



2015 Reunion  
of the  
**18<sup>th</sup> & 54<sup>th</sup> Aviation Co. 'Otternest' Association**

~ **Meeting Minutes** ~

The Business Meeting of the 18<sup>th</sup> & 54<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company 'Otternest' Association was called to order by Jeff 'Bic' Bickerton as Association President. The meeting began at approximately 0900 at the Marriott Courtyard in **Houma, Louisiana** on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of October in the year of 2015.

The Pledge of Allegiance was made.

The Minutes from 2014 were summarized and it was stated that they are published on our Website.

**General Discussion**

Jeff 'Bic' mentioned - It is important to get on the **Agent Orange Registry** with the VA as soon as possible. If a person signs up when they have a medical issue, related to Agent Orange, they may have to wait a long while for benefits during a critical time.

Robert Burgess stated that you should not accept "No" for an answer from the VA. Talk to other Vets to see how they worked with the VA on Agent Orange issues. There is a list on the website of the related Diseases the VA will pay for your treatment.

Bob Lukenbill brought a photo to the Reunion showing the Government spraying Agent Orange all over the place. He said, if you were transported on a C21 or C123 or flew in an Otter, you were exposed to it. If you were there, you are eligible of benefits. **Get in the A.O. Registry.**

**Jim Wittel** was acknowledged for his founding of the Association through his website.

Jeff Bic suggested that everyone send **Dickie Gonsoulin** and his wife Merle a 'Thank You' card and also a Christmas card. He will send out their address to the Reunion Group in a follow-up email.

**Treasurer Report:**

Ron Haugen gave the Treasurer's Report - Last year we had \$7,149.95 in checking account. Up to October 5<sup>th</sup> we deposited \$13,030.00. \$294.00 was paid for operational and advertising expenses. The total, at this time, in the bank account is \$19,885. If this group is disbanded for whatever reason the money will go to Charity (like the USO, Wounded Warriors, DAV, etc.).

Our Group's name is now the 18<sup>th</sup> & 54<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company Otternest Association. Our website address is: [www.18thand54thaviationcompanyotternest.com](http://www.18thand54thaviationcompanyotternest.com). A new secondary domain name & address for our website will be '[www.TheOtterGuys.com](http://www.TheOtterGuys.com)'. It's an easier web address to give to other people.

**New Business:**

The first order of new business was to nominate the following **Board Members** – Jeff 'Bic' for President, Jack Ritchie for Vice President, and Ron Haugen for Treasurer.

Bob Herron would prefer not be the next Reunion Chairman. Jeff 'Bic' stated that we are going to use the **Armed Forces Reunion Inc.** (AFRI) to help with the 2016 Reunion. We worked with them for the 1<sup>st</sup> Reunion in Branson, MO.

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**Committee Members:**

Gene Brockman and Lindsay Perkins will help find and recruit 54<sup>th</sup> unit members.

Volunteers for the committee members are: Wayne Jones Jr., Chaplin and Pete Cranford, Vice Chaplin.

The motion was made by Robert Burgess and Seconded by Steve Staurset.

Steve Staurset volunteered to be Secretary. Bill Glover seconded the motion.

The Executive Board suggested that the **2016 Reunion** be held in Washington DC. Based on conversations with the Armed Forces Reunion Inc. we can get a room near to Ronald Regan Airport (DCA) for \$109 (has been changed to \$124 with breakfast) a night at the Sheraton Pentagon City for 9/22 through 9/24. Jack Ritchie seconded the motion.

**Open Discussion:**

Wayne Jones Jr. – He is a ‘Yellow Cap’ – 1987 Houston area– exposure to the moving wall. He is also a Directory Assistant at the Vietnam Memorial. Wayne takes care of activity around the Memorial. Website has list of casualties and they are **trying to get a picture of every person on the ‘Wall’**. They lack 17,000 pictures. He appealed to the group to go to website search for casualties to see if they have pictures of any of the guys. The ‘In Memory Of’ Program is for the many that died due to their service in VN. This is a way to memorialized them. This information will be on display in the building to be built across from current VN Memorial (the ‘Wall’). Wayne will be in DC on Veterans Day - look him up – in front of Panel 25D. There is a link on our Website.

Joanna Cranford (RN, Captain, VN Vet) - there is a Women’s Vietnam Memorial – she is a member.

George DeSerre is sponsoring a **Vietnam Tour** in 2016. Every year he sponsors a tour in Vietnam – they go to different places from Saigon to Pleiku, to the coast and to Hong Kong Mountain. Contact George if you would like to go. He will help with airfare. You will need a current passport and he will help with obtaining Visas. 2016 is filling up.

Robert Burgess recognized Jeff ‘Bic’ for his contribution to the Association over this past year.

Steve Staurset suggested we get a ‘headshot’ of each member of the group. We should set up a tripod and take pictures. Steve will work with John Adler.

Wayne Jones mentioned that he is part of the **VN War 50<sup>th</sup> Commemorative Org.** He knows funds have been approved for a Military Rep. (i.e., Major General or alike) to personally hand-out a personalized Certificate of VN Service & VN Service Pin. We can get a separate room for this Ceremony. We should look this up for next Reunion.

The Raffle Drawing of the (6) Free Night’s Stays (as well as 4 T-Shirts) was begun and completed. Ten (10) winners.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted for approval by Margaret Bickerton to:

**Steve Staurset** - Association Secretary 11/08/2015