13 and
153 (07/69-02/71)

Joe Hilliard for Joe Benack from Florida and Donald Hart-
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Nancy VanDruff, in memory of Robert E. VanDruff, T-91-
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In memory of my Brothers B Co. 2nd 39th Infantry, 9th
Infantry Division

In memory of my Brothers, B Co. 2nd 39th Infantry, 9th
Infantry Division in memory for John Nielsen, B Co.
2nd/39th (04/68-04/70)

Henry Velez, for my fallen brothers, B Co. 2nd/39th Inf.

The Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division Vietnam



Find us on Facebook

Hey Brothers, check out our Facebook page, "The Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division Vietnam" Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/>

Our Facebook Group is dedicated to all Army and Navy men who served with pride and distinction in a place called the Mekong Delta. Be it on water or land, they all served their country. Whether they were on a Monitor or making a helo assault, setting an ambush on a lonely, quiet, dark night, walking through waist-deep water in a rice paddy, riding a tango boat up a narrow canal, or at anchor in the middle of a brown-water river for long hot hours. Places like Dong Tam, Tay Ninh, Snoopy's Nose, the Cross Roads, Ambush Alley, My Tho, Rach Kien, Plain of Reeds, Parrot's Beak, Tan An, Nha Be or Ben Tre and names like Colleton, Washtenaw, Windham, Benewah, Westchester, Satyr, Askari, PBR, and Swiftboat are names and places we'll never forget.

This group is to preserve a living memory of all those who served in the Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division Vietnam.

Many friendships from days past have been renewed because of our group page. It is a great place to make connections with others who served with the Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry Division.

A few rules are in place to keep order in the group. They are:

1. Politics and religion are the fastest way to start an argument and cause hard feelings and absolutely have no place on this page.
2. We expect members to treat each other with respect.

We hope you enjoy the group.

In Brotherhood,
Doc Pries - MRFA Vice President and Group Admin



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