

# Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Organization

2010 WINTER NEWSLETTER [www.kohtang.com](http://www.kohtang.com)



**“The primary joy of life is acceptance, approval, the sense of appreciation and companionship of our human comrades. Many men do not understand that the need for fellowship is really as deep as the need for food, ...”**

Joshua Loth Liebman

## **Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Organization**

c/o Al & Tina Bailey  
6914 Deer Valley Rd  
Highland, MD 20777





**EDITORS CALL FOR  
WRITERS and CONTRIBUTORS  
THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER**

**Submit an article or pictures of special events  
with a caption for future issues of the Koh Tang  
Mayaguez Veterans Newsletter to Al & Tina Bailey  
6914 Deer Valley Rd, Highland, MD 20777 or  
trbailey@comcast.net**



**YOUR  
NEVER TOO OLD**

**If any of our brothers or sisters would like to be added  
to the birthday card mailing list, e-mail Dan Darden at  
vetsbuildit2@aol.com or call 706/716-0284 with the  
month you were born and your mailing address.**

*Birthdays are good for you;  
the more you have, the longer you live.*

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

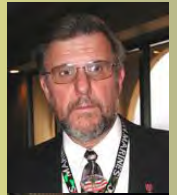


**Please send any new  
contact information  
on yourself to  
KTMV Organization  
c/o Fred Morris  
208 Grand Blvd  
Evansdale, IA 50707  
or  
kohtangfred@kohtang.com**



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Dan Hoffman  
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803/422-6842  
kohtangdan@gmail.com



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706/716-0284  
vetsbuildit2@aol.com



Edd Prothro  
Secretary  
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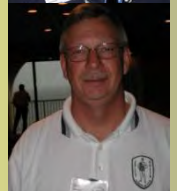
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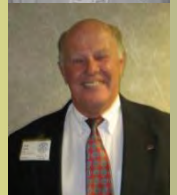
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Bob Blough  
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Jolly44A@aol.com



Tom Noble  
812/636-8002  
shelba@cebridge.net



Vic Salinas  
817/917-0043  
victorgs0101@yahoo.com



**The Wall Memorial Weekend 2010**

# Recent Guest Book Entries on [www.kohtang.com](http://www.kohtang.com)

**254) Edd Prothro, MSgt USMC Ret**  
**Thursday, October 14, 2010 22:02**

I usually pass over the Daily U.S. Casualties report when I'm reading my morning newspaper. There are too many bad memories of the body counts during the Vietnam War, in that the reports tried to simplify, quantify, and justify the loss of so many young men. But this morning something compelled me to look at the list, and this is what I saw:

"Marine Sgt. Frank R. Zaehringer III, 23, of Reno, Nev., died Monday, Oct. 11, 2010, in combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. He was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, I Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C."

I can't ever remember seeing that unit designation in any kind of report or newspaper, and I was somewhat dumnstruck. After a few minutes I began to realize that Sgt. Zaehringer was a member of the very same, exact 2nd Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment to which so many of us were assigned in 1975, except for being part of the 2nd MarDiv instead of 3rd MarDiv. I thought about how sad his family and friends must feel, very much the same as those of our brothers lost on May 15, 1975. As I pondered more I thought how fortunate we are that these young men have stepped into our boots, and now carry the banner of 2/9 to a different clime and place. A different time, a different place, a different generation, yet the bloodshed is the same, and he too is our brother.

Saepe Expertus, Semper Fidelis, Fratres Aeterni  
Often Tested, Always Faithful, Brothers Forever

**252) Mike Cutlip Merritt Island, FL**  
**Friday, October 8, 2010 11:12**

EW aboard USS Coral Sea (CV-43) will always remember the words spoken over the 1MC when we were called to Koh Tang...'make all possible speed.... rules of engagement do not apply'

**240) Hubert Wheeler Lake Worth FL**  
**Thursday, August 5, 2010 15:11**

I was a member Headquarter Co 2/9 I did not go to the Island but all my brothers did. I was in Thailand and was the next wave to go in but was not sent in. Some of you might remember me as I drove a mule across the airstrip and brought ammo to the first wave to go in. I was also the company mailman. My heart goes out to the fallen and their families.

**247) Diane Lancaster, PA**  
**Monday, September 20, 2010 18:49**

In memory of Lynn Blessing, who died in the SS Mayaguez Battle, (and also his recently deceased wife), I thank all of you who served. Keep the story alive!

**253) Gordon Isaacson Seattle, WA**  
**Monday, October 11, 2010 23:47**

Wow, after all these years I can't believe that I found this site. Not to many days ever go by without me remembering the activities of those days. I was at the museum at Wright Patterson Air Force base a few years ago and saw that C130 from Koh Tang and its mockup Blue-82. Then I found that book "A Very Short War" John Guilmartin, Jr. CC 1995. He missed some details but its an okay read. Now I see more books to read. I was a maintenance technician with A-6 Attack Squadron VA-95 aboard the USS Coral Sea. We had been there for the evacuation of Saigon and had gone to Singapore for six days and then we were on our way to Perth, Australia when we heard that alarm again, "General Quarters, General Quarters, All Hands Man Your Battle Stations, This Is Not A Drill." Yee gads not again, and then we turned around and went through another Typhoon just like going to Saigon!!!

**230) Jim Dodge ,CT**  
**Tuesday, June 15, 2010 13:50**

I served with BLT 2/9 the following year, 1976 and processed a lot of the paperwork from the rescue operation. My hat is off to all my brother Marines that went there, those that paid the ultimate price and those that made it home. I feel a little closer to you Marines every time I see an article or read about the incident. My prayers are with all of you, those who didn't come home and those that did and all of the families!! Semper Fi!!

The 35th Anniversary Reunion of the Mayaguez - Koh Tang Veterans was a major success and our best reunion, so far.

More than 60 veterans from the USMC, USN, USAF, Sealand and support elements, along with many family members and friends attended. We had 81 people at our banquet. Many thanks to the dedicated board members who worked so hard to make this possible, but especially Al and Tina Bailey, Fred and Ellen Morris and Tom and Shelba Noble for their hard work.

We started off Thursday night with a Welcome Aboard Party where friendships were renewed and newly made. We had our usual Crown Royal toasts. On Friday we had a very special Open Discussion, Time-line Mission De-brief of the events of May 15, 1975. It lasted over three hours. The group participation was fantastic and emotional as most of our guys became involved relating their personal memories as they learned the details of the operation. At the Neal McCoy Show that night, our group was significantly recognized by the country star. We took pictures and gave him a coin after the show.

Saturday was a busy day starting with a VA Benefits and PTSD Seminar. Hopefully with this information more of our guys will get the benefits they deserve. Our officially sanctioned VFW Meeting was strongly attended and 5 new members and 9 new Life Members were sworn in. We are unique in being able to have this meeting with our VFW being in Cambodia. Minutes of the meeting will be posted on our web site later. That afternoon, we held our official reunion meeting. Much was accomplished for the good of our organization.

We officially changed the name of our organization to **The Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Organization**. We started out as the Beach Club but wanted to be more inclusive, especially for the Delta 1/4 Marines and more who were involved in support of the operation. We approved a set of By-Laws, and elected a new slate of officers and Board Members. We also voted to hold our 2012 Reunion again in Branson, MO. Mark your calendars now for the 1st part of May, 2012. Dates TBA, We also plan to have another campout and Golf Outing in Indiana in summer of 2011. Watch for more information soon at <http://kohtang.com> and for a listing of the new Officers and a posting of the minutes of our meeting.

For all those who were able to attend this year, especially those who joined us for the first time, it was a truly memorable experience. To those who could not join us, you were missed. No room for all I would like to say. I am honored and proud to be your new president. I plan on having a Presidents Comments section somewhere on the webpage. I look forward to your comments and future participation.

Here's to a great Reunion and to improving our organization with increased involvement.

Dan Hoffman, kohtangdan@gmail.com or (803) 422-6842

**35 YEAR BEER BET: PAID**

Ed Prothro and Dan Dardin made a bet while on training in Japan. They were put on alert for the Mayaguez Recovery when Ed said that "we wouldn't go" and Dan said they "would go." So a bet was made for a beer. Thirty-five years later, Ed paid off on that beer bet with a little interest. Little did they know that it would be at a Koh Tang Vets reunion!



Dan Dardin, Ed Mills, Ed Prothro, Melton Dunscombe



Barry Crisp



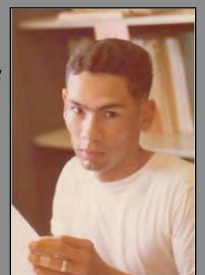
Mark Dick

**Picture Request**  
Send a good picture of yourself from around the year of 1975.

Will be used on name tags at gatherings and most importantly to build a picture history of those involved with the mission.

E-mail / snail mail  
mayaguez1975@yahoo.com

Al Mahan  
1820 Primrose Ave  
Granite City, IL 62040  
(618) 709-0588



Ricardo Rodriguez



Jeff Kern

## THANK YOU, SOLDIERS!

When I lay my head down every night and go to sleep in peace,  
I can stay there knowing all is well while you're standing on your feet;  
Keeping watch, protecting shore to shore, in the air and oceans too.  
Defending freedom at all cost, for the red, white and the blue.

*Thank you, O thank you  
Men and women, brave and strong,  
To those who served so gallantly  
We sing this grateful song.*

To the soldiers who have traveled on to countries far and near,  
In peace and war you paid the price for the cause you held so dear;  
That we may wake each morning bright, and know that freedom rings.  
Because of your great sacrifice, your country joins to sing...

### CHORUS

With the Christmas season drawing nigh, and our loved ones gathering,  
The gift you give is magnified through the absence that it brings.  
So peace on earth, good will t'ward men, is the hope to which we cling.  
But it comes through your brave sacrifice, as the bells of Christmas ring...

### CHORUS

c2009 Michael and Angela Souders(BMI/CCLI)  
Tussing Elementary School Music  
[www.tussingmusic.com](http://www.tussingmusic.com)



Names in Red are USAF, Yellow are USMC and Blue are USN.  
The people you see in the reflection are Koh Tang Vets and families,  
at the 2006 "Call to the Wall" reunion. Photo by Fred Morris.

[www.themayaguezfallenheroestribute.com](http://www.themayaguezfallenheroestribute.com)

### Condensed Minutes of Meeting Koh Tang / Mayaguez Veterans Organization 15 May 2010 Branson, Missouri

- Vice President Bob Blough opened the biannual meeting of the Koh Tang / Mayaguez Organization at 10:00 a.m. with 47 members present. He complimented and thanked Al and Tina Bailey for all the planning and work to make this reunion happen. A recommendation was made to form a committee to assist the Baileys in the continual search for participants in the Mayaguez recovery. No motion was made but several members agreed to assist in this endeavor.
- No minutes from the previous meeting (2008) were available. Fred Morris presented the treasurer's report and Bob Blough approved the report as read.
- Bob Blough outlined the topics of this meeting as: (1) Change the name of the organization to reflect the current membership; (2) Read, discuss, consider and approve the Constitution and By-Laws; (3) Elect new officers for the 2010-2012 term.
- Dan Hoffman motioned that the name of the organization be changed to "Koh Tang / Mayaguez Veterans Organization" (KTMVOrg) which was seconded by Fred Morris and carried by a vote of the membership.
- Fred Morris presented a draft copy of the Constitution and By-Laws for which each article was discussed and amended as necessary. The following is an outline of the Constitution and By-Laws: Mission Statement; Art. I – Name & location; Art. II – Purpose; Art. III – Powers; Art. IV – Membership; Art. V – Meetings; Art. VI – Board of Directors; Art. VII – Officers; and Art. VIII – Amendments.
- Bob Blough concluded the discussion and certified that, with corrections, the Constitution and By-Laws was approved and adopted.
- The floor was opened for the nomination and election of officers for the 2010-2012 term with the following results: President – Dan Hoffman, Vice President – Dan Darden, Secretary – Edd Prothro, Treasurer – Fred Morris, and Board of Directors – Bob Blough, Al Bailey, Vic Salinas, and Tom Noble.
- Bob Blough announced that a recommendation had been made to return to Branson in 2012 for the next reunion which was unanimously approved.

Hello My Brothers,

Much has happened since our big reunion in May. I was waiting to get final answers on some things before I sent this memo, but much is going on, so I will share what is happening now and follow up in the near future with more information.

First, the good news: Since the reunion I have spoken to more than 10 of our brothers who are now "in the door" with the VA and in the process of getting the Veterans Benefits they justly deserve. At least another half dozen of our guys who were getting some benefits are now receiving an increase in their disability benefits. As always, if I can assist you in the process of getting your VA benefits, call me anytime.

Author Scott Baron's new book, "Valor on Koh Tang Island and the Recovery of the Mayaguez," is set for publication this spring by the Naval Institute Press. Several of our brothers are major contributors to this book, which for the first time looks at our battle from the perspective of the Marines on the ground. It is very well written and shows us in a very favorable light. Details on the upcoming publication will be announced soon.

Work continues on the placement of the Captains Desk and Bunk from the SS Mayaguez. The National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, VA, is in the initial stages of discussions. Hopefully, a display at the museum is in the works. If the museum does not go ahead with the exhibit, we will have a backup plan.

Have you checked out kohtang.**org**? (Not our site, kohtang.**com**.) It seems some Chinese investors want to turn our little island into a resort with condos and highways. Many of us are extremely concerned that those carrying out construction on Koh Tang might ignore any remains they uncover, especially those of our brothers who have not yet come home. JAPAC in Hawaii has been notified, I will keep you informed on this very sensitive issue.

Tom Noble is working hard on our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Golf Scramble (6 Aug 2011) which raises money for the Ronnie Hughes Fund. This is a weeklong campfire gathering. Check-out the flyers on the website for more information.

**Finally, I'm pleased to announce that on November 6 we will be celebrating the Marine Birthday Ball at the Gregory S. Copenhaver Marine Corps League Detachment in Elkton, MD. The league is named after our brother Gregory S. Copenhaver, whose remains were repatriated in 1995 from the wreckage of Knife 31 on East Beach. Joining us at the Birthday Ball will be members of L/Cpl Copenhaver's family. We invite you to attend. You will find information about the Birthday Ball on this site under the icon What's New!**

Peace and happiness to you all.

Dan Hoffman, [kohtangdan@gmail.com](mailto:kohtangdan@gmail.com) or 803/422-6842



Many of you have met Don Miller of Columbia, SC. Don is a former SeaLand/Maresk employee and was instrumental in getting our organization some serious funding when we were just starting out. At the recent Branson reunion, Don won over \$300.00 in the 50/50 raffle and immediately, generously, donated it all back to our organization. Although Don was very proud to be an Associate Member of the Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Organization, our Board of Directors unanimously voted to honor Don as our First Official Honorary Member.



## To the Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans

I am a supporter of the military and I like doing picture signing projects on missions that I have read about, this is my way of thanking, supporting and honoring the men from those missions.

My painting, "The Assault on Koh Tang" by Ronald Wong made it to the recent May 2010 reunion and got a lot of signatures, 70 to date. There is still room for more, if you wish to contact me; I will mail the painting to you for you to sign and then return or possibly forward.

Thank you all for your service to our country and I'll look forward to from you.

Kurt Jensen  
Litchfield, NH  
(603) 490-0064  
kjensen605@gmail.com



I also have a print and will bring along to all gatherings for signatures of our Brothers in Arms, ultimately being donated to a museum.

Semper Fidelis,  
Al Bailey  
(301) 854-3452  
trbailev@comcast.net

## The Ronnie Hughes Fund

The Ronnie Hughes fund was established in 2007 to assist Koh Tang veterans who need help in attending the Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Organization gatherings.

Ronnie Hughes' brother, Phil Hughes III, started the fund to honor Ronnie. Ronnie was on Knife-31 on May 15, 1975. Phil says that Ronnie seldom spoke about that day, but the events stayed with him until he passed away.

Contributions from individual donors along with funds raised from the annual Koh Tang/Mayaguez Veterans golf scrambles have helped many of our veterans benefit from the camaraderie, friendship, and support that only those involved in the battle can understand.

If you would like to make a contribution to the fund, please make your check payable to the Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Org. with a footnote for **The Ronnie Hughes Fund** and mail to:

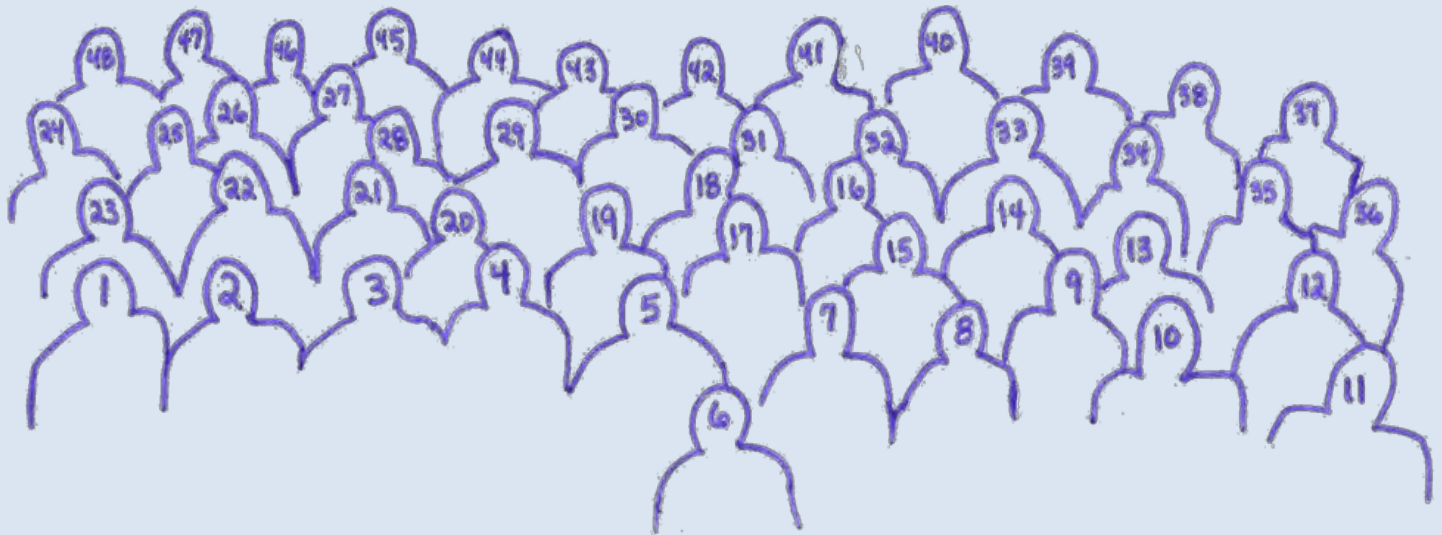
KTMV Org. c/o Fred Morris 208 Grand Blvd. Evansdale, IA 50707 or  
www.kohtang.com (PayPal Donate)



# Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans 2010 BRANSON MISSOURI



48 Ed Prothro 47 Terry Brooks 46 Tom Rell 45 Bob Blough 44 Bob Darden 43 Carl Odom 42 Steve Simoni 41 Larry Yerg 40 Ed Mills 39 Barry Crisp 38 Al Gardner 37 Henry Rausch  
24 Don Miller 25 EJ Oswalt 26 James Gregory 27 Dan Darden 28 Maynard Franklin 29 Fred Morris 30 Dan Hoffman 31 Walton Mason 32 Al Mahan 33 Harry Williams 34 Gil Lutz 35 Rich Comer 36 Scott Kresin  
23 Charles Lunsford 22 Dave Fowler 21 Pat Brown 20 Willy Stringfield 19 Jesse DeLosSantos 18 Steve Berger 17 Terry Lambert 16 Gabe Herrera 15 Jerry Reminick 14 Al Bailey 13 Tom Noble 12 Bill Akery  
1 Bob Undorf 2 Gerry Gettelfinger 3 Francis McGowin 4 Ray Porter 5 Roger Skinner 6 Bob Dochniak 7 Kevin Logan 8 Jesse DeJesus 9 Vic Salines 10 Jeff Kern 11 Melton Dunscombe  
Not in picture: 49 Bernard (Lee) Harry, 50 Danny Valentine (Baldwin),



**There are no extraordinary men... just extraordinary  
circumstances that ordinary men are forced to deal with.**

Admiral William (Bull) Frederick Halsey Jr.





*May 2010*

**De Los Santos      Kresin      Bailey**



*June 1975*

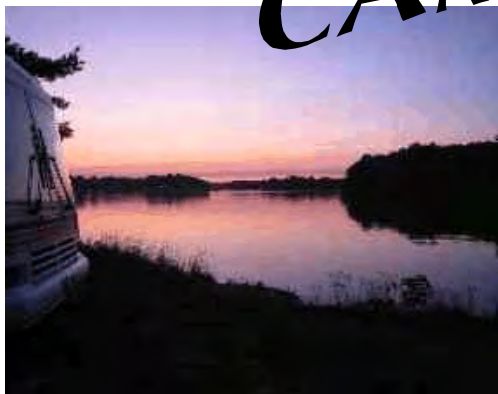


# 2010 Branson Reunion





# YOU'RE INVITED ANNUAL KOH TANG CAMPFIRE GATHERING 2011



## ODON, INDIANA *Where?*

This is a family friendly event and is a great and relaxing time. The gathering coincides with the towns annual celebration to add to our fun. Accommodations for all, Campground or Hotels.

**Date:**

July 30th thru August 7th, 2011

Come for a day or for the week

**Questions???**

Call Tom Noble at: (812) 296-0387  
or home at (812) 636-8002

**Planned Events / Things to do:**

3rd Annual KohTang Golf Scramble  
(Fund Raiser for the KTM Veterans)

Possible Purple Heart Ceremony

Swimming pool at Tom's house

Ride on float in Old Settlers Parade

Liards Club around the campfire.

Fishing & boating.

### Accommodations:

Bring your tent or camper or hotel it.

Camp Ground: West Boggs Park

Loogootee IN 47553

(800) 231-0510

Hotels: The Gastoff Inn (812) 486-2600

Holiday Inn (812) 254-6666

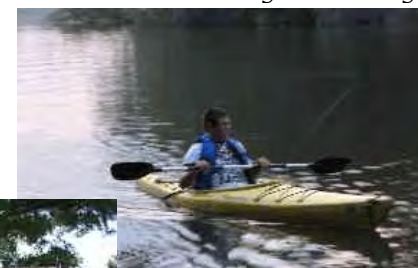
Baymount (812) 254-7000

Camp ground will fill up fast so

make your reservations now.

Watch [Kohtang.com](http://Kohtang.com) for the  
latest information.

Pets welcome





# 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Koh Tang Veterans Golf Scramble



## Saturday, August 6, 2011

EAGLE VIEW GOLF COURSE 21750 Golf Club Ln, Loogootee, IN 47553 (812) 854-0100  
Next to the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Crane, IN

- Four Person Scramble
- 90 % back entry fee 1<sup>st</sup> Three Places
- Longest Drive – Longest Putt
- Closest to Pin – Additional Prizes
- Registration Begins at 7:30 am
- Shotgun Start at 10:00 am
- 2 Free Mulligans & Golf Cart
- Cook-out Following Golf

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Branch \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City, St, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVE/RETIRED MILITARY, VETERANS, & GENERAL PUBLIC INVITED TO PLAY**

Golf Team -\$50 per player

Golf Tee Sign - \$100

Team Captain \_\_\_\_\_

Player 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Player 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Player 4 \_\_\_\_\_

*Partial teams will be placed together at golf scramble*

To Read as Follows:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*If unable to attend donations are welcome and appreciated !!!*

Send form by **July 15, 2011** with your check payable to: **KOH TANG VETERANS**



Koh Tang Island, Gulf of Thailand

c/o Tom Noble  
203 North Grove St Odon, IN 47562

Tom Noble (812) 636-8002

### ***PRIZE DONATIONS***

Sue Myer/Odon Journal (812) 636-7350

Candy Gootee (812) 295-9743

[www.kohtang.com](http://www.kohtang.com)

### **Who are the Koh Tang Island Vets?**

A National organization of United States Marine, Navy  
& Air Force personnel who participated in the  
Recovery of the SS Mayaguez cargo ship & its crew  
on Koh Tang Island, Cambodia  
The Last Battle of the Vietnam War  
May 12-15, 1975



**PROCEEDS USED TO ASSIST OUR LESS FORTUNATE BROTHERS & THEIR FAMILIES**

**WORDOKU**

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**DON'T  
EVER GIVE  
UP**

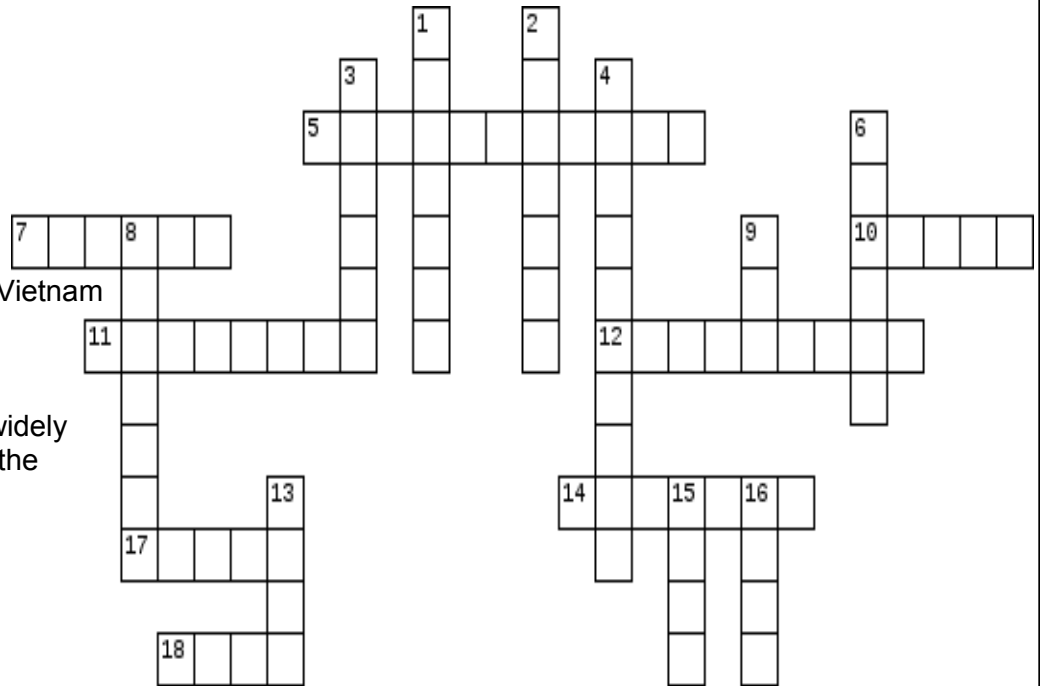


**Across Clues**

- 5. "The Manhattan Project"
- 7. \_\_\_\_\_ Attack "Chopper"
- 10. Navy's specialty units
- 11. Air
- 12. 1914-1918
- 14. North and south \_\_\_\_\_
- 17. North and South \_\_\_\_\_
- 18. Widely used "Chopper" in Vietnam

**Down Clues**

- 1. Sacrifice every day
- 2. Multi-purpose
- 3. The \_\_\_\_\_ is the most widely used piece of equipment in the military
- 4. Hitler's war
- 6. Operation "\_\_\_\_\_ storm"
- 8. Troop transport "Chopper"
- 9. Or "roadside bomb"...
- 13. Sea
- 15. Armored \_\_\_\_\_
- 16. Land



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**WORD SCRAMBLE**

resoHe _____	arAicem _____	aNyv _____
Pirocttia _____	UeaSntdesitt _____	tinNao _____
entmAh _____	tirycoV _____	iatlryMi _____
Crugoaе _____	mAyr _____	Hoorn _____
rbeiytL _____	eAFroic _____	aWr _____
rMieasn _____	rtaVene _____	odmeFer _____

Gatherings Plus was honored to be part of the Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans 2010 reunion in Branson. Al and Tina Bailey were two of the most compassionate planners I've ever worked with. I could tell immediately how much they loved their group and wanted everything to be perfect for them. Their main goal was to make the reunion in Branson one that would never be forgotten.

While taking reservations and speaking with many of the members over the phone in the months prior to the reunion, I could tell they were a very special group of people.....not only the veterans but their families. But, I had no idea how really special they were until I was able to meet them in person and spend several days with them!!!

Chills went down my spine when I'd see two vets that hadn't seen each other in 35 years exchange tearful words and hugs. They all had a bond that will never be broken and that was very apparent during the reunion.

I was blessed and honored to be part of the wonderful gathering in 2010 and look forward to seeing everyone in 2012!!!

Pam Brown of GATHERINGS PLUS [www.bransonmilitaryreunions.com](http://www.bransonmilitaryreunions.com) or 417-338-4048

### LETTER SENT TO DON MILLER ON 31 JULY 2010

Don,

Enjoyed our chat today...delighted you've hooked up with "those guys" and they all sound like real Americans. Spent a little time (but I'm going to have to get a guy with a strong back) getting the bunk and desk "uncovered". They are not necessarily things of beauty but they damn sure are sturdy (and heavy). I'll start doing a little work on shipping the stuff once you give me some more details.

I have two pieces of "communication" that goes along with the bunk...but am thinking of sending "good copies" (we'll talk):

- 1) **On Sea-Land Hong Kong letterhead** dated September 16, 1981, (around the time the vessel was scrapped), a **letter from Captain C.T. Miller**: "Dear Master Brad Cople: This bunk was on the S.S. Mayaguez and removed for you when vessel was sold for scrap. I was enjoying my afternoon nap on May 12, 1975, in this bunk when my vessel was captured by Cambodian soldiers. Enjoy this bunk as I did. With best regards. (signed) Captain C.T. Miller.
- 2) **A picture taken in the White House** of President Gerald R. Ford and Captain C.T. Miller: "To Brad Cople (signed) Captain C.T. Miller To Brad Cople with best wishes (signed) Gerald R. Ford.

I can write an accompanying letter explaining who Brad Cople was/is and my relationship and fact that I served Sea-Land in Vietnam for three years and was VP Asia when the vessel was scrapped. Significance was that Brad Cople was born in Hong Kong on May 12, 1978 (three years to the day of the capture).

As for Mayaguez books: I know of three of them.

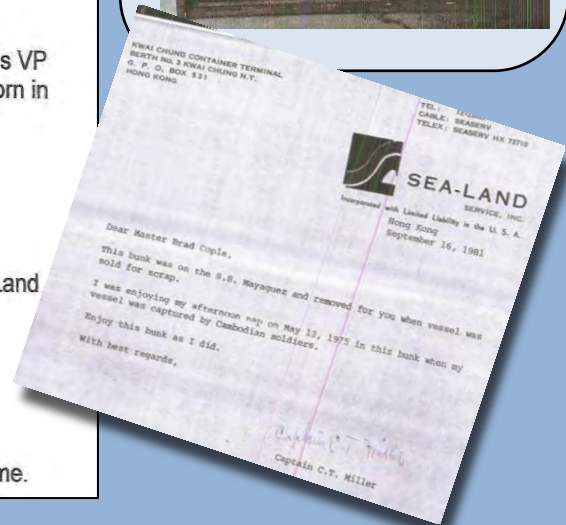
- 3) The original: The Four Days of Mayaguez by Roy Rowan
- 4) The Last Battle by Ralph Wetterhahn
- 5) An Act of Piracy by Gerald Reminick (good friend proofed it...but no Sea-Land connection)

I'll be in and out but I'll be around this week.

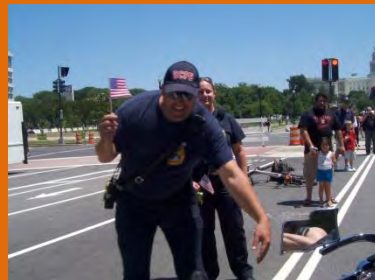
Jerry

PS Happy to talk to any of "your guys". I'm glad this stuff will have a good home.

### SS Mayaguez Desk & Bunk



**PENTAGON – PARADE MOTORCYCLE STAGING AREA**



**RUN FOR THE WALL 2010**  
Washington, DC







Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Join  
**RUN FOR THE WALL**  
 Washington DC  
 Memorial Day 2012



The Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Reunion 2012 will be held in Branson, Missouri on May 16 to 20, 2012. On Sunday, May 20th, I will lead a pack of bikes to join the Southern Route of **Run For The Wall**, then on to Washington, DC for Memorial Day Weekend and Rolling Thunder. The Run was started in part due to the Mayaguez Rescue and the three Marines who did not leave Koh Tang Island on May 15th, 1975.

**SCHEDULE & HOTEL INFORMATION**

**Sunday, May 20 - Depart Branson 0700**  
 Horizon Casino Hotel (601) 636-3423  
 1310 Mulberry St Vicksburg, MO

**Monday, May 21**  
 Tour Vicksburg, connect with **RFTW** in Tallulah LA  
**Arrive PM- Meridian MS**  
 La Quinta Inn Meridian (601) 693-2300

**Tuesday, May 22 - Chattanooga TN**  
 7017 Shallowford Road Chattanooga, TN

**Wednesday, May 23 - Wytheville, VA**  
 Hampton Inn Wytheville (276) 228-6090  
 950 Peppers Ferry Rd Wytheville, VA

**Thursday, May 24 - Lewisburg WV**  
 Hampton Inn Lewisburg  
 30 Coleman Drive Lewisburg WV

**Friday/Saturday, May 25/26 - Washington, DC**  
 Holiday Inn Rosslyn @ Key Bridge (703) 807-2000  
 1900 N Fort Myer Drive Arlington, VA

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More information to follow, this is a warning order and orders may change due to circumstances. If you think you might want to join the Gunny Tour, get on my list by e-mailing me directly.

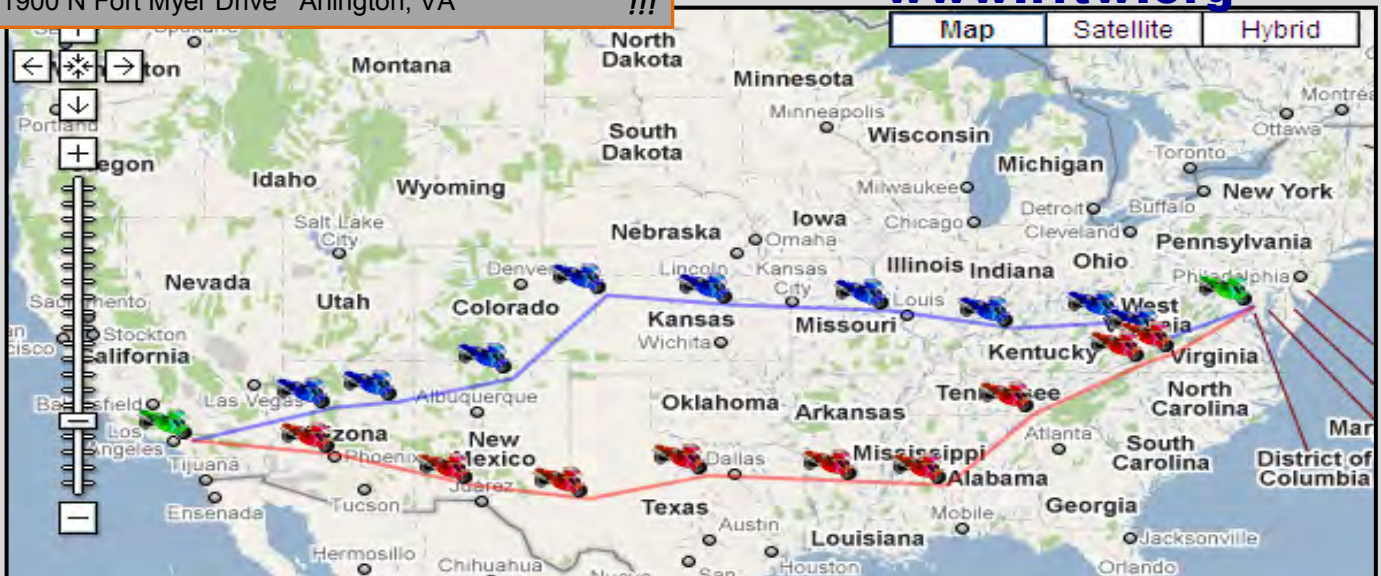


Semper Fi,

James "Gunny" Gregory  
 Run For The Wall Founder  
 Led Pack 1989, 1990, 1991  
 I Co, 3/7 69-70  
 S-2 Scout/Sniper, 2/9 75-76  
[bikergunny@msn.com](mailto:bikergunny@msn.com)

**TO RIDE WITH THE PACK  
 AND ENJOY THE FREE/REDUCED  
 FOOD, FUEL AND HOTELS  
 YOU MUST BE REGISTERED AT**

[www.rftw.org](http://www.rftw.org)



## PTSD Diagnoses to be Based on Veterans' Own Testimonies

VA hopes to implement a new rule by early 2010 that would make it easier for vets with PTSD to collect disability compensation. VFW says the ruling will help its service officers, too. **by Tim Dyhouse**

Veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) will find it easier to file VA disability claims. They will no longer be required to provide evidence—other than their own testimony—of an event that caused their PTSD.

VA published a proposal in the Aug. 24, 2009, *Federal Register* noting that it would no longer require “corroboration of a stressor” (the event or experience that caused the PTSD) if a VA psychiatrist or psychologist confirms that a veteran’s stressful experience “adequately supports” a PTSD diagnosis and the vet’s symptoms are related to the stressor.

VFW favors the proposal because it “eases the evidentiary burden” on vets suffering from PTSD and the VFW service officers who help them.

“The change also will make VA’s job a little easier because it won’t have to do as much development to obtain evidence necessary to establish a service-related stressor,” said Gerald T. Manar, deputy director for VFW’s National Veterans Service. “Our service officers won’t have to help VA and the vet find records that prove a stressor. Service officers only need to be sure that VA properly understands the work and experiences vets had while serving.”

But Manar doesn’t necessarily agree with a VA representative’s assessment that the new ruling would “allow us to pay benefits much faster” when VA’s backlog of claims and appeals stands at some 1 million.

“By policy, VA works on its oldest cases first,” said Manar, who worked at VA for 30 years. “As a consequence, anyone seeking service connection of PTSD under these proposed changes will still have to wait until 150,000 cases

that have been pending for more than six months are settled. What it may do is allow VA to move those six-month-and-older cases where stressor verification is an issue more quickly.”

### Doctors Must Provide Testimony

Before this new ruling, VA claims adjudicators were required to corroborate that non-combat veterans actually experienced a stressor related to hostile military activity. Now, combat support personnel in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars—as well as those of previous wars—who experience combat should find it easier to garner service-connected disability compensation.

**“A physician must testify that the stressor which caused the PTSD is the stressor which occurred while in combat or as a POW.”**

— Jerry Manar, deputy director,  
VFW National Veterans Service

“Supply convoys in Vietnam were frequently ambushed,” Manar said. “But because those troops weren’t classified as ‘infantry’ they weren’t eligible for the Combat Infantryman Badge, and it was extremely difficult to prove they were in combat.”

He says VA only recently began accepting unit records showing Vietnam War ambushes or records proving an individual was assigned to a unit that was ambushed. Manar advises vets who were denied a service-connected PTSD claim for lack of evidence to reapply.

“The proposed change eases the evidence burden, but it does not create any kind of presumption,” he said. “If a Vietnam-era veteran claims, for

instance, that his stressor was received in combat in Vietnam and military records show he never went to Vietnam, then VA is free to deny the claim in spite of this change in regulations.”

Manar points out that even vets who have received a medal for combat or valor, or were prisoners of war, must still obtain a doctor’s supporting testimony.

“Simply being in combat or imprisonment is not sufficient to ease the evidence burden on a veteran,” he said. “A physician must testify that the stressor which caused the PTSD is the stressor which occurred while in combat or as a POW.”

Though the burden of proof on the veteran has eased, Manar doesn’t believe the new ruling will open the door to “significant” numbers of fraudulent claims.

“Does that mean that some veterans will try to game the system?” he says. “Sure. But they will have to fool a doctor twice into believing that they have PTSD and that it is related to a stressor in service. Can that be done? Yes, but probably fewer times than you would think.”

According to Manar, the main result of the new ruling will be that the collecting of evidence to prove a stressor “largely goes by the boards with this change.” VFW doesn’t believe, he says, that the change will open the floodgates of new or reopened claims for PTSD service connection. Rather, it could allow VA to operate more efficiently.

“The river of claims will grow deeper and flow quicker,” he said. “VA will have to paddle more quickly to move against the current, but, since their boat is lighter thanks to this regulation change, they should be able to make progress upstream.”

*Reprinted with permission from the November/December 2009 issue of VFW magazine*

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# KOH TANG STORE

## PURCHASE FORM

	ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST EACH	QTY	Total
Tumbler	Tumbler	24 OZ insulated Tumbler w/Koh Tang Patch	\$10.00		
Coins	Coin 08	2008 Mayaguez Recovery Mission Reunion Commemorative Coin (Helicopter)	\$10.00		
	Coin 10	2010 Mayaguez Recovery Mission Reunion Commemorative Coin (The Wall)	\$10.00		
Book	Piracy	Act of Piracy, by Gerald Reminick	\$25.00		
DVD's	Return DVD	Return to Koh Tang 2000 DVD	\$15.00		
	After DVD	After Action Recordings - Data DVD	\$15.00		
	16MM DVD	16mm films converted to DVD. Original footage from U Tapao and Koh Tang	\$15.00		
CD	Picture CD	All the Pictures from the Web site and then some. Past reunion photos too.	\$10.00		
Patch	3" Patch	3" Embroidered Battle of Koh Tang	\$3.00		
	8" Patch	8" Embroidered Battle of Koh Tang	\$15.00		
	PH Patch	Purple Heart Patch from Koh Tang	\$8.00		
	Postage & Handling	All mail orders C:\D\Koh Tang Island\Doc's\Koh Tang Store Order Form7.wpd	\$7.50	1	\$7.50

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

You can either enclose a check or pay with a credit card thru Pay Pal on the web site and then email me the details at [kohtangmorris@kohtang.com](mailto:kohtangmorris@kohtang.com)

Send your order to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

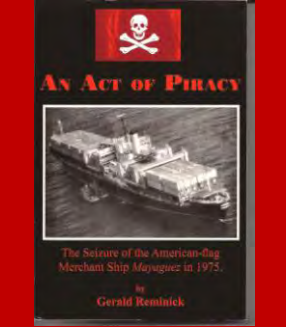
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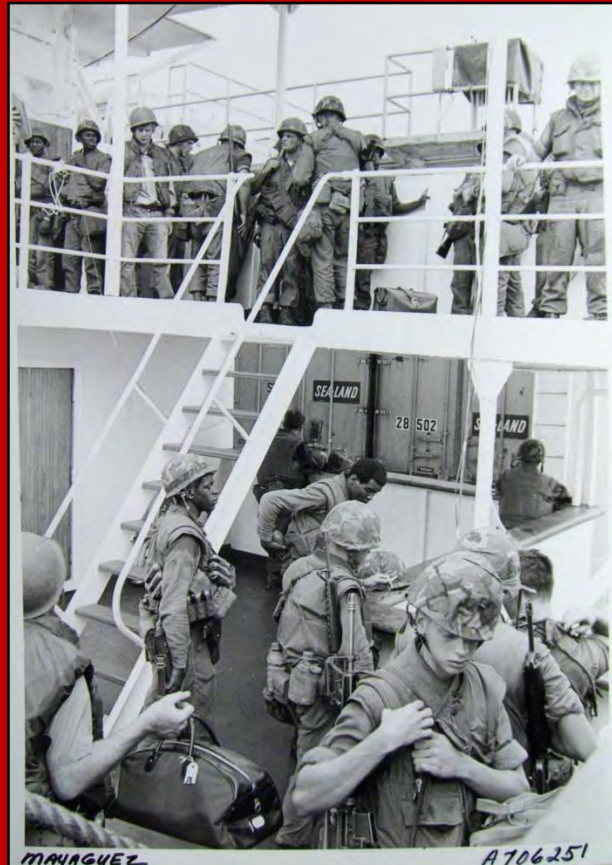
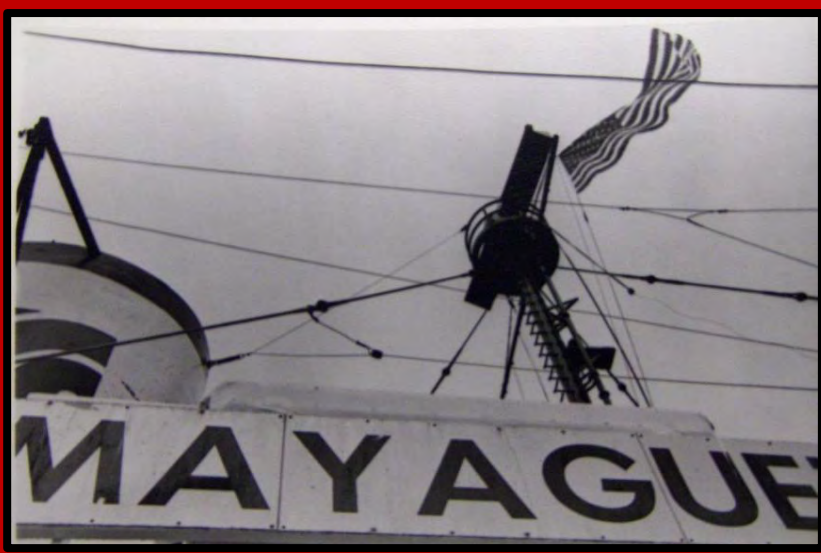
Mail this form to: **Koh Tang Beach Vets**  
**c/o Fred Morris**  
**208 Grand Blvd.**  
**Evansdale, IA 50707**



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5	NUCLEAR BOMB	1	SOLDIER
7	APACHE	2	MARINES
10	SEALS	3	HUMVEE
11	FORCE	4	WORLD WAR II
12	WORLD WAR 1	6	DESERT
14	VIETNAM	8	CHINOOK
17	KOREA	9	IED
18	HUEY	13	NAVY
		15	TANK
		16	ARMY

Heroes	America	Navy
Patriotic	United States	Nation
	States	
Anthem	Victory	Military
Courage	Army	Honor
Liberty	Air Force	War
Marines	Veteran	Freedom



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