



*Bill -
do you get
this?*

FOUNDED BY THE LAST AMERICANS TO LEAVE SOUTH VIETNAM

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By now everyone who attended our annual reunion in Arlington has had time to reflect on that memorable occasion. Since then I have received many articles from local newspapers throughout the U.S. and Canada regarding the war in Vietnam, its aftermath and the future. Many of the articles were truly heartwarming in their coverage of our Vietnamese friends who have succeeded under some adverse conditions. A central theme throughout the articles, regardless of the part of this country in which they originated, was the dedication, hard work and sacrifice of the Vietnamese. That, coupled with their love and respect for their families, is truly inspirational. These traits contributed greatly to their success in this country. I was very pleasantly surprised at the positive tone of the journalists who wrote the articles. I could detect no negativism in their stories. This was all occurring at a time when the nation was viewing and reading horror stories about Haitians, Cubans and other refugees from several African nations on a nightly basis.

The positive attitude of Americans toward our Vietnamese friends has been evidenced in recent actions in the Congress. Many organizations (too numerous to mention in this article) strongly went to bat for the Vietnamese during this 20th anniversary period and the issue of the boat people received more attention than ever before. To date it has not died down and continued efforts on behalf of the Vietnamese continues. It is difficult to see what impact the recent normalization of relations will have but as SMA members we all hope that the end result is an improvement in the lives and conditions of our friends who remain in Vietnam. Only time will tell so we must continue to help when help is needed.

Recent correspondence with Father Crawford in Palawan indicates that his refugees are excited about the recent moves in our Congress. There are still problems with official agencies - particularly the UNHCR. Even our Embassy in The Philippines refuses to accept the fact that

flaws and injustices occurred which resulted in rejections of highly qualified refugees. It is an age-old story - no matter how flawed a policy may be or can be shown to be wrong, regardless it is still policy and many officials appear to delight in hiding behind its words. Father Crawford continues to strive on behalf of his charges. Without someone of his dedication to service and integrity the plight of those in his care would have been much worse. We continue to pray that someone in a responsible position will see the injustices being done and will correct them. To that end our Association continues to do all that it can. Please do not let up on your efforts with your elected officials. They need to hear from you now more than ever!

☐ JIM PINER

CAZ'S CORNER

For those of you who might want to contact the SRV Mission in Washington, the Chief of Mission is Le Van Bang. The SRV Liaison Office is at 1233 Twentieth St. N.W., Suite 501, Washington, D. C. 20036. Telephone is (202) 861-0737.

You can now FAX your friends in Vietnam. You need the street address of your friend. FAX it and your message to SAIGON FAX at 011-848-298-540. On receipt it will be delivered by messenger on bicycle at a cost to the recipient of Dong 5000 - about \$.50.

It has been reported that half of the villages in Vietnam now have electricity, that a total of 1.2 million new jobs were created in 1994 and that 100,000 Vietnamese went abroad as laborers.

It is reported that U. S. and Australian firms are seeking permits to build hospitals in HCM and Hanoi.

The Ford Motor Co. and Song Cong Diesel Factory signed papers for a joint venture to build vehicles in Vietnam. Chrysler and General Motors are negotiating similar deals.

Fishermen recently pulled up materials in their nets off Vung Tau that are consistent with those normally contained in a B-52. Deep-sea divers have begun a search 50 miles off the coast for two B-52s that collided during the war.

Smuggling of commercial goods into Vietnam is increasing as a rapid rate. Items being smuggled into the country include electronic goods, clothing and tobacco products while gems and antiques are being smuggled out. So far this year 1446 persons have been convicted of smuggling.

The police in HCMC have begun a search of some 5000 units or hotels and houses occupied by foreigners. An official explained, "we want to know where these people are and how many of them there are." Violations were found in ten of the first 28 places checked.

Am attempting to obtain a duplicate certificate to verify training in the U. S. for Tran My Y. Y was a captain in the WAC training school in Saigon and received training at the WAC Training Center at Fort McClellan, Anniston, AL from August to December 1971.

Received a letter from Perch Rolfe. He had his second major stroke on 8 June and was hospitalized until 28 June. He has a therapist come to his home two or three times a week and has to have someone in the house twenty-four hours a day. His wife is not well.

Sue and I appreciate the words and cards of sympathy we received when Eugene "Mac" Page passed away on 31 May. He was 54 and died of a heart attack. His smile, his willingness to help and his love will always be remembered.

☐ CAZ PAGE

OTHER NEWS

FATHER CRAWFORD writes of yet another success story. Near the end a plane came into Tan Son Nhut to lift out 170 crippled youngsters and orphans. He gathered his young charges together and headed for the States. Practically all of those youngsters have graduated from college and the most severely crippled of them all received a PhD! He was 16 when he arrived and had never gone to school. Two years ago he earned a PhD in biochemistry. Father Crawford returned to Vietnam with him this past January. He was afraid to go alone since he is still in a wheel chair. They visited his home outside Hoi An, south of Da Nang. His mother still lives in a straw hut without even a door on the house. He now has a job with a scientific institute in Long Beach, CA with a salary of

\$55,000 a year. While in Vietnam the Saigon University invited him to give a lecture -- which made him the happiest guy imaginable. He is building a house for his mother and family and is wise enough not to spoil them! Father Crawford also sends his sincerest thanks for the donation made by SMA. He notes that many of the people in camp need help since many of the services have been cut down. He finds it a blessing to be able to help them.

SALLY VINYARD writes that a special ceremony will take place at Angel Fire, N.M. on 11 November 1995 honoring all women who served in Vietnam. A CIRCLE OF SISTERS will present a plaque with the 56 names of those who lost their lives during their service in Vietnam. 38 of those names are of our ladies who served with us and who were lost in the C-5 crash on 4 April 1975. If you are interested in more information about the ceremony contact **JOLYNNE STRANG** at

ED MEEKS has been attending the U. S. National Tennis Academy teacher course seeking certification as an instructor. He continues to teach youngsters in New Smyrna Beach the intricacies of tennis. Good for you, Ed!

ERNIE HEY writes that he has sold the "ARK" and at the time of writing was beached! He was looking for a small power boat with a galley and a couple of bunks. He is also seeking a larger RV. Hope you find both, Ernie!

PEGGY MOHLER writes that she and Lee are sorry that they missed the reunion. They had intended to be there but were in the process of moving to

Lee
continues to work in Arizona.

"THE FALL OF SAIGON" turned out to be reasonably popular in that 26 members asked for copies. Many wrote that the video brought back many memories and, as well, many tears to their eyes as they watched it. Certainly it was an exceptionally well done documentary and the BBC deserves much applause for their superb work. If anyone is still interested, tapes can still be made and mailed to you for only \$10.00. Send your request to

1996 REUNION -- Joan Fellingham has advised that the menu for the dinner at our 1996 reunion at the RAMADA PLAZA RESORT will consist of --

Veal Normandy, Fruit Cup, Potato, Fresh Vegetable, Rolls & Butter, Dessert and Coffee and Tea

all for \$23, including tax and tip. **Make your plans.**

INDOCHINESE REFUGEES --

For some time we have been working with Boat People S.O.S. and Nick Rock, State Commander of the state of Washington Department of the Veterans of the Vietnam War, in an effort to better the chances of the over 20,000 Indochinese refugees in camps in the Philippines, Malaysia and other places of having a chance of finding asylum rather than being returned to Vietnam and a very uncertain future. We won the battle with the House of Representatives by having them pass Section 2104 to H. R. 1561 which stipulates that (1) US contributions to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are not to be used towards repatriating Vietnamese asylum seekers until the President certifies that flagrant screening decisions by the UN be reviewed, (2) the review must comply with US criteria for refugees and (3) those found to be genuine refugees will be resettled in the US or in any other resettlement country. We now need to see a similar provision in the Senate Bill S. J. 908, also known as the State Department Reauthorization Bill.

Senator Robert Smith (R-NH), a strong advocate for human rights and the full accounting of MIAs/POWs, will introduce an amendment to S.J. 908 based on the language of Section 2104, cited above. This is expected to happen in the first or second week of September when Congress reconvenes after the Labor Day recess.

The next three weeks will be the best opportunity for you to contact your senators on this matter since they are back in their home states. In this light included is a sample letter which you want to copy and send to both of your senators on this cogent matter. The letter can be modified to suit your particular desires or situation. It is most effective if, after sending or faxing your letters, you follow them up with personal calls to your senators' local offices.

The Honorable _____
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator _____

I write to you as a member of the Saigon Mission Association which is made up of the last Americans to leave Saigon just over twenty years ago. We are requesting your support for a resolution with regard to Indochinese refugees to be introduced by Senator Robert Smith as an amendment to S. J. 908.

Among those refugees are many who fought side by side with the American forces and have been severely persecuted by their Communist captors for that reason. Despite their strong refugee claims they have been denied refugee status because of fundamental flaws, including rampant corruption, in the screening process established by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR). Also denied refugee status are numerous religious leaders and political dissidents who spent many years in Communist prisons. They are all facing imminent deportation to Vietnam.

Senator Smith's resolution will (1) prohibit the use of US funds toward returning refugees to Communist Vietnam, (2) require a fair review of flagrant screening decisions and (3) provide resettlement to those found to be genuine refugees pursuant to such review according to existing U.S. criteria and within the existing quota and budget for Indochinese refugees.

The resolution seeks to remedy a scandalous refugee program without any additional costs to the American tax payers. In fact, it prevents the UNHCR's misuse of American tax dollars. Together with your support for the resolution we also request your taking the initiative to investigate all aspects of UNHCR operations. Our experience with Indochinese refugees indicates that our tax dollars might have been misused on a large scale. Each year the United States contributes nearly 300 million dollars to the UNHCR. As far as we know fiscal accountability on the part of the UNHCR and close oversight and monitoring by U. S. authorities, while absolutely necessary, are lacking so far.

I look forward to your consideration of our requests and to your reply.

Sincerely,

Take a few moments and send the above letter to both of your senators. It cannot do anything but be help to those unfortunate souls still in the refugee camps.

"THE NEW SAIGON" is a feature article in the April issue of National Geographic magazine. It is filled with pictures and rhetoric, both of which will bring back memories for most of us.

ON THE OTHER HAND the Clinton Administration has finally begun to complain officially about the jailing of two Vietnamese-Americans who helped foster a pro-democracy movement -- reportedly in Hanoi but actually in Saigon two years ago in November. The two Americans, Nguyen Tan Tri and Tran Quang Liem, both naturalized Americans living in Texas, were sentenced to prison terms of seven and four years respectively for helping organize the "Movement to Unite the People and Build Democracy." Washington aid that Vietnam had damaged its chances for cherished U. S. trade agreements by the jailing. Your editor was on the way to attend the meeting when they were first arrested.

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NEWSLETTER POLICY

The Editor and SMA Board are not responsible for, nor do they necessarily agree with, the opinions expressed. The Editor reserves the right to edit all copy.

DATE OF ISSUE: NLT 30 June and 31 January. In addition, a flyer will be issued relative to the annual meeting 60 days before the established date of the meeting.

CLOSING DATE FOR ARTICLES: 30 days preceding the date of issue.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Notices are to be sent to the **TREASURER**.

PUBLICATION ITEMS: Specially written articles (as contributions) are encouraged. No articles will be returned unless accompanied by return postage.

GOALS OF THE SAIGON MISSION ASSOCIATION, INC.

Promote friendship and cooperation between Americans who served in Vietnam and members of the Vietnamese Armed Forces and Vietnamese who worked for contractors as well as the dependents of both.

Preserve personal friendships and memories among those who served in Vietnam and provide a source for news of these people. Meet annually as well as publish newsletters to foster this fellowship.

Pool knowledge concerning communications and support of those still in Vietnam via telephone, telegraph, mail and freight.

Establish a volunteer sponsorship program to support Vietnamese families and individuals remaining in Vietnam and/or living in refugee camps.

Coordinate with other organizations throughout the world, particularly in the United States, in promoting the preceding article.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/DUES RENEWAL

ELIGIBILITY: Open to all US citizens and foreign nationals who directly served with or supported the US Mission to the Republic of Vietnam. Service may have been in country or from without — such as from an outside command (PACOM) or a neighboring country (USAHAC); in-country contractor personnel are also eligible. Others who do not meet the eligibility criteria may join as ASSOCIATES but will not be eligible to vote or hold office.

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP _____ \$10/yr.
LIFE MEMBERSHIP _____ \$100
ASSOCIATE _____ \$5/yr.

NAME _____
(Please print)

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TEL. NO. _____ (Optional)

Served in Vietnam from 19__ to 19__
with _____

Include my membership with the _____

Regional Chapter _____

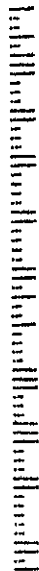
MAY WE PUBLISH YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS: ☒ Yes ☐ No

Make check payable to SMA and forward to:

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Box 722
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20006-3417 22



16

FOUNDED BY THE LAST AMERICANS TO LEAVE SOUTH VIETNAM

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