

FALL OF SAIGON MARINES ASSOCIATION

www.fallofsgaigon.org

23 April 2016

Greetings from northern California – It's been quite a while since I sent out a newsletter as many of our members stay in touch via the Facebook page and through other social media. Please join us there to get the most up to date happenings – the Closed Group is just our Marines and a few close friends. It has 85 members on board and is a great way to stay connected. Just log onto Facebook and search "Fall of Saigon Marines" to find your way to the page. There is also a Fall of Saigon Marines Association page we use to communicate with the public and respond to various inquiries.

It's hard to believe a year has nearly passed since twelve of our Marines met in Saigon in recognition of the 40th anniversary of the Fall of Saigon. For many, I'm sure it was a very cathartic experience as part of the ongoing journey of reflection on an impactful event in our lives. The Marines who went stayed at Marshall Hall (now the Saigon Star Hotel), did day-trips down to Vung Tao / up to Nha Trang and participated in the dedication of a memorial plaque now standing on the grounds of the former embassy (now the U.S. Consulate). Also participating in the dedication ceremony were Ambassador Ted Osius and Consul General Rena Bitter. The dedication could not have happened without both of their support and for that, we'll be eternally grateful. Our Marines were also welcomed by the current MSG Detachment and it's Detachment Commander, SSgt. David Childers.

A documentary about the trip has been produced by Pat Clark who traveled from San Diego for the project. We were introduced to Pat while he was a film student several years ago. Here's a link to the 30-minute documentary that he produced about the trip: <https://vimeo.com/127899942> . The other key media representative on the trip was Bob Oakes (host of WBUR's *Morning Edition*) and the program's field producer, Shannon Dooling. Bob and Shannon did a series of reports from Saigon during the week and here's a link to their series: <http://www.wbur.org/series/return-to-vietnam-series>. Their reports include several 1:1 interviews and provided an opportunity for reflection by several of our members.

The 40th anniversary also provided a couple of other media opportunities and the following is a link to a program Rich Paddock and I participated in at the Sacramento County Library as part of the library's oral history project. The interview took place on a Sunday afternoon in early June and was titled, "Valley to Vietnam: The Fall of Saigon" – here's a link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgKQuhA_PVO . Beth Ruyak of Capitol Public Radio (Sacramento) also aired an interview on her *Insight* program in recognition of the 40th Anniversary and that link may be found at: <http://www.cpradio.org/46272>

Scholarships: Wow – we have now presented the scholarships for 14 years! Thanks to all who have been a part of the program through your financial support of the association. Also, a tip of the cap to John Ghilain for representing the association each year at the Boys & Girls Club of Woburn and to others who have joined him throughout the years. This year's Cpl Charles McMahon Memorial Scholarships were awarded to Andrew Crawford and Danielle DiFrumolo. This year's LCpl Darwin Judge Memorial Scholarship will be awarded on the evening of May 16th at Marshalltown High School.

Lastly, we are all getting older and with that comes the occasional passing of a member of one of the detachments. This past October 15th, James Felber (a member of the Bien Hoa detachment) passed away in Corvallis, Oregon. Jim was laid to rest at the Williamette National Cemetery in Portland, OR where he joins Bob Frain and Bob Schlager.

The association greatly appreciates any donations that are then applied towards the scholarships and maintenance of the website. None of the association officers receive any compensation and all donations are receipted for tax purposes. Please send any donations to Fall of Saigon Marines Assoc., c/o Ken Crouse, Secretary, 487 Slocum Dr., Folsom, CA 95630

Semper Fidelis, Ken

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Above: April 30, 2015. U.S. Consulate (former U.S. Embassy in Saigon, RVN). Bottom Row: Jerome Thomas; Bill Newell; Don Nicholas; Kara Frain; Back Row: Kevin Maloney; Jonathan Kirchner; John Stewart; John Kircher; Doug Potratz; Top Valdez; John Ghilain; and Johnny Moya. Below: The new memorial plaque installed on the grounds of the former embassy.



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Above: Members of the 1975 and 2015 MSG Detachments at a reception held at the former Marine House in Saigon.

Below: The Hard Rock Café quickly became a favorite among the team.



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Above: Dean Kinzie; Marty Davenport; Duane Gevers and Ken Crouse join Lori and Greg DeSaulneirs in the dedication of a uniform of LCpl Darwin L. Judge at the National Museum of the Marine Corps on 30 April 2015. Lori is LCpl Judge's sister. Below: Dean Kenzie; Ken Crouse; Marty Davenport and Duane Gevers at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



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Above: Danielle DiFrumolo, John Ghilain (Vice President, Fall of Saigon Marines Association), Andrew Crawford, and Mr. Michael Mulrenan. Ms. DiFrumolo and Mr. Crawford were the winners of this year's Cpl. Charles McMahon, Jr. Memorial Scholarship. Mr. Mulrenan was a friend of Cpl. McMahon's from his early years in Woburn.