



**18th and 54th Aviation Company – “Otter Nest”
Business Meeting
August 2, 2014**

The business meeting of the Otter Nest was called to order by Ron Haugen as Association President. The meeting began at approximately 9:15 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee.

The Pledge of Allegiance was made along with a moment of Silence to Honor our Departed Brothers.

Tom Fetsch made some announcements about the pictures being taken at 4:45 p.m. and the location of the dinner.

Jeff Bickerton commented on the need for Veterans to become part of the Agent Orange registry and be tested by the VA as you may qualify for benefits. The testing would include blood work, x-ray, etc. Vouchers may be given if 40 or more miles away from a VA facility. John Bonner mentioned there is currently a Toxic Exposure Bill in the House for female Veterans to obtain testing for birth defects. Robert Burgess said that Agent Orange is projected to affect up to 10 generations.

John Heathcock said that using a representative, i.e. VFW, DAV, etc. enables a Veteran to more easily register with the VA. Jack Giusti said Veterans need to register with VA for Agent Orange.

Ron Haugen recognized Jim Wittel as original organizer of the Association and Tom Fetsch as Reunion Chairman.

Wayne Jones is to continue as Association Chaplain and Bill Hamilton will be Sergeant at Arms.

The 2013 Minutes were read. Robert Burgess made a Motion to accept the Minutes and Jack Giusti seconded. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report was given by Ron Haugen. A starting balance of \$4,306, donations made by various members of the Association and Reunion expenses leaves a balance of \$5,742. A Motion was made by Jack Ritchie to accept the Treasurer's report and was seconded by Larry Meier. Motion carried.

Old Business:

The Association by-laws were previously handed out and reviewed by the Association members. John Adler made a Motion to accept the By-Laws as written (copy attached) and the Motion was seconded by John Heathcock. Motion carried.

Newsletter: Jim Sullivan stated that no information was forwarded to Jim Wittel for the Newsletter. Articles should be edited with details before being published. Pictures should be forwarded also. When submitting an obituary, it would be better to also include some information about the deceased. Del Hardiman indicated that the obituary in some newspapers includes that information.

Larry Meier posed a question if anyone knew the number of people looking at the website or has shown any interest. Jeff Bickerton indicated he has overlapping and changing email addresses and phone numbers. The VFW magazine as well as other Veteran publications as being used to bring awareness of the website. Al Wilson would like a list of email addresses. Jeff indicated that 'hackers' want email addresses and the new website would have to be investigated to see if it will allow members to get into a secure level with a login and password. Jim Wittel stated that the website has the member's names listed in a coded format. Members with blank or incorrect information should get with Jim. Website has been changed as 'hackers' hacked into the old website. Jeff stated that we would have to learn the new website, its limits and limitations, etc. The 54th needs to have the message spread about the website. The current list is fluid due to changes in address, email, and phone numbers. Jeff, if requested, will send out list to those interested. Al Wilson got on the website and added his name.

The 18th and 54th does not have a website. Current website is owned by Jim Wittel. The Association is hoping to get a website. There is also a Facebook account started by Jim Wittel and Joe Wilson.

New Business:

Reunion Committee Report – Pete Gonzales went to check out New Orleans as a potential 2015 Reunion site but no further information is available.

The first order of new business was to decide if the Association would have a 2015 Reunion. If the next Reunion is held in New Orleans area should the Reunion date be changed due to the climate in August in the New Orleans area? A Motion to have the 2015 Reunion in Houma, Louisiana was made by Jim Sullivan and was seconded by Jack Guisti. The dates for the 2015 Reunion were changed to October 8-11 (arriving Thursday the 8th and departing Sunday the 11th). After much discussion, the Motion was carried. Dickie Gonsoulin is local to the area and can facilitate the planning of the Reunion.

The next order of business was the election of Officers. Robert Burgess nominated Jeff Bickerton as President. There were no other nominations. Motion was made by Val Hoey and seconded by John Adler. Motion was carried. Jeff Bickerton made a Motion nominating Jack Ritchie as Vice President. As there were no other nominations, the Motion carried. There were no nominations for the position of Association Secretary; Jan Heathcock agreed to continue her role as Secretary for another year. For the position of Treasurer, Ron Haugen was nominated by Jeff Bickerton and the Motion was seconded by Robert Burgess. No other nominations were made and the Motion carried.

Bob Herron agreed to Chair the Reunion Committee with Dickie Gonsoulin assisting as local liaison. Vice Chairman is John Stoner.

Wayne Jones was named Association Chaplain and Phil Hamilton was named Association Sergeant at Arms.

Jim Wittel was named Communications/Website/Newsletter Chairman as he is currently in that position. Jeff Bickerton will assist. This year a decision will have to be made as to a communications hub (at this point it is Facebook). The website is in the early developmental stages and needs to be made usable. As previously stated, the owner of the website is Jim Wittel. If owned by Association, the Association needs to have ownership. Jim Wittel has to be part of the communications system. Dickie Gonsoulin stated that it needs to be someone that is computer savvy. Wayne Jones asked what the duties would be and the description of the duties were read as stated in the By-Laws.

John Heathcock stated that the website should be owned by the Association. Jim Wittel stated that he is not giving out passwords to go into website to change anything. John Heathcock further questioned the future of the website should something happen to Jim Wittel. Jim stated that if something should happen, we would have to go to Joe Wilson who helped design the website. Jim further stated that Joe Wilson wants to be paid \$400 a year to maintain the website. In case something happens to Jim Wittel and Joe Wilson, the Association will have no website. Bill Glover questioned whether the Association should entertain a new website. Robert Burgess wanted to entertain payment to Jim after the Association obtains the passwords. John Stoner stated that the Association would pay the website expenses. John Stoner made a Motion to pay Jim Wittel's current expenses after getting website access information. The Motion was seconded by Bill Glover. Motion was carried. Further discussion was made regarding a copyright for the Association. Dickie Gonsoulin will have his attorney research copyright. John Stoner suggested a trademark rather than a copyright. Gene Brockman posed a question of order regarding the Motion and voted nay. After further discussion regarding the Motion, the Motion was carried to research if a copyright or trademark is needed.

Val Hoey stated that his son estimated the cost to protect the website to be \$100-150 per month (average \$1,500 per year).

Jim Wittel was name webmaster and stated that the website expires in 5 years. Jeff Bickerton stated that a website transfer may have to be made again at that time.

Val Hoey stated that on behalf of the 54th, they are glad to be invited into the Association. John Adler stated he would like to rename the Association to: 18th and 54th Aviation Company “Otter Nest”. John Adler made a Motion to rename the Association, Dick Handly seconded. The Motion carried.

Dickie Gonsoulin stated that Jim Wittel should be reimbursed for website expenses upon obtaining website passwords/access with a \$1,000 cap. John Heathcock made Motion for reimbursement of website expenses to Jim Wittel with a \$1,000 cap and the contributions made by members at the first meeting held in Branson as part of the cap. Motion was seconded by Dickie Gonsoulin. Motion carried.

Daniel Gonzales and Jack Handly were the winners of the Hotel Room raffle. John Stoner, Don Quigley, Tom Fetsch, Dickie Gonsoulin, Daniel Gonzales, Bill Glover, Wayne Jones, Nic Nicholson, Larry Meier, and Jeff Bickerton won free hats.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Heathcock

Secretary