

MEKONG EXPRESS MAIL



The newsletter of the Thailand-Laos-Cambodia Brotherhood, Inc. Volume 20, issue 2

WWW.TLC-Brotherhood.com

Trip Report—TLCB Assistance

Visits to Xieng Khouang Province Schools 18 to 23 February 2019

By Glenn Black

On 19 February 2019, the first-of-the-year TLCB Assistance trip to Laos occurred, led by Vaughan Smith, who has taken the baton from the late Mac Thompson. Paul Carter, Larry Crider, Don Johnson, and I, Glenn Black, accompanied him. We went to the Plain of Jars, Xieng Khouang Province, to visit recently finished school renovations and/or improvements, inspect the work, and attend the handover ceremonies.



The Background

These projects were identified in 2018 and submitted as proposals to the TLCB Assistance Committee by Ajan Soundeuane, TLCB’s counterpart at the Provincial Education Ministry in Phonsavan, Xieng Khouang Province. (Note: Ajan is a title, which generally indicates a university-level position or a religious instructor).

Ajan Soundeuane and Somphou, Mac’s trusty driver, visited Mac in the hospital in early October 2018, and Ajan Soundeuane wrote a beautiful eulogy for Mac, which appeared in the March *Mekong Express Mail*. His requests were translated by TLCB member Art Crisfield and sent for review by the Assistance Committee. The Assistance Committee approved the motions for funding and work started and continued through 2018 and early in 2019. Ajan Soundeuane communicated that each of the projects was nearing completion. Vaughan was contacted by the TLCB to arrange visits to inspect the renovations or improvements to the schools and attend handover ceremonies at the three school sites. The dates agreed to with Ajan Soundeuane were February 20 through 22.

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Reunion NEWS! See page 16.

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Editor's Notebook:

Once again, the *Mekong Express Mail* demonstrates the continuing vitality and dynamism of The Thailand Laos Cambodia Brotherhood. On page one, we celebrate the continuation of our Assistance Program with a detailed report by Glenn Black, who accompanied our new "man in Southeast Asia," Vaughn Smith, on the program's first trip since the passing of the unforgettable Mac Thompson. Beginning on pages 9 and 11, we note the passing of two memorable and noteworthy members of the TLCB community, Rose "Rosie" Wheatley and Jean Pierre-Benoist. Following close after those memorials, we introduce two new members, each with interesting stories.¹ My point is that the TLCB is an organization that appears to have a remarkable capacity to regenerate itself. A few years ago, I chaired an Ad Hoc Committee on the Future of the TLCB. Although we did not come up with a formal plan to restructure, we did recognize that there was a significant opportunity to find new members who had roots in the Vietnam War era, particularly with interests in Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia. In the subsequent years, that conclusion has been found to be profoundly evident. The TLCB's "sunset" is far in the future.

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1 As a matter of policy, I contact all new TLCB members and invite them to submit profiles, or longer stories if they choose. The acceptance rate is usually around one or two out of ten. Message: Hey Newbies, we're all getting too long in the tooth to be so shy.



Mekong Express Mail Index

For an on-line index to all MEM articles ever published, starting with our first issue in June of 2000, go to our wonderful TLCB Website: www.TLC-Brotherhood.com. All articles are listed by issue year and month, by title, with the authors' names and short descriptions of the subject matter. Go take a look sometime!

<http://tlc-brotherhood.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/MEM-Master-Index-031317.pdf>

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Reunion 2019: Las Vegas, Nevada

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February 18— Staging at Nong Khai

Each of us got ourself to Nong Khai and spent the night prior to departure the next day. TLCB members from Bangkok took trains, flew, or bused to Nong Khai. Larry and I flew from Chiang Mai to Udon Thani, then took an hour van ride to Nong Khai to rendezvous with Vaughan and others. The next day the team went to Thai immigration, crossed the river, and entered Laos.

February 19— Rendezvous at Thai-Lao Friendship Bridge

At the border, we were met by the friendly face of driver Somphou. We collected our passports and bags and immediately began the seven to eight-hour drive to Phonsavan. Don Johnson fell sick during this long drive and had to immediately take a flight to Vientiane and back to his home in Bangkok; he is fine now, and may fly to Phonsavan if he makes another trip with us.

The team stayed at three different hotels in Phonsavan. I, a creature of habit, opted for the Dok Khoun Hotel, Mac's old standby, due to the parking and proximity to nearby restaurants. Somphou also stayed there, beaming his usual welcome, helping us unload. He then asked where Mac was and registered shock upon hearing that his friend Mac had left us.

February 20

Early the next day we were met by Ajan Soundeuane, who identifies the needy, motivated communities whose schools require repairs or renovations—usually replacement of tin roofing, cement floors, latrines or dormitories; and sometimes includes furniture and teaching materials. He engages the

communities in identifying these needs and obtains their ‘buy-in,’ which can include the willingness to provide local labor, sand, aggregate, or transport to bring materials to the work sites and perform the work to complete the job. This is an example of “education-focused community development.”

Ajan Soundeuane offers The TLCB's assistance to the school communities whose teachers and parents determine their own needs and contribute their own labor towards accomplishing those goals, then drafts project proposal to the local government education office. A similar strategy was used with much success by the pre-1975 USAID and implemented by International Volunteer Service Volunteers (IVS) in Laos.

I should mention that the trip and visits with authorities and school sites are much the same as when Mac was with us. Vaughan carried out the handover ceremonies with Ajan Soundeuane, and Larry Crider expressed the TLCB's appreciation of the community's participations in completing the school renovations. Both Vaughan and Larry spoke in their quite fluent Thai. (Mac had previously explained to us that, owing to the Lao's familiarity with Thai language via Thai television, most ethnic Lao prefer hearing foreigners speak in Thai language rather than attempting to speak their language.)

Ajan Soundeuane met the group the next morning and we began our 59-kilometer journey to Muang Phou Kout off Route 7, northwest from Phonsavan. The village leaders and headmaster had requested roofing sheets to repair the leaky roof and cement to replace the dirt (mud in the monsoon season). The school provides education to about 80 students, over half of whom are Hmong and the rest are Lao Loum. The school is neat and orderly and the new roof is shiny with good quality,

Assistance continues on page 4

Ban Sy Chom Primary School with new roof sheets. Photos provided by the author and by Vaughan Smith.



Assistance continues from page 3

zinc-coated roof sheets. The new cement floor adds a clean appearance, and will be very welcome come rainy season. The local officials and residents appeared pleased with the TLCB assistance, and the handover and “Baci” ceremonies followed.

February 21- Ban Lang Chong Primary School

The next day we traveled to Ban Lang Chong Primary School, Muang Phou Kout, located 93 kilometers North-Northwest of Phonsavan. It is actually over the edge of the Plain of Jars, down a valley surrounded by mountains. It borders Muang Phon Xay of Luang Phabang Province. The school site is comparatively isolated and out of the way and it took most of the morning to arrive there. TLCB members visited this site in late April of 2015 when Mac and Ajan Sounduane discussed needs with the school headmaster and village leaders.

TLCB funds were for materials to help make repairs to the school and build two dorms for students and teachers, who come from the neighboring Ban Sop Sam School, which was severely damaged by high winds in mid-2018. Though other donors constructed a permanent new school in Ban Lang Chong,



Vaughan, Headmaster, and Village Leader sign handover documents—Ajan Sounduane looks on.

the older wooden school gets used as a kindergarten and was in need of new steel and zinc roofing sheets, as well as cement floors. The TLCB also purchased roofing and cement for the floors of a kitchen and the dormitories, one for girls and one for boys. The villagers provided all the wood for these two dorms,



Group Photo after Ban Sy Chom School Handover Ceremony and Baci.

Assistance continues next page.



Ban Lang Chom Kitchen and Dorms on the Left.

and they assisted with the transportation.

Isolated school communities and remote families very much appreciate the dormitories where their children can stay at the school site during the week, the distances being too far for boys and girls to travel on a daily basis. Once at the school they are under the watch of the headmaster and teachers. All children are encouraged to grow vegetables for those children in the dormitories and the community provides the kitchen with enough food to feed them. The children go home on the weekends. Were it not for the dormitories, the children might not be able to attend. Late that afternoon we returned to Phonsavan, about 4:30 PM, and Paul Carter returned to Bangkok that evening.

February 22

The remaining team members joined Ajan Soundeuane for the trip to Ban Sy Sieng Mai Primary School, some 32 kilometers South-West of Phonsavan. The access and roads to the school were good, and we were met by many parents, teachers, and attending school children.

The original school was built in 1992 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for Hmong repatriated from Thai refugee camps. The school provides education for about a 150 girls and boys— half of whom are ethnic Hmong and half Lao Loum. The immediate local community has about 160 families. After 25 years, the tin roofs were leaking and ceilings damaged. The TLCB funded new tin roofs, plywood for ceiling repairs, paint, rollers, and nails;



Above, new roof sheet at Ban Lang Chong School.
Below, dorm with new Cement Floor and Roofing.



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from page 5*

the community provided labor.

The students of this school were the more enthusiastic frisbee throwers of the trip, and immediately appeared to catch the knack of throwing and catching them. I took no photos recording this enthusiasm because I was too busy throwing the frisbee, but thankfully somebody did. At the end of each handover ceremony, the TLCB provided frisbees, soccer and volley balls, ball pumps, and hard-plastic takraw balls, previously wicker balls kicked in takraw games, which are a lively sort of kick volleyball and fun to watch. They are a big hit with the kids.

The team returned to Phonsavan and remained another night.

February 23

We drove to the edge of the PDJ and down the mountains, eventually to the coastal lowlands along the Mekong and the Friendship Bridge. I remained in Vientiane for the evening and crossed into Thailand Sunday the 24th and took the van to Udon Thani and Nok Air flight to Chiang Mai. All in all, it was a great trip and Mac would have been proud of Vaughan and the team.

It felt or seemed like MacAlan “Mac” Thompson was along with us the whole time and he certainly was in spirit.



Baci ceremony at Ban Sy Chom School—village leaders left and TLCB team right. Attending: right to left: Sompeu, Vaughan Smith, Glenn Black, Larry Crider and Paul Carter



Above, At Ban Sy Sieng Mai Primary School Glenn Black delights teachers with frisbee demonstration. Ajan Soundeuane observes, at right.



At left, Larry Crider visits classroom—Ban Lang Chom School.

*Assistance continues
next page*



Ban Sy Siang Mai Primary School
Children receive Sports Equipment



At left, Ban Sy Siang Mai Students and
Teachers after Ceremony



At left, Ban Sy Siang Mai Sports
Enthusiasts

The Work of Lia Genovese

Evenings in Phonsavan— the TLCB team often met with Lia Genovese, a friend of Mac and Paul and an academician who has been studying the Jar Sites of the Plain of Jars for nearly 20 years. Lia is probably the most knowledgeable authority on the origins/possible use and origins of the Bronze Age jars. Her knowledge and travels around the remote Jar Sites on the PDJ made Lia an interesting dinner companion, who occasionally gives presentations on her findings in Bangkok at the Siam Society talks. An article about Lia’s work is available on The Christian Science Monitor’s Website:

<https://www.csmonitor.com/Science/2016/0405/Researchers-begin-to-crack-the-mystery-of-Laos-s-Plain-of-Jars>

See Assistance Postscript on page 8

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Assistance Postscript: The following map displays the team’s travel (tracks in blue) to each of the three school sites from Phonsavan, the capital of Xieng Khouang Province.



Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)

One feature of the area near the school at Ban Sy Siang Mai were the numerous bomb craters behind it. The authorities didn’t mention them and we didn’t bring them up. These remnants of the war are an unfortunate and ever-present reminder of Laos turbulent past, and perhaps more regrettably, the present. Many parts of Laos including the Plain of Jars and Xieng Khouang Province remain heavily contaminated, primarily by Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) but also mines and UXO residue left by all sides. UXO and Mines Awareness signs are displayed at all schools warning children and adults alike not to touch ordnance when encountered and to report the danger to authorities. The US Department of State continues to provide Laos with financial support to UXO-Lao, the Lao national agency responsible for the clearance of un-exploded ordnance (UXO). As part of their national focus, UXO-Lao also send UXO Awareness Teams to provide schools and communities with presentations about risks posed by UXO and mines. For more information, visit <https://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/othr/misc/284147.htm>



Note: *Mekong Express Mail* has covered UXO extensively. See articles in December 2000, March 2007, and June 2008 issues.

In Memoriam

Rose “Rosie” Wheatley

9 January 1950 – 16 March 2019

By Robert “Bob” Wheatley

She was the love of my life, my only love. Rosie and I met on a blind date in 1971, and we just clicked. Having been somewhat lost and aimless after my return from Southeast Asia, I knew almost immediately that this was the woman I wanted to share my life with. She was to be my rock, my purpose in life, my stabilizer. I could tell right away that she was a gentle soul with a kind and generous heart with so much love to give. A recently divorced single mother of a handicapped toddler, I soon learned that she had come through some very tough times in her short 21 years. I made it my purpose in life to love and protect her and her son from any further hurt and to give them the best life I possibly could.

Rosie was born in 1950 in Indianapolis. She came from humble beginnings, having grown up in a poor neighborhood on Indy’s south side in the old Fountain Square district. Her mother had to take in neighbors’ laundry and sewing to try to make ends meet. To supplement the family income, Rosie and her siblings often would walk the alleyways behind their rented flat in search of pop bottles to return for deposit. In the winter, to help heat the house they searched for bits of coal that had fallen off the coal delivery trucks. Indeed, in the hardest winter



May 22, 2013

times there was no heat at all and the girls slept together bundled in their winter coats under a pile of blankets.

Welfare, the Catholic Church, and local charities helped the family out. Much of the clothing Rosie and her siblings wore in their younger days was furnished by the Salvation Army, and much of it was sewn by their mother who was an accomplished seamstress. I guess Rosie must have inherited her talent with needle and thread from her mother. In high school she excelled in her home economics classes where she sharpened the sewing skills that would serve her and others well later in her life. When Rosie and I were wed in 1972, having learned the lesson of frugality from her mother, she sewed her own wedding gown, and what a beautiful bride she was.

Having come from such humble beginnings, Rosie felt a deep empathy for others in need. Sewing and quilting was to become the primary means by which

she could give of herself to others. It was her creative outlet. She donated many quilts for children who were undergoing chemo treatments at Riley Children’s Hospital in Indianapolis, and she made and donated countless dresses for impoverished little girls in Africa. For more than twenty years, she made monthly donations to the Christian Children’s Fund to aid impoverished children in Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. She often gave of her time to work with handicapped adults teaching sewing arts and



Above, Rosie and Bob, November 27, 2016, Scottsdale. At far right, the wedding dress (1972).



Rosie continues on page 10.

Rosie continues from page 9.

crafts at the local shelter workshop where our son Jeff worked.

Rosie has also been a lifelong, staunch supporter of veterans' causes. During our engagement, once weekly she volunteered at the Indianapolis VA hospital, escorting patients on bowling outings. Later in life she assembled care packages to send to the

troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. When I first became involved with the TLCB in 1998, Rosie enthusiastically supported me in that, and became an active participant herself. She accompanied me to every reunion I attended. Soon she hit upon the idea of making quilts to be raffled off to the membership and their families and friends to raise money for the TLCB Assistance Fund.

Rosie's first such quilt was raffled at the 2000 Colorado Springs Reunion and it was a huge hit. Each year thereafter, up to and including the 2018 Biloxi Reunion, she made a quilt for raffle. All of her quilts were truly one-of-a-kind pieces. Literally hundreds of hours of labor went into each of those quilts, and every single one was made with painstaking care. In those 19 years, Rosie's quilts brought in more than \$40,000 to aid the children of Southeast Asia in memory of our TLC brothers who did not return with us.

Rosie's passion in life had always been in helping others less fortunate than she, and she expected nothing in return for her labors. Someone once asked of her, "What's in it for you?" Astonished at such a question she responded, "I get to help the kids!" This was the kind, generous, loving person that was my Rosie. She is gone to her rest now, but she leaves behind a legacy of kindness, love, and generosity. I was truly blessed to have her as my partner in life for these past forty-eight years, and I give thanks for every minute we were together.

There will never be another "Rosie."



Drawing at the 2017 Reunion in Dayton. Chaplain Debra Stein, at left, drew the winning ticket. Rosie presented the quilt to the lucky winner, Duane Mullen, of Sidney, Ohio. Duane later wrote: "Note—we love Rosie's quilt! Just a few minutes earlier (after a trip down the hall), I asked Rosie if they had had the drawing for "my" quilt yet. If you remember me laughing like a clown when my name was drawn, that is why..."



Rosie's Legacy

By Thelma Tilton

There is a lot of talk about legacy these days. Who comes to my mind regarding that noun is Rosie Wheatley and the endowment she gave to all of us involved in the TLCB. It's often used to describe what a president leaves to history. In his eulogy, Bob, Rosie's loving husband, provided insight into the local, generous giving that was part of Rosie's legacy.

TLCB Rosie, our Rosie, was even more global. The raffle was such a great success because of her every-year willingness to labor over choosing an appropriate concept for the quilt, buy materials that "popped" and demonstrate her reverence for the theme, not to mention the hours of painstaking piecing together those various fabrics and careful stitching the materials. With her special kind of devotion to detail, she helped provide better education and a more comfortable environment in schools that sometimes had dirt floors and no toilets.

How many young children in Southeast Asia benefitted from those stitches, that kindness and giving? Rosie raised over \$40,000 for the TLCB with her talent and beneficence. Let's take up her torch. Let's keep Rosie's Raffle going strong. Let's think of her when it's time to buy raffle tickets, and let's continue to dream up ideas for each year to carry her legacy high!



Rosie's first TLCB quilt!

This photo was taken in 2000, in Colorado Springs, and was run in the June, 2003 MEM, in an article to encourage the sale of 2003 raffle tickets.

Above: In Colorado Springs, at Reunion 2000, from left to right: Col Jimmie Butler, author of "A Certain Brotherhood," Rosie Wheatley, Board Secretary Leigh Hotujec, and Raven FAC Col Jim Roper, author of "Quoth the Raven." The quilt was signed by many members, who "bought" squares, and in person by banquet speaker, Gen Robin Olds.. Gen Olds' daughter, Christine, will speak at the 2019 banquet.

Note: See "Reunion Quilt Raffle 2019" on page 13 for information about the quilt and Rosie's Raffle.

In Memoriam

John Pierre-Benoist

by Paul Pierre-Benoist

John Pierre-Benoist, a charter member of the Thailand Laos Cambodia Brotherhood, passed away on April 14, 2019. His son, Paul Pierre-Benoist, provided The Mekong Express Mail with the following tribute to his father.



Above, one of the most recent pictures of John, happily at the helm of a boat that he rented to take some family members out for a day on the lake. Photos furnished by Paul Pierre-Benoist. This one was used at John's service.

John Pierre-Benoist was born in New York, NY, July 22nd, 1947. Each of his parents was an only child, as was he. His father was a French diplomat, so John grew up all over, including the Swiss Alps, moving often due to his father's work. When John was a teenager, his parents separated and his mother brought him to Washington, D.C., where he spent most of his life.

At 17, he enlisted in the United States Air Force on September 10, 1964. For part of his USAF time, he was stationed at Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base. After his Air Force service, he studied at American University, where he got his undergraduate and master's degrees. He became a civil servant, working for the U.S. government for 30 years, spending the bulk of his time at the International Trade Commission as an International Trade Analyst. After retiring, he began a second career driving a school bus.

John was a jolly giant of a man, always putting children and others ahead of himself. He spent many years driving his van, the "John Mobile," for his kid's friends, children not his blood, but all of whom were "his" kids. And that is why the school bus was an appropriate retirement career.

While a student at American University he met the love of his life, Matilde. John and Maty were happily married for over 46 years and had three beautiful children: Angelique,

Jean-Louis, and Paul-Michel. He is survived by Maty, Jean-Louis, and Paul-Michel. Sadly, he survived his own daughter, losing Angelique 10 years ago to leukemia. John also left this world with four beautiful grandchildren.

On April 14th, 2019, John was super excited to take his grandson out on his motorcycle for a ride, which was only their second ride together since his grandson was just recently old enough to go along. While on the ride, a minivan failed to yield and turned left in front of them. In a split-second decision, John managed to throw his grandson to the grass, saving the boy's life, but John died instantly. *A hero to the end.*

This is what one of John's "chosen" daughters, which was what his non-blood children called themselves, wrote about him:

"When we were kids, we all had that other parent. An extra parent. Not your actual parent but a friend's parent who takes you in, looks out for you, gives you advice, and puts your crooked ass back into place when your actual parents aren't there to do it. I had a couple. Yesterday I lost one of those extra parents. John always gave me advice. Always kept in touch, no matter where I was. Always reminded me that being misunderstood wasn't a travesty. John, my heart aches for your family, but I know you are happy to have Angelique back in your arms.

"I'll miss you Papi."



John at 19, in Thailand.



Above John and Maty's wedding picture.



New Member Profile: John Mastro

I enlisted in the Army in 1970, with an interest in military intelligence, and was selected for that area based on tests for the Army Security Agency. This separate-but-equal branch of the military was responsible for the interception and analysis of signals intelligence. After Advanced Individual Training (AIT), I received the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) of Traffic Analyst (98C20), which was redesignated Signal Intelligence Analyst. This MOS entailed identification of enemy units, locations, and order of battle data, which work could be done to the strategic or tactical level.

Initially assigned to Vietnam, I got diverted to Thailand in January 1971, assigned to the 7th Radio Research Field Station, in Udorn. I worked with the group of analysts that covered what we called "low level Pathlet Lao." We worked with intelligence collected by Air America, CIA, and others. Even now, the world knows little of what was occurring in Laos during that time.

I was in Thailand only briefly. The Army, in its wisdom, asked for volunteers, and off I went back to Vietnam on 1 May 71. I enjoyed my time in Thailand and often visited the monk's teak lodges, in an attempt to learn Thai.

In the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), I served with the 101st Airborne, 265th Radio Research Co., involved with tactical intelligence and Army Airborne Radio Direction Finding (ARDF). I spent most of my time crewing an ARDF Huey and sitting on the DMZ monitoring NVA units. I left Quang Tri two

Right, John in Thailand. Far right, recent photo. "Then and now" photos provided by John Mastro.



Above, John in Vietnam.



days before the Easter Offensive, and after my tour I was stationed at Ft Bragg, NC.

My interest in Southeast Asia resulted in my obtaining a double major in East Asian Studies/Political Science from Central Connecticut State University. My RVN service spawned a thirty-year career in aviation maintenance at Pratt and Whitney Aircraft, on the F22 Military Program. I was a staff engineer when I retired in 2010. I've been married to Fran for 42 years, the girl I met in college. We enjoy traveling in the Continental U.S. My areas of interest are fly fishing, photography, and reading historical books on SEA.

What brought me to the group was Jimmy LaBella's bumper sticker on his auto.

He's a USAF Veteran I know from church and the vet center.



Newest Members in the TLC Brotherhood

The 8 members listed below joined between the last issue of the MEM and the end of May. You can find more information on our website database. The Mekong Express Mail wishes you all a hearty "Welcome Home."

No	Branch	Last Name	First Name	City	State
1866	USAF	Gadzinski	Leonard	Sterling Heights	MI
1867	USA	Mastro	John	Hartford	CT
1868	Other	Gatenby	Ian	Chiang Mai	Thailand
1869	Other	Hittle	Jon	Yankton	SD
1870	USA	Hill	Jim	Castledale	UT
1871	USAF	Brassard	Andre	Deltona	FL
1872	USAF	Geryak	David	Ft Worth	TX
1873	USAF	Mills	James	Tupelo	MS

Reunion Quilt Raffle 2019: Rosie's "Memory" Quilt

Rosie's Raffle will take on a different tone this year. As a group, we want to celebrate Rosie Wheatley's past work and honor the nature of her efforts to contribute so much to the success of the TLCB Assistance program. Rosie was the above-and-beyond, paramount fundraiser through the years. It is to her memory that this year's quilt symbolizes a kind of raffle renaissance.

In 2005, John and Maty Pierre-Benoist won the quilt raffle. A member was very disappointed at not obtaining the quilt since it had very special meaning for him. He contacted Maty and John

to see if they were interested in selling it, and they graciously agreed to relinquish ownership since the new owner promised to provide a generous donation to the Assistance program.

John Pierre Benoist is also remembered in this issue in his memoriam. This is "a small world" occurrence. Since Rosie and John have both left us (see In Memoriam articles on pages 9 and 11) what better quilt could we use than this one, melding Rosie's talent, John's generosity, and the "memory" quilt squares of commemoration?

This quilt contains about 125 squares that were bought by individuals for whatever they wanted to commemorate. The photo at right shows a detail from the mid-part. Note there has been some fading, but it is in great condition otherwise.

Sample of memory squares. Below are some of the squares on the quilt. You can find the full list on the Reunion page at www.TLC-Brotherhood.com.



In Memory	In Honor
Amos, "The Famous" Parker	Flight Brass-02
Barry Waters	Glen Edward Cosat
Bill Gardner	The Ghost Man
Captain Ed Ulrich	Joseph S. Carrano
Carl Corbin	Ferrall B. Wheatley
Clarence, Velma, Robert Ort	Leslie Johnson
David Cloud	Dr. Robert "Bob" Certain
Gay Tilton	Louise Slicker
Harold "Doc Marty" Martin	Jon Caton
Jack Shirley	Richard Caton
Jim Bartholomew	Richard B. Cheney
Joe Gagnon	Robert H. Shumaker
John Vickers	George W. Bush
Kenton P. Wheatley	George Johnson, Sr.
Lee Harley	Robert Marion Cosat

Remembering	Mentions
479 th Tactical Fighter Wing	To the Brotherhood 2005
Lima Site-85	Julius C. Houlditch, Jr
LS-15, Ban Na	Robert Wheatley
Wattaway Airport	Gunther H. Rehling
43 RD SW, Andersen AFB	Richard Rhoades
DET NO. 6 VIKING	Tom Wolfe
Personnel of Invert	Mack & Sunee Thompson
POWs of WW11	Gerry Connally

Official Notice: TLCB Election 2019

The TLC Brotherhood, Inc. Board of Directors election will be held at the Annual Meeting on Saturday, October 5, 2019, at the Alexis Park Resort in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The TLC Brotherhood Board of Directors has adopted the official slate, which was recommended by the Nominating Committee as announced in the March issue of this newsletter.

The absentee ballot and a proxy designation form are included with this issue, for use *only* by active members who are unable to attend the annual meeting. If you are going to be present to vote, do NOT use the form. If not able to be present, use either one section or the other to vote.

The official slate of nominees for 2019 is:

Vice President: Gerry Frazier

Secretary: Paul Lee

Chaplain: no candidate nominated

Members at large:

George Shenberger (eligible incumbent)

John Sweet (eligible incumbent)

Note that the TLCB Bylaws permit write-in votes; however, voters should make sure their write-in member is willing to serve if elected.

Thailand-Laos-Cambodia Brotherhood Authors List

List of works published by members of the TLCB, so far as known by The MEM.

Author		Title	Category	Publisher	Avbl Online
Barrett	Dean	Hangman's Point	Fiction	Village East Books	Yes
		Kingdom of Make Believe	Fiction	Village East Books	Yes
		Memoirs of a Bangkok Warrior	Fiction	Village East Books	Yes
		Skytrain to Murder	Fiction	Village East Books	Yes
Butler	Jimmie	A Certain Brotherhood	Non-fiction	Cricket Press	Yes
Davis	Charles O.	Across the Mekong	Non-fiction	Hildesigns Press	Yes
Gleason	Robert L.	Air Commando Chronicles	Non-fiction	Sunflower Univ Press	Yes
Harrington	John	The Year of the Lieutenant	Fiction	Archway Press	Yes
Harrington	Scott	They Called it Naked Fanny	Non-fiction	Hellgate Press	Yes
Hauser	Paul	I'm Always Going Somewhere	Non-fiction	Createspace	Yes
		Inherently Dangerous	Non-fiction	Createspace	Yes
Kittle	Jon (J.B.E.)	Michael Collins and the Anglo-Irish War: Britain's Counterinsurgency Failure	Non-fiction	Potomac Books	Yes
Martino	Joseph P.	The Justice Cooperative	Mystery	Elderberry Press	Yes
		A Fighting Chance: The Moral Use of Nuclear Weapons	Non-fiction	Ignatius Press	Yes
		R&D Project Selection	Non-fiction	John Wiley	Yes
		Resistance to Tyranny	Non-fiction	Createspace	Yes
		Technological Forecasting for Decision Making	Non-fiction	McGraw-Hill	No
McDaniel	C.R.	The Tales of the Six Tigers	Fiction		Yes
Melton	Alan	The Champa Flowers	Fiction		Yes
		The Green Parrots	Fiction		Yes
		The Libyan Bomb	Fiction		Yes
Morrison	Gayle L.	Sky is Falling	Non-fiction	McFarland & Co.	Yes
Polifka	Karl	Meeting Steve Canyon...	Non-fiction	Createspace	Yes
		Flying With the CIA in Laos	Non-fiction	Createspace	Yes
Rossell	Eugene	USAF Air Commando Secret Wars from Laos to Latin America	Non-fiction	Xlibris	Yes
Schreader	George	Hognose Silent Warrior	Non-fiction	Outskirts Press	Yes
		Unsung Hero: Forgotten War	Non-fiction	Outskirts Press	Yes
		Sergeant Doughboy: Journal of a WW1 American Soldier	Non-fiction	Outskirts Press	Yes
		The Nexus Colony	Fiction	Outskirts Press	Yes
Tambini	Anthony	Douglas Jumbos— The Globemaster	Non-fiction		Yes
		F-5 Tigers Over Vietnam	Non-fiction		Yes

Authors continues next page

Author		Title	Category	Publisher	Avbl Online
Tambini	Anthony	Ice Meteors— The Danger Overhead	Non-fiction		Yes
		UFOs - An Overview of Close Encounters and Low Flybys	Non-fiction		Yes
		Wiring Vietnam: The Electronic War	Non-fiction		Yes
Whitcomb	Darrel	The Rescue of BAT 21	Non-fiction	Naval Institute Press	Yes
Note: Bold Print Indicates Title Added Since December 2018					

New Member Profile: Rick deTriquet

I was born in Newark, New Jersey, and raised in nearby Essex County. I had family members living in Tucson, Arizona at the time, which lead me to apply to the University of Arizona after graduation from high school. I graduated from there and was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1979. Over the next 23 years, I served in a wide variety of command and staff assignments, including command of a Marine infantry battalion and extensive training deployments to Thailand, the Philippines, and Korea. A designated Foreign Area Officer for South East Asia, I graduated from the Defense Language Institute Thai Language Course and served as the Marine representative at the Joint US Military Advisory Group Thailand (JUSMAGTHAI) from 1995-98.

In the civilian sector, I supported the Defense Department and the Department of Homeland Security in a variety of program management positions in both the Norfolk and Washington DC areas until my retirement in 2018. I continue to volunteer locally with the National Park Service and also mentor at-risk elementary school children near my home. I enjoy continuing to polish my Thai language skills and enjoy annual trips to Thailand and canoeing the lakes and rivers of northern Canada. I am happy and humbled to have been accepted as a member of TLCB and hope to contribute to the goals of this tremendous organization.

I'm married to Chanaporn, who is from Ayuttayha, Thailand, and live in Fredericksburg, Virginia. My three sons, work in a variety of professions. Rick Jr. is a pilot with NOAA stationed out of the Tampa area. Tom is with the Peace Corps in Zambia working as an Agro/Forestry volunteer, and Bob is a substance counselor living in the Richmond area.



Rick and Chanaporn. Photos provided by the author.



Rick says: "This photo was not taken in Thailand but in the Philippines around 1981. It was taken during preparations for a combined Philippine and Marine exercise in a rather remote area in Aurora province."

Changed your address? ...eMail?

If so, please let us know so that we can update the official database and ensure that *MEM* issues and official mail get addressed properly. You can send an email to Treasurer@TLC-Brotherhood.com, or a note in the mail to TLC Brotherhood, PO Box 60, Aspers, PA 17304.

LIKE us on FACEBOOK—

***The Official Thailand, Laos, Cambodia
Brotherhood page***

2019 Las Vegas Reunion and Annual Meeting

...will take place at the Alexis Park Resort All Suite Resort on 375 E Harmon Ave. Las Vegas Nevada, which is near the airport and the Fashion Show Mall. (Not a casino, but there are casinos nearby).

Hotel Reservation Costs:

The reservation costs are \$69.00 for October 3, and \$89 for Oct 4th and 5th. If you wish to tour or party in Vegas before and after the Reunion, room prices are \$69 for Oct 2nd, 6th, and 7th. These prices are locked in at 2017 prices! All Vegas hotels have an entertainment fee plus tax per room per night. The Alexis Park Resort fee is \$14.00 each night you book, plus taxes. Watch the June Mekong Express Mail for more details.

Reservations:

To make reservations call 1-800-582-2228 or 702-796-3322. You must identify your affiliation with the **TLC GROUP TO GET THE GROUP RATES AT 2017 PRICES.**

Make reservations now while room suites are available!

TLCB Reunion Registration

The registration form and shirt order forms are enclosed with this issue of the *Mekong Express Mail*. You can mailed it in, or you may register at our website, www.TLC-Brotherhood.com.

Dick Jonas to Perform

Popular singer of “fighter pilot songs,” Dick Jonas, is engaged to perform at the TLC Brotherhood reunion banquet. Many members will recall songs such as “Itazuke Tower,” “Throw a Nickel on the Grass” (“Salvation Army”), and “There Ain’t no Fighter Pilots Down in Hell.” Learn more about Jonas at WWW.Erosonic.com.



October 3rd through the 5th

Reunion events include:

- An optional TOUR to NELLIS AFB
- The ever-popular Nipa Hut, where members and guests can mingle while sipping and snacking
- The great (and fun) TLCB Assistance Auction (bring your SEA “white elephants”)
- A tasty buffet-style banquet dinner
- A stupendous banquet program, featuring musical entertainment by the famous Dick Jonas and an acclaimed presentation, “The Life and Times of Robin Olds,” by Christina Olds, daughter of legendary fighter pilot Robin Olds. (See information below).



Christina Olds, Reunion Speaker!

In 2010, Christina Olds published a memoir of her father’s life titled *Fighter Pilot; Memoirs of a Legendary Ace Robin Olds*. The book became a national bestseller, heralded by reviewers and readers as an exceptionally literary and lyrical biography. Christina has begun work on a screenplay for FIGHTER PILOT, and is working on a second book, the story of her grandfather, Maj. Gen. Robert Olds, an instrumental leader in the development of early air power and the U.S. Air Force. A Vassar College graduate with a degree in creative writing, Christina is a sought-after speaker at Air Force and NATO bases, aviation museums and air shows, both nationally and abroad, and is dedicated to furthering her father’s legacy to inspire today’s active duty fighter pilots around the world. She lives in Sacramento, CA and is the mother of a beautiful daughter, Jennifer Olds Newman, a costume designer in Los Angeles.

