

*Law Offices of*  
**FINKBEINER & BURNHAM, P.C.**

ROBERT T. FINKBEINER  
PRISCILLA S. BURNHAM

375 N. MCCLELLAN AVENUE  
MARQUETTE, MI 49855  
(906) 228-2100  
FAX # (906) 228-2133

PLEASE REFER TO  
OUR FILE NO.

2800  
March 22, 1999

Mr. Bertram Hubble

Glendora, CA 91741-3731

Re: Vietnam Dog Handlers Association

Dear Mr. Hubble:

I have seen your name on the internet concerning the Vietnam Dog Handlers Association for more than a year. I intended to send this letter some time ago, but with our busy lives, it becomes difficult to take on new tasks.

I knew that I had some information that would be of interest to you and other members of the organization. I am enclosing a packet of material that I hope will be helpful.

To begin with, I went from advanced infantry training to Fort Benning, Georgia for a special NCO program which was to produce E5 personnel for operations and intelligence. I successfully completed that course and then myself and 10 other individuals were selected to go to scout dog school at the other side of the camp. I was the class leader and I was trained as a scout dog handler and as a scout dog trainer. Before leaving Fort Benning, I was promoted to the rank of E6. Originally, I had orders for some place in the fourth division, but because of some vacancies through injury or discharges, my orders were changed when I arrived in the country. I was assigned to the 59th Scout Dog Platoon at Duc Pho.

At the time I arrived, the unit was waiting for a new first lieutenant and I believe there was an E7 sergeant. Their names and serial numbers appear on the some of the orders that I have sent. The lieutenant's name was William L. Ebberly and the sergeant was Leonard M. Childers. Neither Lieutenant Ebberly or Sergeant Childers had trained with any scout dogs but were merely assigned to fill vacancies. It seems to me that several months later Sergeant Childers left and I took over as the platoon sergeant for the last couple of

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months. It appears that I have social security numbers for at least eight of the members of my unit. At this time I don't know where any of them are but I would like to. I did note that Ken Henderson is listed as a member. I can also advise that Robert E. Zimmerman, who was a close friend of mine and was with Lawrence Yochum at the time of his death, died approximately ten years after he got home. I did correspond with him frequently and he apparently had a heart attack or an aneurism of some type while playing basketball.

I have also sent you orders that lists the 10 sergeants that went through dog training with me. I don't know what units they ended up in but I certainly would like to locate these guys.

Other members of the 59th that received a CIB at the same time I did are listed on the orders of April 21, 1970. Allen Amen was on R and R with me. Byron Nelson was from Florida. Charles Snow was injured in the field in March or April while on a mission. I remember visiting him in the hospital after he lost his foot. Robert Zimmerman is now deceased but I would like to know where his wife lives. George Pelkie I believe was from Guam. Harold Evans and Tommy Carl were with me for most of my tour but I have no idea where they are.

After the death of Lawrence Yochum in the field, members of our unit decided to attempt to bring the dogs home after the war. I am enclosing an open letter that we composed and sent to the Animal Protection Institute. I received information from them and we responded with this letter. I have original posters that are all yellowed in the envelopes from them. I have also enclosed some of the correspondence that we had at that time.

After I returned home, I found an article in a Reader's Digest on dog handlers in Vietnam. I cut it out and I found the original article in some of my old papers. If you are interested in something like this, please let me know and I will send you a copy. In addition, I may have some additional paperwork tucked away in a footlocker out in my garage. Perhaps this summer I will get these things out and go through them.

I have completed an application and sent it along with my check to Bobby Railey. Please keep me informed of any progress in locating any of these members. If I can be of assistance, don't hesitate to give me a call or write. I also watch my mail on AOL and you have been including me in various

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correspondence on the internet as K9 Scout.

Very truly yours,  
  
Robert T. Finkbeiner

RTF/dmd

Enclosures

P.S. My dog's name was Ted and his number was X046.