



## 589<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion Assn. (Vietnam)

10/17/13

### 589<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion Association Business Meeting, September 14, 2013

President Blanchfield called the 2013 Business Meeting to order at 1206 hrs and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chaplain Randy Joyner gave the Invocation.

President Blanchfield made a roll call of Chapter Officers. All were present. He then thanked all the Officers for their service and reminded the members to seek their help as needed and to respond to any requests for assistance from Officers.

Secretary Pendergrass was asked to present Minutes from the 2012 business meeting which had been provided to members via email and a few copies had been distributed to the tables. Rich Comiso moved that the minutes be approved by acclamation without reading. Motion was seconded by Freddie Guth and unanimously approved.

Treasurer Spencer was asked to present the financial report. He gave a very thorough explanation of the balance sheet (copy attached) and described the checks and balances in place to protect and insure funds are accounted for. He introduced the Audit Committee, consisting of Chairman Tim Cameron, John Mayes and Jerry Nichols. Chairman Cameron described their audit and reported they found the records to be in order with all funds accounted for. A question was asked from the floor regarding investment of funds not needed for short term expenses. Treasurer Spencer reported that it is very difficult to find any financial vehicles which will earn interest for short term investments. A motion to accept the report was made by Dave Goodrow, seconded by Bill Heflin and unanimously approved by the members on a voice vote.

President Blanchfield made comments about the state of the Association which is continuing to grow and currently stands at about 635 members. He thanked everyone for attending and the importance of contributing to the Association. He also thanked the various committees for their work during the year.

The Membership Committee Members were acknowledged and thanked:

HHC-Sterling Hester, Dennis Kotke

A Co-Luigi Bersani, Richard Radko, Robert Hickox

B Co-Charles Begley, Bill Fraundorfer

C Co-Larry Jenkins, John VanZelf, Chuck Schueddig

D Co-John Miller, Jerry Nichols, John Ryan

President Blanchfield recognized the 15 members who were attending for the Fifth time, all reunions and also pointed out there were 24, fourth time attendees.

Fifteen, 5th Time attendees

Perry	Blanchfield	A	Mar68-Oct69
Gary	Burns	513th	Nov69-Nov70
Tim	Cameron	A	Nov67-Nov68
Larry	Dorough	D	Feb70-Jan70
Sterling	Hester	HH	Jan68-Feb69
John	Hunt	A	Feb68-Feb69
Clyde	Hutson	C	Jul67-Jul68
Randy	Joyner	A	Dec68-Dec69
Sam	Lamey	C	Sep68-Jun68
John	Mayes	A	Apr67-Nov67
Michael	Morrish	C	Jan68-Jan69
Dennie	Pendergrass	B	Apr67-Jun67
Bob	Spencer	A	Sep67-Apr69
Donald	Swensrud	C	Dec67-Feb70
Jim	Thacker	A	Jan69-Jan70

President Blanchfield then welcomed the 9 First time attendees and presented them with a 589<sup>th</sup> Shot Glass.

Nine, 1st Time attendees

Tomas	Briseno	HH	Apr67-Mar68
Denis	Cowand	D	Apr67-Apr68
Robert	Coy	B	Jan68-Jan69
Jerry	Craig	B/577th	May68-Feb69
Larry	Densch	B	Jan71-Nov71
Harry	Grant	D	Apr67-Oct67
Jimmy	Hendrix	A	Apr67-Apr68
Walter	Kazenski	D	Apr67-Nov67
Terry	Story	C	Apr67-Apr68

The President thanked Rich Comiso for his publicity work. Rich mentioned he still needed a contact of someone who is a member of the NCO Association so he can try to place Reunion Announcements in their publications.

The President mentioned Sterling Hester's efforts in regards to keeping the 589<sup>th</sup> Memorabilia and Memorial Plaque and thanked him for that service. Sterling informed us that he had arranged for Dan Voegel to build a case for the Battalion's US Flag. Mr. Voegel would not accept any remuneration for his work.

President Blanchfield also mentioned the service provided by Elizabeth Ledvina as VA Representative and thanked her for that effort.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

President Blanchfield reminded those in attendance that last year, the Board of Directors was authorized to donate up to \$2,000 to an organization or organization which helps Veterans of our era and which has a good track record of maximizing the amount of funds collected for the intended purpose and not for administrative costs. The President reported that consistent with that directive, donations of \$1,000.00 each have been made to the DAV and Vietnam Memorial organizations.

President Blanchfield described several problems with doing business via the Association PX and suggested that service be continued with the following guidelines; stop online sales of clothing with the

exception of caps with a \$20.00 minimum purchase required. A motion was made by Jim Swick, seconded by Rich Comiso to that effect. Motion was approved by members.

A Challenge Coin was not available yet due to difficulties of finding a quality manufacturer from which to purchase an "American Made" product.

A Reunion Aid Fund had been established to help members attend the Reunions. This fund went unused since the last meeting. After a general discussion regarding the importance of establishing a working Chaplin's Fund, a motion was made, seconded and approved to transfer the balance in the Reunion Aid Fund to the Chaplin's Fund and increase the balance of the Chaplin's Fund to \$1,500.00, with the understanding that this fund could be used to provide reunion assistance to members who might need it.

President Blanchfield mentioned the sympathy card designed by Marti Wilde Miller, which will be sent to families of members who pass away. He also discussed a Memento that could be given to the family. One suggestion last year was to provide a triangular shaped box for storing the flag presented to each family. It was found that different size flags are used and one size case would not serve the purpose. Presenting a small bayonet had been discussed but a source for one had not been found. At this point Nick Kallas made a motion which was seconded by David Goodrow to table the search for now and that the Board would research and make a recommendation at the next business meeting. Motion was unanimously approved.

Last year, Amendments to the By-Laws were approved which temporarily provide for two Vice Presidents but reverting back to one with this year's elections. They were also amended to name Perry Blanchfield, Permanent Chairman of the Board after this year's election.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The topic of where to hold the next Reunion was opened. President Blanchfield asked Randy Joyner, Chairman of the Reunion Committee to provide details about other locations they had checked. Mr. Joyner reported a Conference Hotel in Chattanooga was contacted. Room rates were \$89.00 per night, all food and drinks must be purchased from or through the hotel and their Banquet room would not accommodate our group for the larger meetings.

The Crown Plaza in St Louis was contacted and their room rate is \$99.00 per night and all food and drinks must be purchased from or through the hotel.

The Committee had also contacted a Holiday Inn Express in Nashville and their response was similar to the above in terms of cost and conditions.

A motion was made by Fred Guth with second by Dave Cordingley to make Branson and the Stone Castle our permanent Reunion HQ. The motion was approved with one dissenting vote. During discussion of the motion several comments were made, such as sometimes a local Chamber of Commerce will provide funds to help defray cost of the meeting and some airlines often provide special rates for travelers to

Military Reunions. Tim Cameron said he travels 1800 miles to Branson and likes it here. Tom McClain felt there are few if any compelling reasons to move.

The President reported that the Association established in a previous Business Meeting that our Reunion would be held during the second weekend of September each year. The dates blocked out for the next Reunion is September 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and the second week in September each year thereafter.

At this point, Jay Wilson, Manager of the Stone Castle asked to make some remarks. On behalf of the staff, he welcomed the 589<sup>th</sup> to their facility and said it was their privilege to have us. He pointed out that the City of Branson honors Veterans in many ways. The Hotel is proud to be keeper of Bell and they gladly accept the honor and privilege of its safekeeping. Several thousand people see it every year and many favorable comments have been made. He asked that we please call him if there is anything he can do for us. At this point President Blanchfield informed him that we had just voted to make Branson and the Stone Castle our permanent Reunion HQ. Mr. Wilson expressed his appreciation for that action and they would work very hard to keep that trust.

Next, the Early Bird registration was discussed. President Blanchfield said the original idea was that all who registered and paid their fees prior to 31 March, 2013 would be eligible for a drawing for the free rooms provided by the Hotel. The number of free rooms available is based on total number of room reservations at the Hotel, with one free room available for each 20 registrations. There are 3 free rooms available for use this year. Somehow confusion developed and he proposed that one room would be drawn from those who registered prior to the cutoff date and the two remaining rooms would be drawn from all who were registered at the Hotel. A motion was made to that effect by Charles Begley, seconded by David Cordingley and unanimously approved. Bill Heflin's ticket was drawn for the first room. Tom McClain and Mike Morrish were drawn for the other two rooms. Another ticket was drawn and Roger Collis won a free dinner for the Saturday Night event and James Kelly won his choice of PX items.

David Goodrow made a motion which was seconded by Terry Story that a drawing for the free rooms will be made next year in the same manner as this year, with the exception that all Stone Castle registrants will be eligible for the free room drawing with no cutoff date for registration required. The motion was approved.

President Blanchfield stated that a free upgrade is received for each 20 rooms reserved at the Hotel. However, those upgrades must be assigned prior to registration. David Goodrow made a motion which was seconded by Terry Story that for next year, a drawing for a room upgrade would be made from the first 20 people who registered, another from the next group of 20 and so on until all the upgrades were used. The motion was approved.

The matter of donating funds to various causes was discussed. Several possibilities were mentioned including purchasing pavers for the local privately owned Veterans Museum which is undergoing financial difficulties, an Education Center at the Vietnam Memorial Wall in DC, which will serve as an education center and display area for memorabilia left at the wall and an Army Museum which is being planned for Ft Belvoir. David Cordingley made a motion and seconded by Larry Jenkins to allot \$2,000 for

donations to organizations, with the specific organizations to be selected by the Board of Directors. The same guidelines as used for 2012 donations are to be used. The motion was approved by members.

President Blanchfield said he would like to have some method or means to recognize those who built the Battalion at Ft Hood and made the trip to Vietnam. He presented a motion which was seconded by Woodrow Lucy to that effect. The motion was approved by the members. President Blanchfield said he would work with the Historian to meet that goal.

Next, President Blanchfield called for election of Officers. He said the new slate of Officers would take office at the end of Saturday Nights Banquet.

President: Dennie Pendergrass had been nominated for the position but declined. Nick Kallas was also nominated. There were no nominations from the floor. Rich Comiso moved to close nominations, seconded by Larry Jenkins. Nick Kallas was elected by acclamation.

Vice President: John Miller has been nominated for the position. There were no nominations from the floor and Pete Norman moved to elect with John VanZelf seconding. John Miller was elected.

Historian: Dennie Pendergrass has been filling this position by appointment of the President and has been nominated to fill the office. There were no nominations from the floor. Pete Norman moved with a second by David Goodrow to elect by acclamation. Dennie Pendergrass was elected.

Secretary: Sterling Hester has been nominated to fill this position. There were no nominations from the floor. Pete Norman moved with second by Terry Story to elect him. Sterling Hester was elected to the Secretary position.

Treasurer: Bob Spencer has been nominated to remain in this position. Pete Norman made a motion which was seconded by John Hunt to elect him. Bob Spencer was elected to the position.

VA Liaison: Don Baux has indicated he wants to step down from this position. President asked if anyone was interested in the job or if there were any nominations from the floor. Woodrow Lucy indicated an interest in the position but after the President pointed out some of the computer skills needed to research and keep members informed, he withdrew his name from consideration. Roger Collis nominated Charles Begley with a second by David Cordingley. Charles Begley was elected to the position.

President Blanchfield asked Bob Spencer to discuss a VA Proclamation he had prepared. Copies were made available for review. After the explanation, Larry Jenkins moved and Fred Guth seconded that the Proclamation be approved. It was unanimously approved by the members. The document will be placed on the Website and members are encouraged to send it to their Senators and Representatives to let them know our position on the VA organization. The adopted Resolution is attached.

Randy Joyner read the names of members who died since the last reunion: CSM Clifford Moore, James Hopkins and Jerry Waters.

A toast to all our Fallen Brothers was presented by John Ryan.

“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.”

Chaplin Joyner offered a Benediction.

President Blanchfield adjourned the meeting at 1400 hrs.

#### SPECIAL CALL TO ORDER

At the close of Saturday Nights Banquet, President Kallas called the members to order for a special meeting. Dennie Pendergrass made a motion which was seconded by Jerry Nichols to make Elizabeth Ledvina an Honorary Member in recognition of her service and efforts on behalf of the members. The motion was unanimously approved by members. President Kallas adjourned the special meeting.

Respectfully Submitted

Dennie L. Pendergrass, Secretary