

**(Final Draft 9/25/12)**

**589<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion Association Business Meeting, September 15, 2012**

President Blanchfield called the 2012 Business Meeting to order at 1100 hrs and led those gathered in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chaplin Randy Joyner gave the invocation which was followed by the lunch buffet being opened.

President Blanchfield made a roll call of the Officers and introduced each one.

Secretary Pendergrass was asked to present the minutes of the 2011 meeting which had been provided to members via email. Rich Comiso moved that the minutes be approved without reading. That motion was seconded by Al Carlisle and unanimously approved.

Treasurer Spencer was asked to present the financial report. He introduced the Audit Committee which included Chairman Tim Cameron, Bill Carter and John Mayes. Tim reported that the statements had been reviewed and no discrepancies found. The Audit Committee recommended that, for member's information, a statement be periodically posted to the 589<sup>th</sup> Website in a secure section. Treasurer Spencer discussed some of the details of the reports including income sources and expenditures. Rich Comiso moved with Dennis Cluth's second that the finance report be accepted as written. The motion was passed unanimously. A copy of the Financial Statement is included as part of these minutes.

President Blanchfield Comments:

Recognized 16 members, in the enclosed list, who have attended all four reunions.

Introduced and welcomed the 46 first time attendees, in the enclosed list, and made sure each one had received their 589<sup>th</sup> shot glass.

Thanked all for attending and discussed the membership number which is still growing and currently stands at 590. Darrell "Louie" Lewis was member number 589. Lewis hails from Morehead, KY and was assigned to C Co from March '70 through January '71. President Blanchfield commented on the importance of members from all Companies and attached units and from all year groups.

Thanked the Membership Committee members:

HHC- Sterling Hester and Dennis Kotke

A Co- Luigi Bersani, Richard Radko and Robert Hickox

B Co- Charles Begley and Bill Fraundorfer

C Co- Larry Jinkins, John Van Zelf and Chuck Schueddig

D Co- John Miller, Jerry Nichols and John Ryan

He pointed out the extraordinary work done by A Co, C Co, and D Co, with exactly 200 members found since the last reunion. He also asked if anyone wanted to help with the search and recruitment effort. As a result, Pete Norman, Al Carlisle and George Berry were added to the HHC group and Tom Leasure was added to the B Co group.

President Blanchfield then thanked various individuals for their work during the previous year:

Rich Comiso was thanked for his Publicity efforts, especially ensuring the Reunion was listed in several military related periodicals. Rich mentioned that he had advertised in Army Engineer Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Veterans of America and Military Officers Association of America. He asked that if anyone has or knows of possible publicity avenues, to please let him know, specifically he needs the help of a member of the Noncommissioned Officers Association.

President Blanchfield also thanked John Miller for sending out communications by mail for those who do not have email capability, Randy Joyner for efforts with the Reunion Committee, Sterling Hester for keeping the 589<sup>th</sup> Memorabilia and Vietnam Memorial Plaque and Tom Engelhart for the Rubys he provided for each member.

He thanked all for sharing their stories and memories especially Al Carlisle for his book, "Field of View" and Bob Spencer for his short stories, "The Rain" "Tet 1968", "Burning Shit" and "Death of a Latrine". He also thanked Bob for Bell's Dedication letter and Memorial Bell Register and his 589<sup>th</sup> Vietnam Memorial Service Words which would be delivered at the Memorial Service later in the day. Larry Jinkins was thanked for his "Vietnam Impressions", Dennis Cluth for his "C Co 589<sup>th</sup> Memories" and Bob Grant for his "History of the 51<sup>st</sup> Asphalt Platoon". He encouraged others to record and share their stories and memories. He then discussed the possibility of consolidating these into a collection of some sort and if anyone has any ideas to please share with him or the other Officers.

He thanked Tommy McLain and Pete Philbrick for their work to provide the Unit Crest Pin and Bruce McEltree for arranging the VA Representative Speaker, Elizabeth Ledvina.

The next item of discussion was Old Business and the By Laws changes. President Blanchfield pointed out that during the last Business Meeting, members voted on a proposal to temporarily provide for two Vice Presidents and that with the 2013 election there would be a new President and Vice President elected. Rich Comiso made a motion which was seconded by Fred Guth that the By Laws be approved. A vote of members present approved the motion unanimously.

The next item discussed was New Business. The Reunion location was discussed to great length. President Blanchfield suggested that we should return to the Branson area in 2013 and asked for a show of hands of those in agreement. A motion was made by Terry Holland, seconded by Ralph Downing to return to Branson in 2013. With a show of hand vote, there were 3 nays to the motion and it was decided that the 2013 Reunion would be in Branson, during the same time period and at the same location if available. (Note: It was later confirmed with the Hotel that they could handle the request next year and planning will start shortly to that end.) Discussion followed about the advisability of determining locations for the Reunion for 2 to 3 years out. It was pointed out that one year is not a

sufficient length of time to make all the arrangements necessary to ensure a quality experience for attendees. It was agreed that this was a good plan and the Reunion Committee was asked to implement that idea.

Other discussion about the Reunion included a suggestion from John Bergland that transportation be arranged from the Springfield Airport to Branson so car rental would not be required. Pete Norman mentioned that other organizations he belonged to uses \$2 bills for tipping to exhibit the effect their business had on the local economy. He suggested a supply of bills could be provided with a stamp "You have been tipped by the 589<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion". Randy Joyner asked how many people drove to Branson. Approximately 75% responded with a show of hands. A majority of the members indicated a Central USA location would be preferable. Randy Joyner mentioned that cost might be a negative factor at some of the larger cities. Byron Schriever discussed experiences he has had with planning events with another Military Association he is involved with and offered to provide a contact with an organization that will help you get in touch with the Visitor Bureaus at locations where our size group could be accommodated.

President Blanchfield asked for help with the Reunion Committee and appointed the following:

HHC- Sterling Hester

A Co- Randy Joyner, Committee Chairman

B Co- Roger Collis

C Co- Dennis Cluth

D Co- Terry Holland

The next item of discussion was what to do with funds that have been and will be accrued. A motion was made by Don Baux and seconded by the members present, that the Board of Directors be given authority to donate up to \$2,000.00 to an organization which helps Veterans of our era and one which has a good track record of maximizing the amount of funds collected for the intended purpose and not for administrative costs. The motion was approved unanimously.

The idea of using funds to help members attend the Reunion was mentioned. President Blanchfield indicated that had been authorized at the 2011 meeting but there had been few, if any, names brought to the Board's attention. We can still do that if members make the Board aware of that need. Funds for this purpose would be used out of the Chaplin's Fund.

There was a short discussion about having an Early Bird Registration with a drawing with all Early Bird registrations being eligible and a free hotel stay or reunion expenses paid. No motion or action was taken regarding this idea.

The next idea discussed was what to do for the family of a deceased member. A donation of various dollar amounts was discussed but it was decided a set amount for each instance was not a viable idea

because of the various levels of needs for each family. Providing a card and memento to the surviving members was discussed and seemed to have a high level of interest. Suggestions for a memento included a letter opener in the shape of a bayonet, a picture frame and a triangular shaped shadow box suitable to display the funeral flag. John Bergland is aware of a Veterans organization in Hastings, Minnesota which manufactures a display box for that purpose. President Blanchfield requested that any additional suggestions be forwarded to him. (Note: Marti Miller was later asked if she would be willing to provide a picture suitable for the sympathy card and she responded with an enthusiastic yes.) This recognition will be prepared and provided to any deceased member's family beginning with the period after the 2012 Reunion. Terry Holland moved and seconded by Rich Comiso that \$1,500.00 from the general fund be earmarked for a Chaplin's Fund to be used for this purpose. The motion was unanimously approved. A suggestion was made that someone from the Association attend the Funeral Services of those members who pass away.

There was a discussion about the 589<sup>th</sup> Website including any items that could or should be added. Members were informed how they could register to have the Blog automatically sent to their email when a new item was posted.

There was a short discussion about notating the member list to designate those who went to Vietnam on the ship. A motion was made to that effect by Ed Marshall with a second by Pete Norman. The motion did not pass by a show of hands vote of the members present.

There was a general discussion about the PX including any additional items that should be added and how to make goods available to members. President Blanchfield discussed a Challenge Coin source he had found overseas and asked if there was still interest in this item and what price point would be most attractive. Ed Marshall talked about Challenge Coins and indicated he thought it was a good idea for the Association to have one. Nick Kallas made a motion that if an Association Challenge Coin was produced, it should be made in the USA. Motion was seconded by Clyde Hutson and approved by a show of hands. No decision was made on design and acquisition of this item for the PX.

President Blanchfield introduced Frank Lowe who was essentially the last man, assigned to the 589<sup>th</sup>, out of Viet Nam. He presided at the turn in of Battalion equipment and assets. Frank briefly described the process and indicated that one of the items in his possession was the 589<sup>th</sup> Battalion U. S. Flag originally issued to the unit upon activation. He indicated his desire to present that flag to the 589<sup>th</sup> Association and President Blanchfield accepted it for the Association with their heartfelt thanks. Frank Lowe went on to describe a series of photographs which he would show to the Farewell Dinner audience and asked for help in identifying many of the individuals in the pictures.

Nick Kallas asked for an acclamation by the members that a triangular display box be acquired to display the unit flag which was unanimously approved.

VP John Hunt described the Veterans Remembered Flag and distributed information of how to contact the organization.

President Blanchfield read a list of members who have passed away since the formation of the Association:

First	Last	MI	Co.	Deceased
LTC Albert	Costanzo	C	HHC	5-Oct-11
William	Holt	D	HHC	24-Jul-12
Robert	Lussier	H	HHC	27-Aug-12
LTC Donald	O'Shei	M	HHC	6-Oct-10
John	Sebestyen		HHC	26-Jan-11
Daniel	Kuczynski	E	A	26-May-12
Jerry	Waters	W	B	22-Jun-12
John "Twiggy"	Engdahl	E	C	11-Apr-11
Franklin	Farmer		C	12-Jul-11
Daniel	Goetsch	E	C	29-Dec-11
Lynn	Hunter	B	C	29-Sep-11
William	Rach	G	C	24-Aug-11
Edgar	Smith		C	29-Dec-12
CPT Thomas	O'Dea	W	D	10-May-12
James	Pavlick	L	D	31-Mar-12

Nick Kallas presented the following toast to our fallen brothers.

“To the Brothers we lost in Vietnam; to the Brothers we have lost since; who, while they do not remain with us in body, they remain with us in spirit. To Our Absent Brothers.”

Randy Joyner offered a Benediction.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennie Pendergrass, Secretary

## 46 First Time Attendees

George	Barry	HHC
John	Berglund	HHC
Doyle	Breeden	D
Jarrell	Burgess	D
Al	Carlisle	HHC
William	Carter	A
Tommy	Collins	D
Roger	Collis	B
Jerry	Cutts	HHC
Bruce	Daniels	A
Bill	Darrah	A
Tom	Engelhart	C
Richard	Forbus	A
John	Garrett	D
Ronald	Gathers	A
Randall	Gawf	D
Kenneth	Geackel	A
Ron	Goodwin	A
Earl	Harper	D
Gary	Hibbeler	A
Robert	Hickox	A
Terry	Holland	D/A
Glen	Hollis	A
James	Kelly	A
Stanley	Leis	C
Francis "Frank"	Lowe	513/D
Bruce	McEltree	A
James	Newsome	B
Jerry	Peacore	C
Frank	Pugliese	D
Elroy	Randall	C
Donald	Rawls	A
Dalton	Robertson	D
Lynn "Robbie"	Robinson	A
Michael	Schanz	C
Byron	Schriever	HHC
Ted	Shank	D
Donald	Smith	HHC
Jimmy	Spreier	B
Billy	Steman	C
Eddie	Swann	D
Keith	Swilik	C
Gradin	Taullbee	B
Leroy	Walston	D
Marion	Watkins	A
Roy	Wolfe	D

Sixteen 4<sup>th</sup> time attendees:

Perry	Blanchfield	A
Gary	Burns	513th
Tim	Cameron	A
Larry	Dorough	D
Sterling	Hester	HHC
John	Hunt	A
Clyde	Hutson	C
Randy	Joyner	A
Sam	Lamey	C
John	Mayes	A
Mike	Morrish	C
Dennie	Pendergrass	B
Bob	Spencer	A
Don	Swensrud	C
Jim	Thacker	A
Larry	Westmoreland	A