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# Viet Vet Monsoon Tribune

Volume III, Issue No. 6

VVA Chapter 106

July, 1986

## NEW APPOINTMENTS

At the last Board Meeting held July 10, 1986, Bill Rasmussen resigned his temporary position of Secretary of the Chapter. Succeeding Bill will be a relatively new member to the Chapter, Mike Brasher. He became involved as a result of the Chapter's participation in A & A Days at Davis-Monthan. A Vietnam Veteran and on active duty, Mike has taken an active interest and commitment to our Chapter.

Also appointed to the position of Associate Liaison was Eleanor Reitz, Chair of the POW/MIA Committee. You'll be hearing more from Eleanor and Mike later in this Newsletter. Good luck on your new appointments and a job well done Bill. Thanks to all of you!

## THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

This month's General Meeting will be dealing with the internal structure of the Chapter and discussion on the dispersion of recently received or to be received Chapter funds.

September elections are coming up. We will be reviewing the electoral policies of the National Charter and electing the Nominating Chairperson. All offices will be open for bid. They are Executive Committee President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, plus five elected Board of Directors. Those interested in seeking one of these positions should attend this meeting. Get Involved!

Soon to be available are monies from various fund raising projects we've endured, that will need to be dispersed to community support. The Chapter needs your input as to where these funds should be placed and what community groups should benefit. Please let us know! Attend this meeting!

Dealing with internal affairs, the Chapter is actively seeking a Membership Committee Chairperson. We desperately need someone to fill this position. Some of the duties involved are maintaining Chapter membership files, reporting and forwarding Chapter info to National and following up on Chapter renewals. HELP!

## ACROSS THE FENCE

Many apologies to the Vets at Santa Rita. This month, due to lack of personnel and bad timing, we were unable to meet. For the benefit of those not informed, the Chapter has been attempting to maintain an outreach program with the Santa Rita Veterans Association at the Wilmot Correctional Facility. Anyone wishing to participate in the fulfilling program, please contact Bill Rasmussen or Dave Croteau. We'll be hearing more about the progress from the Vets themselves in future newsletter issues.

# PRESIDENTS CORNER

Let me open by saying that I hope that everyone had a pleasant 4th of July. We were to have some Vets participate in the 4th of July Parade and Picnic, but due to the rain in different parts of Tucson, we decided that since it was raining, we wouldn't participate. That does not mean that we weren't represented. Thanks to Mary Mohs and Eleanor Reitz and the M.I.A./P.O.W.- MOBILE there was some participation. Thank you ladies!

July, August and September are crucial months for Chapter 106. At this month's Chapter meeting, we will have to ELECT a Nominating Committee. Previously, the Nominating Committee Chairman was appointed by the President, but due to changes in the Constitution, the Chairman of the Committee must be elected by the membership. I'd like to take this time to thank Dave Croteau for the job that he did for the Chapter as Nominating Committee Chairman last year. As stated, IT IS UP TO YOU to elect a new Nominating Committee Chairman and for that, we need YOU to come to this month's Chapter meeting.

Once a Nominating Committee Chairman has been elected, the Chairman will set up the committee and begin to take nominations for ALL positions on the Board. It will be for the month's of July, August and September. Since we had an EMERGENCY ELECTION last year as you recall, the Board has moved to hold our ANNUAL MEETING this September. The Board Meeting will take place immediately prior to the ANNUAL MEETING (Yearly Elections) and elections will take place at that Chapter Meeting.

If you are interested in running for a position on the Board, NOW is the time for you to act. NOTHING GETS DONE ON IT'S OWN, it takes effort, responsibility and COMMITMENT. You've heard this from me before, and you can be sure to hear it from me again. I'd like to also add, that you have to be a certain kind of individual, ready to take criticism, whether you like it or not. In addition, you had better know the issues or you will only misrepresent the Chapter. So if you're interested in running for an Office or Directorship consider these factors. I personally have seen too many Vets come and go because they didn't possess the essential qualities of EFFORT, RESPONSIBILITIES and COMMITMENT. I'm not telling you this because it's what I want, but rather a matter of policy for the proper operation of ANY successful Management Program.

Did you know that the MONSOON TRIBUNE goes out to more than 700 families a month? Did you know that for the most part there is only ONE individual who puts the Newsletter together? JOHN SHIRLEY. Yes, other people help with articles, information and the like, but only John does the GRUNT work. It's TIME for some of you people to get off your duff and participate in the newsletter. And what about all you people who get the newsletter and aren't Chapter members? WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU THINK? HOW DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANYTHING? WHEN WILL YOU TAKE YOUR PART? You've been receiving the MONSOON TRIBUNE for months now and I haven't seen 70 people (10% at a meeting is representative) at a Chapter meeting yet?

I'm NOT angered over your Newsletter response, I'm saddened. We provide you the information and updates and every month it's the same dedicated few who contribute to the Newsletter. WE NEED YOUR INPUT NOW. We need your help with the Newsletter NOW. And we need YOU to participate in YOUR CHAPTER NOW.

I would very much like to see you at this month's Chapter Meeting and hear some of your views, feelings and opinions.

In camaraderie,

*Albie Giaro*



# POW/MIA UPDATE

Poor is the nation that has no heroes; shameful is the nation having them that FORGETS!

POW film may have Chinese connection. The Senate Veterans Affairs Committee subpoenaed two former Green Berets to appear before its committee on July 16, or face contempt of congress charges. The committee is trying to secure a video tape showing POWs still held in captivity in Laos as late as 1985. The two-hour tape is allegedly in the possession of Robin Gregson (aka John Obassy). The tape surfaced after Ret. Major Mark Smith and Ret. SFC Melvin McIntire sued President Reagan to secure the release of POWs left behind after the end of the Vietnam conflict. In February 1986, Mark Waple, attorney for Smith & McIntire, had a letter delivered to President Reagan, which stated the tape could be secured for 4.2 million dollars in cash. The money was to be delivered to a point somewhere in the Far East. According to reports, President Reagan turned the purchase down. Vice President George Bush asked Texas billionaire, H. Ross Perot, to purchase the tape.

A transcript written by Richard James Barker, International Operations Coordinator for Wildfire International, has recently surfaced in the POW/MIA activist network. Following a jagged trail of betrayal, shady drug dealers, and the shadows of double agent contacts, the transcript makes a very convincing account which indicates the Obassy tape originated from Hoan Van Hoang. Hoang is a former high-ranking Vietnamese official who, in 1977, grew disenchanted with Soviet occupation and aspirations in Vietnam. Hoang left for China and joined with strong allies in the Chinese Communist Party. According to reports, Hoang is a highly respected Ho Chi Minh loyalist who commands the loyalty of many Vietnamese provincial chiefs. Hoang's objective is to retake the Vietnamese government from the Soviet puppetry of Le Duan (now deceased) and Nguyen Co Thach. After a series of back-alley contacts, Barker was put in contact with Hoang's representatives, who said they would arrange the release of 476 American POWs for a diplomatic price. Hoang has no love for the U.S. government and insisted that the negotiations be carried on through the Canadian government. He agreed to prove his ability to deliver the support of the Vietminh and provincial chiefs. He agreed to provide a two-hour film of American POWs, some of whom he has moved into China. These events took place between April and December 1985. A plan was developed in which American POW Colonel Charles Alva Dale, U.S. Army, would be the first released to the Canadian Embassy in Peking. Following an interview with Bill Paul of the Wall Street Journal, other POWs would be released in groups of 20-30. The release was scheduled for Christmas 1985. However, between October-December, the negotiations broke down and the release was delayed. In January 1986, attempts were made to reestablish negotiations. Hoang and the Chinese accused Canada and the United States of insincerity and they closed the operation down. Barker returned to the U.S. and was arrested in early 1986, and accused of drug dealing. Barker claims his partner, Robert Ketcheson, and others of setting him up.

Now enters John Obassy who states he has a two-hour video tape and will turn it over to the U.S. government for 4.2 million in cash. Senator Frank Murkowski, Chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, makes public John Obassy's true identity. Mr. Obassy is jailed in Singapore on drug charges. He is angry and refuses to turn over the video tape to Mark Smith. Obassy has purportedly destroyed the tape. On analysis, the Obassy tape is a duplicate of the Hoang tape. Smith and McIntire say that money is not the problem. They believe the tape can be acquired by granting Hoang political and material considerations. It is obvious the Reagan administration showed no interest when they could have brought our men home for Christmas 1985.

These missing Americans have continued to honor their country. Now, we must ask, "What will their country do for them? We, individually and collectively, are their country. WHAT PART WILL YOU PLAY IN THEIR REPATRIATION?"

Eleanor Apodaca Reitz  
Sister of Major Victor J. Apodaca, USAF  
June 8, 1967 North Vietnam

# HISTORY

In the history section this month we are going to give you the answers to the trivia quiz we have been running. We had absolutely no entries so it must be too tough for you. Either that or you are all rich and don't need a twenty five dollar gift certificate! The three Air Force aces were stationed at Udorn Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand. Their names in the order they made are, Capt. Richard Steve Ritchie, Capt. Charles B. DeBellvue, and Capt. Jeffery S. Feinstein. The aircraft they flew was the F-4 Phantom. Only Ritchie was a pilot the other two were back seaters. Because the F-4 was so complex both the pilot and the back seater were credited with the kill. When DeBellvue and Feinstein made ace they were accepted for pilot training and eventually became pilots. DeBellvue was Ritchie's back seater for four kills. When Ritchie got his fifth MIG DeBellvue was on R & R. Because of the adverse publicity feared if an ace were to be shot down and captured when they got their fifth MIG they were barred from further combat missions. DeBellvue had four kills and on his last mission scored two more giving him six so he had the most. For all of you Navy folks out there we haven't forgotten you. There were also two Navy aces. They were Lt. Randy Cunningham and Lt. William Driscoll both had 5 kills.

## LOTS OF PEOPLE READ THE TRIBUNE

This month's Monsoon Tribune will go out to over 700 veterans and concerned individuals. Recently I received an inquiry from the editor of the Veteran, our national newspaper concerning Peg-Leg by Jerry Donnellan. In the "July '86 Tribune" I deliberately omitted his address to hopefully channel some response through the Chapter. As a result of the article, I'm proud to say Mr. Donnellan's article may receive national attention in next month's national edition. For those wishing his address, here it is. Peg-Leg, P.O. Box 599, Bardonia, NY 10954-0599. Self-addressed response cards are also available through the Chapter. You saw it first in the Monsoon Tribune!

And more...The last two issues of the Tribune have been a bit smaller than normal, partly due to summertime, partly due to lack of writers and in part to advertising. In order to keep "puttin' out the word" the newsletter needs support. Your donation through writing and advertising keeps us afloat. Remember, a business card ad costs only \$10.00 per issue. Send your letters, send your money, (even if you don't have a card).

Just a reminder, when submitting copy for publication, if possible type it single spaced with a 7½ inch line length or ½ margin on each side of the sheet of paper.

Special thanks to Butler Paper company for the donation of paper for this month's issue!

## MINOR CHANGES IN MEETING DATES

In order to avoid conflicts at the DAV meetings, dates have been set for Board Meetings, the second Thursday of each month and General Meetings the 4th Thursday of each month. Previously it had been the last Thursday of each month for General and two weeks prior for Board. Please take note of this change.

# MEETING DATES

GENERAL MEETING - July 31st at D.A.V. Chapter 18, Time 8:00p.m.

BOARD MEETING - August 14th at D.A.V. Chapter 18, Time 8:00 P.M.

GENERAL MEETING - August 28th at D.A.V. Chapter 18, Time 8:00 p.m.

Remember in order to take advantage of all Chapter benefits we MUST have your DD 214 on Chapter file.

## AO Payment Update

Charles T. Hagel, Chairman of a five-member Advisory Board of Vietnam veterans, reported that organizations will soon be selected to handle the enormous task of distributing the Agent Orange settlement fund to tens of thousands of eligible Vietnam veterans and survivors. The five-member Agent Orange Payment Program Advisory Board was appointed by the U.S. District Court to help oversee the distribution of the settlement fund in the Agent Orange case.

The Board has been working closely with the Court and with Special Masters Kenneth Feinberg and Richard Davis to select organizations to collect information from veterans, screen their claims, invest the funds, and distribute payments. Forty-seven organizations have submitted proposals to manage the distribution and investment of the fund. Hagel described the quality of the proposals as "first-rate" and expects that the Court will be ready to make selections within the next two months.

Once the settlement fund administrators have been selected, detailed application forms will be sent to all claimants. All veterans or survivors who have already filed a claim form will automatically receive a new application. Veterans or sur-

vivors who have not filed a claim and would like to do so should contact the Agent Orange Computer Center, P.O. Box 905, Smithtown, New York 11787. All claimants should advise the Agent Orange Computer Center of any change of address.

Payments will be made to Vietnam veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange and who now suffer from a total disability caused by any disease, or to spouse or children of veterans who have died of any disease.

The board expects the process of collecting and evaluating information from veterans to be in full operation before the end of the year. However, the Board cautioned that eligible veterans and survivors should not expect to receive checks from the settlement before the end of 1986. The settlement is currently being appealed in the United States Court of Appeals in New York, which heard arguments on April 9th and 10th. It is impossible to predict when the Court of Appeals will issue a ruling on the validity of the settlement.

In addition to the payments to individual veterans and survivors, settlement funds will be used to establish an Agent Orange Class Assistance Foundation.

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(202) 332-3305 Officers  
1-800-424-7275 HOTLINE

VARO 622-6424 Tucson  
263-5411 Phoenix  
1-800-352-0451 Elsewhere

VA POW Hotline 1-800-821-8139  
VA IG Hotline 1-800-368-5899  
GAO Fraud Hotline 1-800-424-5454  
Vets Outreach Center 323-3271

Federal Information Center  
522 N. Central Ave., Rm. 120  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
261-4736 Jobs Tape

DES Vets Employment Hotline  
4525 E. Broadway 628-5722  
316 W. Ft. Lowell 628-5561  
195 W. Irvington 628-5749

AZ State Legislature  
1-800-352-8404

AZ Vets Svc Commission 628-5388  
Pima Voter Registrar 792-VOTE  
Agent Orange Class Action  
1-800-645-1355

Sen. Barry Goldwater  
Federal Bldg., 301 W. Congress  
Tucson, AZ 85701 629-6334

Sen. Dennis DeConcini  
33 N. Stone  
Tucson, AZ 85701 629-6831

Rep. Jim Kolbe  
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Tucson, AZ 85712 323-1467

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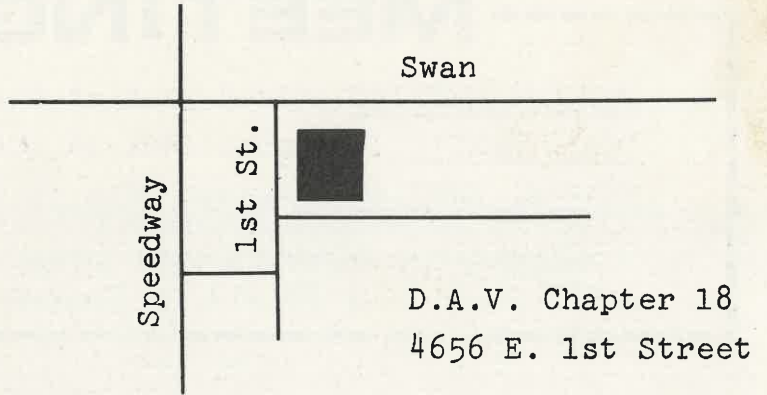


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- I am not a Vietnam era veteran, but would like to be an Associate Member.

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