



THE THUNDERING THIRD

NEWSLETTER



THIRD BATTALION, FOURTH MARINES ASSOCIATION

44 Old Marlborough Road, Maynard, MA 01754

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow 3/4 Marines:

In mid-July, 3/4 returned to 29 Palms following its second tour of duty in Iraq. I'm sure they returned with many adventures gained in combat, but also with more casualties and KIA's. Your thoughts and prayers during this deployment were appreciated and I'm sure were instrumental in bringing them back safely. In May, we sent a care package to each of the companies. Dennis Thun and Oscar Kergalvis coordinate this program and the troops received beef jerkey, cigars and other goodies. For all of you, please accept the heartfelt thanks of the troops. I'm sure we all remember the importance of receiving a package from home. Lt Col McCoy will be leaving 3/4 by month's end. As a gift from the Association, Jim Wright has offered to make and send a nameplate designed with the 3/4 logo for use in his new staff position.

Last month I signed the contract with the Hilton Hotel, San Antonio Airport for our reunion in San Antonio, Texas. Reunion Chairman, Larry Carpenter reviewed the hotel and reports that it will be perfect for our reunion. However, due to the high level of tourism, we were unable to reserve the last week of July. So please note that the next reunion dates will be August 1-August 7, 2005. Reservations can be made at 1-877-377-7227 or online through a link on our website.

San Antonio is truly one of the unique cities in Texas. Not only is it the historic site of the Alamo, it is vibrant, clean and beautiful. I think you will all be pleased as the hotel is reasonably priced, conveniently located near to the airport, and offers free shuttle service to the Riverwalk area.

Sadly we have lost several members since our Seattle reunion which has caused me to reflect on the meaning of life. One thing is certain, the bonds of friendships which we have formed during our Marine tour of duty will be the strongest we will have. We're not getting any younger and God only knows how many more reunions are in our futures. Please, plan to attend this upcoming reunion. Make your reservations now and I hope to see ya'all in San Antonio!!

Once again this year, we are again offering an assistance program to those of you who want to attend but are suffering financial difficulties. Chaplain Stan Beach and I are presently revamping the program so more of you can take advantage of it. Details will be forthcoming in the next newsletter. Chaplain Beach will continue to implement the program, however we are in need of an assistant. Any interested party, please contact Chaplain Beach at STANBEACH@aol.com or myself at jconklin2@cox.net

I spoke with Sgt Maj Howell last week. He told me that the unit totally enjoyed the care packages that were sent. He said that all the other battalions were jealous and that our association was famous with the troops for the great support.

Semper Fi,
Jim Conklin

Chaplain's Corner

*Submitted by
Chaplain Stan Beach*

Some recent writings about the vets and religious faith provide surprising data. They suggest that Vietnam vets, compared to other vets, are less actively involved in a church or synagogue, and most **were** involved before their Vietnam experience. They know and use religious language; but haven't "reconnected" with their religious roots. Several theories are offered in attempts to explain this phenomena, all which suggest feelings of emptiness and incompleteness like, as one vet said, "a hole in the soul that leaves an ugly scar and pain like shrapnel did to my body."

That may challenge some of to self examination. It does highlight the reality that **what we believe** and embrace as absolute and enduring truth subtly and powerfully shapes us. It camps with us to disturb us, or to bring peace and strength. It colors how we interpret our experiences, and how we look at the future. It also affects how we look at others. What we most strongly believe powerfully connects us with those who share the same beliefs. This spiritual bonding and reconnecting, the studies show, brings a sense of completeness that heals the "hole" we may have felt in our soul.

Those who attend our 3/4 reunions know the healing that occurs when we reconnect with those who shared our experience, reminding us of the Corps' values of courage, honor and loyalty to one another. This benefit of the reunion experience can serve as a profound reminder that we need to reconnect with our spiritual roots as well for a **complete** healing!

Articles – Any member wanting to have an article, or interest item, included in the Newsletter please send your copy to me at the address on the top of this Newsletter. You may include photo's, old or new.

Dues – A reminder is appropriate here about dues. If you received this Newsletter and have not paid your dues, someone else has picked up you tab. Dues are on \$15 a year. Please make your check payable to "Third Battalion, Fourth Marines Association" and send it to our treasurer Chuck Lear, 708 S.S. Basil Ct. Lees Summit, MO 64063.

In Memoriam

Bob "The Top" Weightman

It was a sad time in Las Vegas, March 22 when we lost my good friend and fellow association member Bob Weightman. Most of us knew him as "The Top" as he was the epitome of a Marine NCO. As if by divine intervention, I was working nearby his home and dropped in for a visit. Within a few minutes he was stricken by an aortal aneurysm, which had been undetected. EMT arrived in minutes and rushed him to Nellis Afb hospital. He died during emergency surgery. The top was a career Marine who loved the Corps and loved the Association. He was the Lima Company First Sgt when I arrived at Phu Bai in 1966. The Top was a proud member of our Association who totally enjoyed talking with the young troops during the annual sword presentations. He was the beloved "grouchy old bastard" with a heart of gold. He loved his Budweiser and I'm sure he is immensely proud to have died with a cold long neck Bud in his hand. In his pocket, were both USMC First Sergeant challenge coin and a 3/4 patch which he always carried. In keeping with his wishes we held a military funeral here in Las Vegas on Saturday March 27th, followed by an Irish wake at the Leatherneck Club. He was buried in Lemon, S.D.

Semper Fi Top, we will miss you.

Jim Conklin

In Memoriam

Steve Emmanuel

Last Spring we lost another outstanding Marine, former Sergeant Steve Emmanuel of Newton, MA. Steve had served with India Company, 1st Platoon during '67-'68. He joined the US Customs after his discharge and served at Boston's Logan International Airport until his recent retirement. Steve was our Association Archivist and was always ready to help with any project and reported with a smile. Steve had not been in good health for several years. I was fortunate enough to have shared lunch with Steve a month or so before he died. Member Mike Keho and I (Doc McNiff) represented the Association at his wake and funeral. He honors us all as he chose to wear his dress blues to eternity. His fellow Customs agents provided a color guard.

Steve, we will miss you, and I will miss a good friend. But not those stinky cigars of his! God Bless and Semper fi.

3rd BN, 4th MARINES

REUNION 2005



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Hilton Hotel, San Antonio Airport, San Antonio, Texas

August 1-August 7, 2005

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS NOW!!!