

# Lima Co. 3/5 Reunion



**VIETNAM 1966-1971**

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Dan Nordmann, Editor



**Feb 2015. . . Newsletter #103. . Reunion Myrtle Beach 2015**

**SANDS RESORT JUNE 9TH TO JUNE 14TH**



**SEMPER FIDELIS**

# Membership Info

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

TJ Dyer  
701 Spring Lake Rd.  
Waco, TX 76705  
254-717-4096  
[oooraah21@yahoo.com](mailto:oooraah21@yahoo.com)

If you have an **e-mail address** and you don't get the Roster updates or Newsletter via e-mail, send me your e-mail address to save on postage. We mail out 256 and e-mail 211. **Get an e-mail address.**

## NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS

Dave Nixa [davenixa@centurylink.net](mailto:davenixa@centurylink.net) Terry Benton [nancy.benton@ocsds.net](mailto:nancy.benton@ocsds.net)



## LOST E-MAIL ADDRESS

Jim Gilbreath  
AH Miller  
Rick Richter  
Bill Magnus  
Al Nidever  
Dave Whitaker



## TAPS

|                  |                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Joe Cormier      | Sgt. Cormier was an 0331 who served with Lima Company from May 66 to September 66. Joe passed away 7 Oct 2001.                        |
| Clinton Hingerty | PFC. Hingerty was an 0311 who served with Lima Company in 1966. Clinton was wounded 5 Jul 66. He passed away 2 Feb 2008.              |
| Ronald Lightfoot | Cpl. Lightfoot was an 0311 who served with Lima Company from May 66 to Jan 67. Ron was wounded 15 Nov 66. He passed away 27 Jan 2003. |
| Robert Rigdon    | SSgt. Rigdon was an 0369 who served with Lima Company from Apr 68 to Apr 69. Robert passed away 19 Oct 2014.                          |
| Eli Takesian     | LtCmdr. Takesian was the Chaplain with the 5th Marine Regiment from May 67 to Apr 68. Eli passed away 20 May 2014                     |

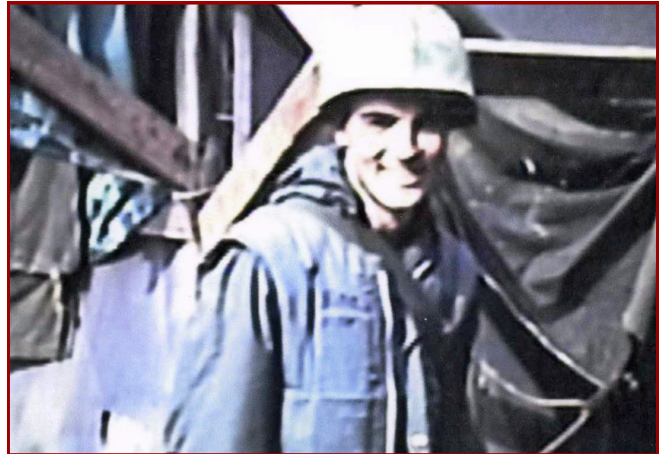
Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to evoke emotion than the call **Taps**.

*Day is done, gone the sun  
From the lakes, from the hills  
From the sky  
All is well, safely rest  
God is nigh.*

*Fading light dims the sight  
And a star gems the sky,  
Gleaming bright  
From afar, drawing near  
Falls the night.*

*Thanks and praise for our days  
Neath the sun, neath the stars,  
Neath the sky  
As we go, this we know  
God is nigh*

## George Fick's Vietnam Photos





## Interview with Eli Takesian, December 13, 2002

### University of North Carolina, Wilmington

On 5 April 1967 I was in Vietnam and assigned to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, a great outfit, one of the most highly decorated of the Corps! Here's what I wrote in a published article, after that tour: "Negative experiences (in Korea) manifested positive results years later, especially in Vietnam, where troops posed the same kinds of gut-wrenching questions I had asked in Korea. What I knew, I shared. When uncertain, I would say something like, 'I don't know the answer; but let's talk about the question.' It helped them. It helped me. To be receptive to, and honest with the young Marine who shares from the depths is basic ministry." Two profound words are "I KNOW." Three profound words are "I DON'T KNOW." I know ... and I don't know. The older I get the more universally affirming and more agnostic I become.

3rd Battalion, 5th Marines operated in the Que Son Valley (Spring/Summer 1967). I joined the battalion toward the end of UNION II, a bloody operation. We suffered heavy casualties, but the NVA (North Vietnamese Army) suffered far, far more. Another bloody operation was SWIFT, which began 4 September 1967.

A Roman Catholic chaplain, a Maryknoll priest, Vincent Capodanno, relieved me at 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines (I transferred to Regiment). Although he served the battalion for only three weeks, his spiritual impact on troops was profound. Vinnie and I became very close. He was killed on Operation SWIFT and posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. I was on SWIFT with another component of the battalion when word of his death was announced. It was as if a shroud had covered us all. Troops of Mike Company were in a fierce battle, outnumbered and overrun by a massive NVA force. Father Capodanno was with them. According to eyewitnesses, Capodanno, who had been seriously wounded by shrapnel, was moving about the battlefield ministering to his Marines. He spotted an NVA machine gunner preparing to take aim at some wounded Marines huddled around a Navy corpsman (Leal) ... whereupon he ran and intentionally shielded the wounded troops with his own body, sacrificing his life for their sake. He was shot in the back ... and killed. We used to joke that troops shot in the back were often running away. It certainly was not so with Chaplain Capodanno, a courageous man, whose sacrificial act truly emulated Jesus Christ. Corpsman Leal bled to death from a groin wound. Capodanno's remains were flown to Da Nang within an hour or so, after the NVA broke contact.

Then fighting turned fiercer throughout the combat zone. Choppers were unable to land safely, and for several days scores of dead Marines could not be evacuated. Consequently, rigor mortis set in. Bloating by intense heat and humidity, their remains turned grotesque ... and began to stink. Finally, when it was safe for choppers to take the dead Marines away, 3/5's Mortar Platoon volunteered to place their remains onto the helicopters. Someone suggested they wear gas masks to stifle the horrendous odor; but in the spirit of true Marines, the mortar men refused, saying it was a distinct honor to carry their fallen brothers ... and would do so without gas masks. It's all so vivid in my memory.

As Operation SWIFT neared its end, the Regimental Commander came out to see us. He said, "Chaplain, hop into my chopper. They want you back at Division Headquarters in Da Nang, to give the eulogy at a High Requiem Mass for Father Capodanno." I flew to Da Nang and reported to the 1st Marine Division Chaplain's Office. Cruddy from days in the field, I needed fresh clothing. After showering, I was issued new utilities. The Division Chaplain, John Keeley, offered shoe polish to shine my boots. I refused, saying, "Thanks, Father ... but the blood of my Marines is on my boots. I can't cover their blood with shoe polish."

After scrounging Chaplain Keeley's jeep, I was driven to the morgue and viewed Father Capodanno's remains. The senior man, an Army master sergeant, greeted me with tears in his eyes. He said, "I'm Roman Catholic. When I heard what Father Capodanno did for those kids, I insisted on preparing his remains myself."

Upon entering a refrigerated room, the master sergeant showed me Capodanno's remains. I inspected the wounds. Three fingers were missing ... shrapnel had blown away part of his left shoulder. There were exactly 27 gunshot wounds in his back. The one that killed him had entered the back of his head. I'll never forget Vinnie Capodanno.

Allow me an appropriate footnote. When my first tour in Vietnam ended (April 1968), I went to say goodbye to my skipper, Colonel Bob Dewey Bohn, Regimental Commander of the 5th Marines. Chaplain Carl Auel was with me. To my surprise, Bob Bohn turned to Carl and said something like, "Eli helped save the lives of hundreds of Marines and Vietnamese people. Men in combat can become barbaric. Eli never let us forget the virtue of mercy, constantly underscoring our shared humanity with Vietnamese, be they friend or foe. He kept articulating the difference between combatants and non-combatants ... and the meaning of compassion.

I once overheard a bull session in which he told young troops, 'Remember, we're visitors in Vietnam. Imagine living in, say, Philadelphia, and being occupied by a foreign army. How would you feel if foreign soldiers entered your home ... upended your furniture ... raped your wife and mother and sister ... and torched the house? How would you respond if they shot members of your family, or neighbors, unjustly? Put yourselves in their shoes. Create friends, not enemies. Don't alienate Vietnamese by violating their religious or social customs. If possible, show restraint. Try creating friends rather than enemies.' He held their attention. His words impacted their behavior, thereby minimizing innocent South Vietnamese and Marine casualties." It was one of the finest compliments I've ever received.

Again, what goes round comes round ... for good or ill.

In Vietnam, we were all ministers ... a brotherhood of Marines. I was their minister. The kid serving chow was my minister ... so was the corpsman ... the doctor ... the battalion commander ... the rifleman who provided protection ... the list goes on."

**Excerpts taken from an interview with the University of North Carolina, Wilmington**

# 2015 MYRTLE BEACH REUNION ORDER FORM

**Advance orders only.  
Pick up at Reunion.**



**Shirt orders due  
by May 9th.  
SHIRT ORDERS  
DUE BY  
MAY 9TH!!!!!!!**

## **Polo Shirts are Red with Logo embroidered on left breast**

Polo Shirt S, M, L, XL . . . . . \$23 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

Polo Shirt XXL, XXXL . . . . . \$25 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

Polo Shirt W/Pocket S, M, L, XL . . . \$26 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

Polo Shirt W/Pocket XXL, XXXL . . . \$28 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

## **T-Shirts are Red with Logo embroidered on left breast**

T-Shirt S,M,L, XL . . . . . \$18 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

T-Shirt XXL, XXXL . . . . . \$21 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

## **Hats are Red with Logo on front and VSM Ribbon on back**

Hat Sm-Med, Med-Lg . . . . . \$19 ea. Size\_\_\_\_ Qty.\_\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_

**\$8.00 Postage for shirt order**  
**if not attending the Reunion.** . . . . . \$\_\_\_\_\_

**Total Shirt Order . . . . . \$\_\_\_\_\_**

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE GENERAL FUND & OPERATION REACHOUT WILL BE GREATLY APPRECIATED**

**Pre-Pay Banquet Dinner \$50 Per Adult ( Children under 12 Free) . . . # \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$50 = \$\_\_\_\_\_**

**General Fund Contribution . . . . . \$\_\_\_\_\_**

**Operation Reachout Contribution . . . . . \$\_\_\_\_\_**

**Total Shirt Order . . . . . \$\_\_\_\_\_**

**Total for 2015 Myrtle Beach Reunion . . . . . \$\_\_\_\_\_**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_ Cell\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail\_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to Dan Nordmann**

**Send the Form to:**

**Dan Nordmann  
11702 Avery Ln.  
Bridgeton, MO 63044-2105**

# REUNION 2015 \* MYRTLE BEACH, SC

## June 9th to June 14th Sands Resorts

201 75th Ave. N  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29572

Book your room by phone at  
**1-800-599-9872**

And ask for **Lima 3/5 Reunion**

Or book online at  
[www.meetingsatthebeach.com](http://www.meetingsatthebeach.com)  
And use group ID **"322879"**



**The Sands Resort** has 2 different towers, **The Ocean Dunes** and the **Sand Dunes**.

|                    |                             |         |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------|
| <b>Ocean Dunes</b> | Oceanview Double . . . . .  | \$79.00 |
|                    | Oceanfront Double . . . . . | \$89.00 |

|                   |                                        |          |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Sand Dunes</b> | Oceanfront Efficiency/Double . . . . . | \$99.00  |
|                   | Oceanfront 1Bedroom Jr. Suite . . . .  | \$139.00 |

Hospitality and resort charges are currently 24.34% plus an access charge of \$2.26.  
Room rates good for 3 days before and after.

## Room Rates Good till May 10th

### REUNION ITINERARY

|                  |                        |
|------------------|------------------------|
| Tuesday June 9th | Hospitality Room Opens |
|------------------|------------------------|

|                  |      |
|------------------|------|
| Friday June 12th | Golf |
|------------------|------|

|                    |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Saturday June 13th | Business Meeting at 0930 Hrs |
|--------------------|------------------------------|

|                    |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Saturday June 13th | Cocktails at 1800 Hrs |
|                    | Dinner at 1900 Hrs    |

# LIMA COMPANY



3RD BN. 5TH MARINES 1ST MAR. DIV.  
VIETNAM 1966-1971

Daniel J. Nordmann  
11702 Avery Lane  
Bridgeton, MO 63044



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

