Hotel 2/5 Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 16, 2017 RETREAT HELL ISSUE TWENTY

Editor's Column

It occurred to me that this is the 10th annual reunion that Hotel Company has put together. The first one was back in 2008 in Ohio at Al Gautschi's backyard. I still remember my feelings as I headed to Ohio on the plane. Palms sweating, second thoughts, and a sense of dread and fear. Very similar to the plane ride to Vietnam. So glad I didn't get back on the plane after I landed in Ohio. I have benefited so much by attending and thank all of you for the camaraderie that we share at these events.

I want to stress that you have just a few days left to register for the reunion. However, all of the discounted rate rooms available at the hotel have been taken. You will need to reserve a room at the regular rate or look for a room at one of the many surrounding hotels.

A couple important updates on the itinerary:

(1) There will be a Mexican Buffett included at the reception on Thursday night at 7:00 p.m.

(2) Col. Joe Long will be the guest speaker at the banquet on Saturday night. (Read the story on the next page) I have updated the "Order of March"

Be sure and print up a copy of the Order of March to bring with you so you are always current on the events planned for the reunion.

Don't forget there will be an informal dinner with the early reunion arrivals at Hotel Santa Fe or other Santa Fe restaurant on Wednesday, Oct. 25th, 2017.

Hope to see you all in New Mexico. Semper Fi.

Jay

Photo: Jay Wells fires 3.5 Rocket launcher during Taylor Common





Your Editor

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Asst Editor in charge of everything digital

Carlie Peterson







Reunion Guest Speaker

Colonel Joe Long began his Marine Corps life in 1966 as an enlisted field radio operator, serving 13 months with Second Battalion, Ninth Marines in Vietnam. Commissioned in 1974, he participated in Operation Desert Storm and Somalia's Operation Restore Hope.

He completed his uniform service as the Marine Corps' Project Manager for the creation of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia retiring in 2004 after serving 37 years.

He is the author of "Hill of Angels", a monograph about the Vietnam Battle of Con Thien. The work was commissioned by the Marine Corps University. You can download a copy of the monograph at: https://www.usmcu.edu/sites/default/files/HD/Publications/Hill%20of%20Angels.pdf

In February, 2017 Joe Long retired as the Director of the New Mexico Veterans Business Outreach Center for the Department of Veterans Services. Under his direction the New Mexico VBOC was awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration's 2016 National VBOC of the Year in a Washington, DC ceremony.

2017 Reunion Info Santa Fe, New Mexico

Register online by September 25th for the reunion by copying and pasting or clicking on the following address: http://hotel25vv.org/reunions/2017-santa-fe-new-mexico/registration/

2017 Santa Fe Reunion
Oct. 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th
Hosted by Dave & Bonnie Harbin

REUNION REGISTRATION

- **Registration Marine:** $165.00 (includes Sweatshirt)
- **Registration Guests:** $150.00 (does not include Sweatshirt)

REUNION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

If money is an issue, you can apply for a reunion scholarship by copying and pasting or clicking on the following address: http://hotel25vv.org/reunions/2017-santa-fe-new-mexico/apply-for-reunion-scholarship/ to request consideration for a paid scholarship. **This scholarship does not include hotel arrangements or transportation costs associated with a reunion.**

Hotel Reservation Info Santa Fe, New Mexico

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER FOR HOTEL

The dates for the reunion are Oct. 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th, 2017 at the Hotel Santa Fe, 1501 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, NM 87501. Look at the Order of March on the next page for daily events.

ROOM RATES

All of the discounted rate rooms have been taken. Check with the hotel to see about room availability at the regular rate or surrounding hotels. Call the hotel directly and make a reservation or reserve online. The telephone number is (855) 825-9876 or toll free at (877) 259-3409.

For a complete list of relevant tourist information SantaFe.org is a great link!

A virtual tour of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial State Park at Angel Fire, New Mexico is available at the following link: https://www.vietnamveteransmemorial.org/virtual-tour/15/TheGrounds/



2017 Reunion Info Santa Fe, New Mexico

ORDER OF MARCH

WEDNESDAY October 25, 2017 (optional)	THURSDAY October 26, 2017	FRIDAY October 27, 2017	SATURDAY October 28, 2017	SUNDAY October 29, 2017
Dinner among early reunion arrivals at Hotel Santa Fe or other Santa Fe restaurants.	**1:00PM** Registration opens in Hospitality Room at Hotel Santa Fe We will need some volunteers to man the registration table on Thursday afternoon and evening. **7:00PM** Meet and greet reception in Hospitality Room (BYOB) Mexican Buffet included in registration	**7:00AM – 9:00AM** Continental Breakfast **9:30AM** Bus Departure to Vietnam Memorial in Angel Fire **12:00PM** Bus Arrival in Angel Fire for lunch **1:15PM** Bus Departure to Vietnam Memorial **3:30PM** Bus Departure for return trip to Santa Fe **6:00PM** Bus Arrival at Hotel and dinner on your own **7:00PM** Hospitality Room open (BYOB) for men and a Social at the hotel for the ladies hosted by Bonnie Harbin	**7:00AM – 9:00AM** Continental Breakfast **9:15AM** Leave hotel using hotel shuttle & private cars to get to the Santa Fe Plaza **10:00AM** Group guided tour of Santa Fe Historic Sites **12:00PM** Explore Plaza, downtown & lunch on your own. Option to visit New Mexico History Museum. (To return to hotel, call hotel for shuttle pickup.) **6:00PM – 10:00PM** Hotel 2/5 Reunion Dinner. (dinner & dancing). ***Guest Speaker Col. Joe Long*** ***Men should be in tie and jacket, ladies in dresses or pant suits.*** Auction/raffle and cash bar. **10:00PM – 12:00AM** Hospitality Room Open (BYOB)	**7:00AM – 9:00AM** Continental Breakfast and Goodbyes **9:30AM** Company meeting to discuss business items and 2018 reunion in Cincinnati, Ohio and future dates and locations.

For Marines who carry their own to burial: “The Last to Let You Down”

In the dim light of a subterranean parking garage, the Marines gather before dawn to train beside the flag-draped casket and a black coffin lid on the wall bearing the inscription: “The Last to Let You Down.” They are the Body Bearers, an elite unit that carries Marines to their final resting place.



Trainees at the Body Bearer Ceremonial Drill School stand behind an empty casket during a training drill in a parking lot at the Marine Barracks in Washington. (Allison Shelley/For The Washington Post)

To ready for the arduous work — they perform three to five funerals each day at Arlington National Cemetery and the caskets they lift can weigh up to 800 pounds — the Marines come together every morning for pulse-thrumming drills. But they cannot prepare for all aspects of their graveside ritual, as the most difficult moments come when they least anticipate: the sight of a boy at his father’s funeral dressed in the fallen Marine’s oversized uniform, or the sound of a K-9 service dog whimpering as the Body Bearers interred its handler.

“Each funeral takes a part of you,” said Cpl. Salvatore Sciascia, 21, the most experienced Marine among the Body Bearers. He has performed 550 funerals.

Marine Corps Body Bearers Ceremonial Drill School instructor Cpl. Jamen Miller, left, and section leader Cpl. Salvatore Sciascia, right, stand for a portrait in the parking garage where the unit trains.



Sciascia said the unit trains for “flawless funerals,” noting that while a Marine can mistakenly lose grip of a rifle, the Body Bearers can never drop a casket.

“Selfish people don’t make it here,” said Cpl. Jamen Miller, 25, who traded toting an M-240 machine gun for carrying coffins. “It’s not about my temporary pain. It’s about the families.”

Of all 182,000 active-duty Marines, there are just 10 Body Bearers, making the unit based at the 8th and I barracks in southeast Washington one of the smallest of the Corps. To join, Marines must be at least 5-feet-11 — to ensure the casket remains level when carried — and they must be capable of lifting more than 200 pounds. As part of their training, the Body Bearers learn to breathe only through

their nose so as not to give the appearance of exerting themselves as they walk with the coffins elbow high. In addition, the Marine Corps prides itself as the only military branch to use six pallbearers for all funerals rather than eight.

"It's about making it look effortless," Sciascia said.

The training regimen is tougher than boot camp, and the Body Bearers who succeed stand apart. Sciascia — who weighs 255 pounds — said their imposing frames are unmistakable around the barracks. A metal pull-up bar in their practice area is bent from their weight, and they are not permitted to sleep in bunk beds in the barracks as a safety precaution.



Lance Cpl. John Penley, a Marine Corps Body Bearer, trains for the heavy lifting that comes with his job



Cpl. Adam Rihacek has a tattoo of Saint Michael the Archangel, the patron saint of Marines

To build the requisite strength, unit members take part in drills carrying trash cans filled with cement and practice with caskets loaded with weight plates. (They also eat to gain muscle: one Body Bearer swears by salmon burgers; another said his secret is tuna and orange juice smoothies.) While they train for the inevitable they must also brace for the unforeseen. During one ceremony, the horse-drawn caisson broke down, so the Marines had to carry the casket all the way to the burial site.

As they perform funerals, the Marines step toe-to-heel to ensure they walk steadily on the cemetery's uneven soil. They wear modified uniforms with the underside of the arms of their wool coats stitched with mesh so that the bulky cloth does not inhibit the Marines from executing a stiff salute. And as a solemn reminder of the frequency of their task, the Marines must periodically change out their white leather gloves, which take on a red tint from folding flags.



Lance Cpl. Jacob Heisler, a Marine Corps Body Bearer, shows his ceremonial gloves, which are stained red from folding U.S. flags. (Allison Shelley/For The Washington Post)

The Body Bearers' final maneuver is a ceremonial raising of the casket to eye-level, holding the fallen Marine high for up to 10 seconds for a full honors funeral before lowering the coffin to the ground.

"It's a sign of respect," Miller said.

The graceful movement is where the Body Bearers earned their motto: "The last to let you down." But to Sciascia, who joined the Corps "to serve a greater purpose," it's more than just words.

"It's anything that we do," he said. " 'The last to let you down' to me means we're going to do the job and do it perfect every time, and we're not going to fail."

Nowhere else is the Body Bearers' dedication more apparent than when they fold the flag to be presented to the family of the deceased. During a recent funeral at Arlington, the Marines stood at attention as a leaf-rustling breeze chilled the autumn air. Standing opposite one another, the Marines unfurled the flag in a choreographed finger ballet. With their gloved hands, the Body Bearers kept the flag taut and creased with a flick and a snap. Finally, the Marines gently passed the flag to be presented to the next of kin.

"We provide families with possibly their last look at the Marine Corps," Miller said. "We want to show them how much honor we put into it and care and love for our brothers and sisters in the Marine Corps."

The funeral ended with a rifle party firing a salute and a lone bugler playing taps. The Body Bearers then marched solemnly away from the grave.

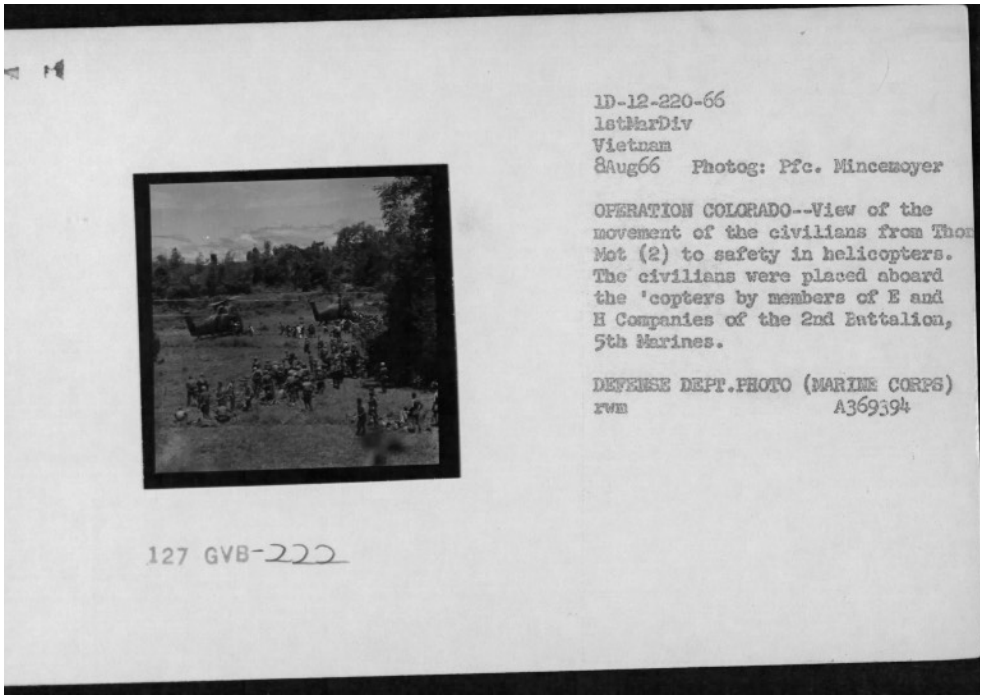
Semper Fidelis…



Marine Corps Body Bearers Ceremonial Drill School instructor Cpl. Jamen Miller stands near a training board printed with the unit's motto, "The Last To Let You Down."

New DoD Photo

I just came across a new DoD photo showing Hotel Company in Vietnam. This one is from August 8, 1966. Let me know if you see yourself in the photo I will try and get it added to the other DoD photos that are up for view at http://img.gg/wz9Elcf The password is Semper Fi.



1D-12-220-66
1stMarDiv
Vietnam
8Aug66 Photog: Pfc. Mincemoyer

OPERATION COLORADO--View of the movement of the civilians from Thon Mot (2) to safety in helicopters. The civilians were placed aboard the 'copters by members of E and H Companies of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines.

DEFENSE DEPT.PHOTO (MARINE CORPS)
rwm A369394

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PROJECT COMPLETION

Barry Broman, Hotel Company XO and Platoon Commander in 1969, just returned from the jungles of Malaysia were he finished the making of a film about the disappearance of Jim Thompson in 1967.

