



Newsletter of "The Ghost Battalion"

Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Bn 1st Marines

www.FirstMarines.org



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Message from the President

Brothers, Family, and Friends

Much has transpired since our last newsletter was published in February 2020, most significantly is the Covid-19 pandemic impacting our country. I hope this newsletter finds you and your family in good health and spirits as we all have been subjected to various stay-at-home requirements as well as diminished social and personal interactions due to the virus.

Most importantly, I hope that neither you and or any of your family members have caught the virus, or if you have, that your recovery is/was a quick one.

On a lighter note, with wide-spread facial coverings required in many communities, the creation of Marine-themed face masks have become a fashion statement. Wear them proudly when required.

Because of the virus pandemic, most of our members indicated to VV 2/1's on-line inquiry that they would not attend the reunion scheduled for this September in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It made sense to cancel that gathering. Many other veterans' organizations cancelled their 2020 reunions as well.

Our next reunion date is set for May 18th through 24th 2021 at the Hyatt Regency Fairfax Hotel in Fairfax, Virginia. The May reunion was scheduled in the anticipation of attending the Evening Parade at Marine Barracks, Washington, DC (8th & I) as one of our reunion excursions. The Board of Trustees will publish a reunion itinerary as dates and events are confirmed.



Another notable anniversary in 2021 is the 50th anniversary of the 2d Battalion 1st Marines redeployment from Vietnam to CONUS, thus ending 2/1's Vietnam service.

The Trustees are in the planning stages of a ceremony to recognize the battalion's Vietnam service during our reunion.

Stay healthy and safe. Semper Fidelis, Tim Dunn

Anchors Aweigh 1965

August is the 55th anniversary of the deployment of the 2d Battalion 1st Marines to Vietnam. The battalion departed Camp Pendleton on ships for service in Vietnam. As noted in We Remember, that service began a six-year legacy of excellence by our beloved battalion.

Thank you to those who sailed with the battalion in August of 1965. Your combat service in Vietnam created a standard that those of us who served in-theatre during subsequent years sought to uphold. You for lead the way.

We also fondly remember those 2/1 members who made the ultimate sacrifice during their deployment with the highest respect and deepest gratitude.

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Hotel**2021 Reunion Fairfax, Virginia May 18th to 24th**

As we noted in past business meetings, VV 2/1 planned its 2021 reunion for the Washington, DC Metro area (as required by our By-Laws every four years). This reunion was scheduled for May in anticipation of attending the Evening Parade at 8th & I on Friday May 21, 2021 (weather and Marine Barrack's schedules permitting).

Our hotel consultant requested quotes from available hotels in the area and presented her finding to the Board of Trustees for consideration. The Hyatt Regency Fairfax was a finalist on the list, and following a virtual Zoom tour, the Trustees signed a contract with this hotel.

The hotel has agreed to:

Free parking

Beer, wine and snacks for our Hospitality Room at not charge (other hotels are now requiring groups to purchase from the hotel)

Breakfast discounted to \$15/person – Reunion ID Badge required

Block Room rates \$139.00/night

“Shoulder Dates” for Block Room rates – three days prior and three days following our contracted dates

Ball Room capacity to accommodate our banquet

Hotel reservation information will be published in a separate notice.

The hotel is a 20 - 25 minute drive to the Washington, DC Mall (Vietnam Memorial Wall) and close to many other Northern Virginia attractions. Dining and shopping venues are close by the hotel (5 minute drive or less).



V V 2/1 Getting Out of the Donation Business

The Association is getting out of the charitable donation business and using our remaining funds to directly benefit the membership during our reunions. Over the past decade, VV 2/1 has donated a third of its assets to various charitable entities without seeing significant contributions from our members or outside entities to support these charitable donations. Our bank account will not be able to sustain future contributions without donations to VV 2/1.

As an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization, donations to VV 2/1 are tax deductible. The same IRS Code does not compel VV 2/1 to donate any of its funds to other organizations. VV 2/1's tax exempt status is primarily for the benefit of our members. VV 2/1 does not realize any tax benefits when it makes charitable contributions to outside organizations. Those contributions, as well-intended as they may be, only decrease our bank account and provide small contributions to the recipient organizations.

The Board of Trustees will use the remaining funds in our bank account to directly benefit our members during our annual reunions by subsidizing various functions and excursions, thus reducing those costs to the membership.

Presently, VV 2/1 makes an annual donation to a member-related organization, which was approved by a vote of the membership during the last Washington, DC reunion. We will continue this donation until we vote on the matter at the next membership business meeting. New requests for donations will not be entertained.

Membership in our Association is shrinking annually, so are the donations to VV 2/1. While we are still able to meet at annual reunions, let us spend the money we have on ourselves. Those members who seek donations to various causes and organizations are welcome to make solicitation presentations to the membership at our reunion business meetings. Members who wish to donate to these organizations may do so directly.

Protect Yourself From Identity Theft and Financial Fraud

Recently one of our members was the victim of identity theft and financial fraud. As a former federal financial regulator and still active Certified Fraud Examiner, I wanted to share some tips about protecting yourself from identity theft and financial fraud.

Financial fraud is a result of someone using your confidential personal information to gain unauthorized access to your accounts or assets. **Your identity was stolen for fraudulent use.** The membership of VV 2/1 are of the age where we have accumulated financial assets (investments, savings, retirement accounts) and are "targets" for the fraudsters because of those accumulated assets.

Due to the wide use of computers, much of this fraudulent activity is conducted on-line in combination with suspicious or felonious telephone solicitations. The "attacks" are constant and on-going, even without our active use of the computer. Recently I was locked out of a bank account I own because of an unauthorized on-line access attempt. Access was denied when the fraudsters could not answer the security questions. I had to reset my passwords and security questions once I was identified as the authorized account holder.

◆ Basic Protective Steps to Follow:

- (1) Do not engage in verbal or written solicitations from unknown parties.
- (2) Never disclose confidential personal information (Social Security Numbers, account numbers, license numbers, etc.) in telephone conversations or email communications.
- (3) Do not respond to telephone calls or emails that claim to be from government agencies (IRS, Social Security Administration, law enforcement or courts).
- (4) **Government agencies do not call you on the telephone.** The agencies send letters on official stationery when they want to communicate with you.
- (5) Reconcile (check and verify) your financial statements regularly and look for discrepancies. If you find a discrepancy, call the issuing company immediately.
- (6) Report all suspected and/or actual financial theft to the local police (record an incident report), the financial institution where the account is held, and any regulatory authority.
- (7) Change your computer access passwords periodically and use passwords that are more complex than simple (Stay away from 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or A, B, C, D types of passwords).

Although you may have good protections in place, there is no guarantee that you will not be victimized. The fraudsters are exceptionally good at what they do. Finally, the unfortunate reality is that once the fraudsters get your money it is quickly gone. Your recourse is to establish that the financial institution where your account is did not follow their security controls and seek reimbursement. The process for reimbursement is lengthy and time consuming. Stay diligent in protecting your identity and finances. Report all suspicious activities to the authorities and keep a record of those incidents and reports.



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Head Count

The 2021 Reunion is scheduled for May 18 – 24
Hyatt Regency Fairfax Hotel in Fairfax, Virginia.

The Board of Trustees are currently working on a reunion itinerary which includes a trip to the National Museum of The Marine Corps (and our monument).

A memorial ceremony recognizing the 50th anniversary of 2/1 leaving Vietnam,
guests at 8th & 1st's Evening Parade (weather and Barrack's schedule permitting) and being together as brothers once again.

We will keep you updated as our itinerary becomes more defined and developed.

We ask you to send an email to Vin Burdziuk (**Webmaster@FirstMarines.org**) indicating how many in your party will attend. It helps us plan for the banquet and transportation.

Thank you in advance for your response.