

Annual Membership Meeting**Vietnam Veterans of the 2nd Battalion 1st Marines**

**Annual Membership Meeting
Sunday November 11, 2018
Kenner, Louisiana**

Officers:

Philip D. Leslie, President
Lansdale B. Williams, Vice President
Timothy Dunn, Secretary
Mario A. Sagastume, Treasurer

Trustees:

Vin Burdziuk
Bruce Oliver
Jose Perez
Paul (Doc) Stein
Jesse Tipton

President Philip D. Leslie – Called the assembled sixty members to order and notified them that Master Gunnery Sergeant Frank Odzimowski (Ret) has been appointed the Association's Sergeant-at-Arms and Parliamentarian.

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Vietnam Veterans of the 2nd Battalion 1st Marines (VV 2/1 or Association) was **Called to Order** by MGySgt. Odzimowski, following which, he led the assembly in the **Pledge of Allegiance**.

In attendance were all the Officers and Trustees of VV 2/1 and sixty Association members.

Award Ceremony - Recognition was made public by MGySgt. Odzimowski that former Sgt. Thomas (Blue) Ray [H&S S-2 Scout – 69-70] rates the Combat Action Ribbon for his Vietnam service in 1969 and 1970. A corrected personnel-record oversight now gives overdue authorization for Sgt. Ray to wear the ribbon. The order was publically read by MGySgt. Odzimowski to the assembly. Sgt. Ray was also awarded the Navy Commendation Medal at the banquet by MGen. Mize following a several-decade delay due to lost supporting documentation.

President Philip D. Leslie – Opening Comments. Phil said that he and the Board are glad to see everyone, especially the new attendees. He gave a brief overview of the site selection process and the importance of parking and free breakfast held in selecting a hotel. Phil then gave an update on VV 2/1 – we're in good shape and always looking to serve the members better.

Vice President Lansdale B. Williams – Comments. Dale welcomed the membership. He stated that he is not seeking reelection as vice president or as a trustee, but he will stay involved with the brick program. Dale thanked the members for their support during his time in office and looks forward to being with his Fox Company brothers.

Treasurer Mario A. Sagastume gave the Treasurer's Report. VV 2/1 is solvent with a small cash reserve in a dedicated VV 2/1 bank account. VV 2/1 uses September 30th as its fiscal year-end date. The Association will make its annual IRS filing on a Form 990 EZ Report. Any member is welcome to look at the books of the Association upon request. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary's Report. The motion was unanimously accepted by the membership.

Annual Membership Meeting

Secretary Timothy Dunn gave the Secretary's Report. The report was the 2017 Membership Meeting Minutes. Dunn reminded the membership that the minutes will be on the Association's web site for all to view. The 2017 Membership Meeting Minutes were accepted by proclamation by the membership.

Webmaster Vin Burdziuk – Communications Report. Vin gave an overview of our web site visits (649,588) and the ability to post photographs, citations, stories, etc. on our web site. Vin also noted that the "Get Well" card program started by Phil Odom is still going strong. Send information along about ill or infirm members, as well as members who have passed. Total cards sent this year was 34.

Membership/Registration – Timothy Dunn and Doc Stein. Tim and Doc reminded the membership about the importance of keeping the Association informed about address/contact changes in order to keep our membership abreast of upcoming events. Members were asked to return the membership info form by the end of the reunion.

Hospitality Room – Jesse Tipton and Jose Perez. Jesse thanked the assembly for their care of the Hospitality Room. Jesse also solicited requests on the variety/selections of beverages and snacks. He will consider all requests and suggestions to keep the Hospitality Room friendly and enjoyable.

Jose has monitored the beer and wine consumption and successfully kept the products in stock. Please send him suggestions of beer for future events.

Silent Recognition – A moment of silence was held at 1100 hours in recognition of the 100 Year Anniversary of Armistices Day.

New Business

Recognition – To Ramona Ratcliff for her generous donation of banquet table centerpieces.

Donation Requests

Mike McNeely (Echo 65-66) presented a written request for a donation consideration to the North Carolina Veterans Residential Services of Wilson. The Board will review this request following a post-reunion accounting of income and expenses.

Dan Kellum (Echo 70-71) inquired about a donation to care for the Camp Horno Memorial Garden. Dan was advised of Tim Stanton's Battalion Liaison role. Dan will communicate directly with Tim Stanton.

Elections

Annual Membership Meeting

As required by VV 2/1's By-Laws, elections must be held annually for expiring terms or resignations of officers and trustees. Candidates serve for various lengths of office and are expected to fund their own expenses while on Association business. The election results are:

Vice President – Dale Williams decided to “retire” after long service as vice president. Tim Dunn (Hotel 66) was elected VV 2/1's vice president.

Secretary – Tony Kilroy (Fox 69-70) was elected VV 2/1's secretary.

All candidates received unanimous votes of approval from the members.

Trustee – An interim Trustee position was vacated when Wayne Thornton submitted his board resignation. Following By-Law guidance, Vin Burdziuk (H&S 65) succeeded Wayne as a Trustee.

Reunions

Phil opened a discussion about moving the reunion dates from November annually to other months so we may visit other cities during more moderate temperature periods. There was a general consensus that moving dates and locations seem to be a good idea.

A formal motion was made to move the reunion date in 2020 to an alternate date (other than the usual November 10/11th range) by Lupe Renteria (Fox 67-68). The motion was seconded and an open discussion ensued.

Should we have our reunions around national holidays? What about significant dates to the USMC, 1st Mar Div, 2/1, etc.?

Washington is a required reunion site by the By-Laws for every fourth year. Should we have our 2021 Reunion coincide with 8th & I's Parade Season?

The question was called to vote on having a reunion “off-cycle” in 2020. The motion passed unanimously.

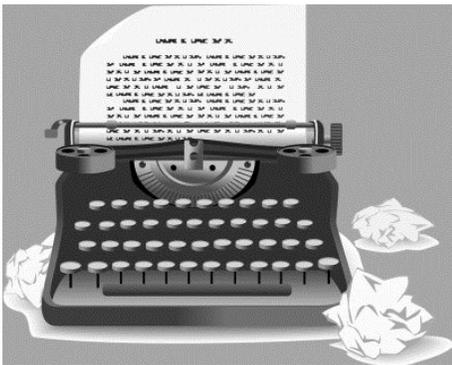
Reunion venues were explored, championed, debated and listed below:

- 2019 – San Diego, CA (Nov 5-12)
- 2020 – Site Suggestions by members:
 - Milwaukee, WI (Summer) Lupe Renteria (Fox 67-68)
 - Orlando, FL (Nov) Doc Bo (Echo 69-70)
 - Boston, MA (Summer) Roy Greenleaf (Fox 67-69)
 - Branson, MO (S/S/F) Tom Leary III (Echo 67-68)
 - Ft. Worth, TX (Nov) Jose Perez (Golf 69-70)
- 2021 – Washington, DC. Jun/Jul/Aug? Sunset Parade season.
- 2022 – Suggest a city. Nov/Jan/Feb?

Membership Meeting - Continued

This is an opportunity for all members to consider locations and months for future reunions. A vote from the floor to close the site discussion was made by acclimation.

Closing - Phil closed the annual business meeting and wished everyone fair winds and smooth sailing as we concluded VV 2/1's 2018 Membership Meeting. See you all in San Diego next year.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN BOOK 3 ?

Your Story

We veterans of VV 2/1 have reached the middle of the battalion's mid-point of its fifty-year deployment to Vietnam (1965 - 1971). For many of us, it seems like fifty years ago, yesterday. Many of those experiences, stories, remembrances, thoughts, feelings may feel as if they are still fresh in our minds/consciousness (and they are!), but time is not on our side.

In earlier years, we produced two volumes of our story *We Remember*, to very favorable acclaim. But it has been a while. During that time, we have had other members of the battalion become active members of VV 2/1. Surely, they must have stories to record. Plus, those who have previously submitted stories for publication may have other stories to contribute to the literature of our battalion's deployment to Vietnam.

Is it time for us to compose a third volume of our story? We are a dwindling group, as we are aware. I remember remarks by Gen. Anthony Zinni a few years ago that the majority of those who served in the Vietnam War have already passed. Notwithstanding the cumulative number, we are at the age (and often on-set condition) where our numbers are shrinking at an accelerated rate.

I am interested in your comments about a third volume. Email me at timothydunn@comcast.net. If there is enough interest, we will explore creating another volume.

Also, during past reunions, we were visited by a member of the "Witness to War" project. The premise of the project is to conduct a taped interview with a combat veteran, allowing them to tell their unique story in their own words. A copy of the interview is sent to the Library of Congress as a permanent record of the veteran's remarks. The veteran receives several CD's of the interview at no cost. Again, your story - your words. If this is something that you have interest in (send me an email), I will ensure that a "Witness to War" representative attends future reunions.

Tim Dunn
timothydunn@comcast.net