



The Chaplain's Corner

"God formed you"...

By Ned Moore, Shotgun Chaplain

I saw an interesting Editorial Cartoon the other day by Clay Bennett of the Chattanooga Times Free Press. It shows a Christian fish symbol in smooth dark blue lines with a "shark" dorsal fin having been drawn upon it with a purple crayon. The crayon is lying on the lower right on the fish's tail, and is labeled "Intolerance" on the paper wrapper. The arrogance of those who criticize Christians as being intolerant of other religions – having forgotten to look in their own mirrors - is just astounding. To be intolerant of our "intolerance" is also intolerance, is it not?

That got me to thinking. So often, Christians are dissed, in part because we **claim** that our scripture claims that faith in Jesus is the only way to Heaven. I could launch into an extended

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Shotgun Blasts

Assembled By Don Smith, Shotgun-8A
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Letters

It's really great getting information like this from one of our members...Ed.

1 July, 2010

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER – PTSD

This spring Harriette and I enjoyed a weekend visit from an old army veteran friend and his wife. He spent five tours in Vietnam with the Special Forces (enough said). As usual the two of us carried on a conversation, with some libation, about our time in Vietnam. After some time he asked me if I suffered from PTSD..... I discovered that the most difficult thing to do for a combat experienced, decorated, macho, former officer to do was admit he might have a problem. As we talked he told me about his PTSD and how it affected him, the help he received from the VA and how he understood and resolved many of his attitudes, feelings, etc. The way I handled one of my anger feelings is when some idiot was driving like a maniac on the freeway was to say to myself "Well there goes another guy who is late for the in-breeders meeting". It relaxed me for the time being but I always experienced the recurring attitude.

To make a long story short, I swallowed my pride and made an appointment at the local VA hospital to find out if I had PTSD and if I did what I could do about it. After discussions and some testing I was found to have Mild to Moderate PTSD. I was assigned to a very fine counselor who has really helped me to realize and admit I had a problem and how it affected me. I am not a lunatic, madman, or a crazy sicko, alcoholic, druggie. I am just a normal guy who experienced and was involved in military actions that as a civilized person I was not mentally prepared to accept. It helps greatly to get it out in the open and off my back so to speak. I have **damaged relationships in the past that I now hope are salvageable.**

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discussion of how EACH of the religions in the world claims it is the one, true way to (fill in the blank) eternal destination – even the irreligions of Secular Humanism and Atheism make their claims - - but I won't.

I was, however struck by one particular line in the Call to Worship for this morning's service in my church, which said in part, "... you did not form God, God formed you ..." or words very close to that. It continued with allusions to Romans 9:20-22, in that our purpose in life is to allow ourselves to be molded by the hands of our Creator, thus fulfilling his purpose(s) for us in His Will.

You know, it seems that may well be the crux of our problem(s) here, upon this "terrestrial ball", as one hymn-writer put it.

We – humankind – in all our various iterations, in time and space, continue to insist (consciously or unconsciously) that we form that which we are willing to worship, to conform to our ideas of what we should be about. I suspect that is the primary reason we have over 300 Protestant groups (avoiding other possible labels) before even mentioning all the other types of religious organizations' names currently in use on Spaceship Earth. The circumstances causing the various divisions responsible for varying groups shall not be discussed here either, although word has it that the building's thermostat may have contributed somewhat

In my woodworking activities, I will make of the materials at hand what I jolly well please, barring too many goof-ups (especially since I do not have nearly the courage to take an assignment on as a commission). If someone does not like the product of my efforts, fine. But the work is not open to criticism that I made a candlestick look this certain way, instead of it having been made into a bowl, a salt shaker, a toothpick or some other device.

The whole point of this ramble is to say – to Christians only – If we were more interested in finding out what our Creator wants of us, and working diligently to comply, instead of insisting upon what we want to receive from (insert pronoun of choice) we would find ourselves in a different frame of reference: vis: Spirituality

instead of Churchianity.

I am reminded of what Bob Harrington, a Baptist Minister, said in the 70's. "There are only two kinds of people in the world - the lost and the saved. And, there are two kinds of saved people - those who act like it and those who don't. God really is not that interested in denominational labels, because if you are going up - it will blow off and if you are going down - it will burn off."

Have you sought diligently to seek and to comply with what/whom your Creator and Redeemer wants you to become – in order to experience the Abundant Life for which were created?

Be careful, very careful, because that is a lot more dangerous than creating a god you can worship comfortably - - - Or is it?

Ned

Reunion 2011



OK Folks, all you have to do is follow our Guidon to the lovely city of San Antonio, Texas the home of the Alamo. October 13 – 16, 2011

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OPERATIONS BUILDING DEDICATION AND AVIATION REUNION

ARMY AVIATION FACILITY, SALEM OREGON

AUGUST 28

OV-1 MOHAWK ASSOCIATION REUNION

DAYTON, OHIO

SEPTEMBER 8 - 11

ALL BIRD DOG UNIT REUNION

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO

SEPTEMBER 9 - 12

For details contact john.fischer@worldnet.att.net

IBDA BIRD DOG 60TH BIRTHDAY ROUNDUP

FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS

SEPTEMBER 15 - 19

ARMY OTTER-CARIBOU ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION

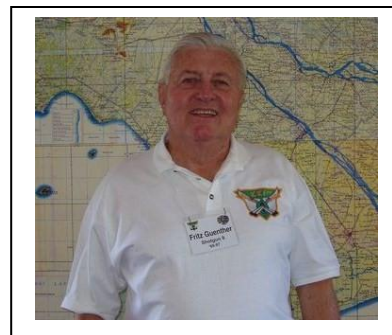
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

OCTOBER 6 - 10

The reason I am writing this *for you* is that during my initial interview my interviewer said **"EVERYONE WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM SHOULD BE SCREENED FOR PTSD"**.

If you even think you might have experienced a traumatic event in Vietnam, no matter how seemingly insignificant, make an appointment and get evaluated for PTSD at the VA. It won't hurt all it can do is help and it's free.

Fritz Guenther, Shotgun 34, 8, '66 – '67



All of these fine young men are mentioned in the Ramblings for this month. Can you identify them? Do you note any changes in them?

Ramblings

“SOMETIMES, JUST DOING WHAT YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING IS GOOD ENOUGH.”

Soc Trang Sector, September, 1966 (*all referrals to anyone and anything as pertains to names, ranks, and dates will be as best as I remember them at that time in 1966.*)

By Larry D Stockton, Shotgun 49/46 1966/67

I arrived at Soc Trang Army Airfield in late July, 1966. **Larry Williams, Shotgun 49**, was due to depart in a week after serving his time in country as the MAACV advisory team's Soc Trang sector pilot. **Major Bill Poor** informed me I would take **Larry's** place as sector pilot. **Larry** flew with me for six days trying to acquaint me with the area and how to best serve the Advisory Team that he was supporting. **On the seventh day, he rested.**

While he rested and prepared to leave the area, I got my check ride from **Frank Allen**, 221st Operations Officer. I didn't scare him too bad and so, with a pat on the backside, he turned me loose as the new **Shotgun 49**. I got back to the sector house just in time to thank Larry Williams for his excellent orientation, shook his hand and he departed. For the next 41 years I never saw him again until the **221st Reunion of 2007**. And what a fun reunion it was; seeing him along with everyone else after all those years was very exciting and somehow comforting and rewarding. **Bill Poor, Damon Agee, Hank Collins, and Bill McCoy** were among the first ones I sought to reunite with (**Allen** hadn't showed yet). And, **despite** all the, they remained just as I like to remember them; young, alive and great guys.

My primary mission as SG 49 was to give whatever air support my advisory team needed, each and every day. Also, at least 4 hours a day, 7 days a week I was to conduct aerial surveillance and reconnaissance in the Soc Trang Sector. That all seemed doable, so I started settling in by acquainting myself with each ground advisor and what he needed in workable support. I did my best to let each one know that, although the old SG 49, the one they had grown to know and love had departed, he didn't leave them high and dry. A task easier said than done. As an infantry officer myself, I knew how important it was not only to use your resources efficiently, but to have

complete confidence in the dependability and reliability of them. I decided that my '*Demonstrated performance*' would be the key to their confidence and acceptance. So from that day forward I went about my work with that one thought in mind

As the days went by, my knowledge of the terrain and the scope of my job became clearer and clearer. Although everyday life, living with the advisors, started becoming routine it still didn't seem like we were operating as a well oiled team. It had been 30 to 40 days by this time, but something was missing and I just couldn't put my finger on it.

Aerial intelligence was compiling in the sector and my contact with the Viet Cong was picking up daily and each day more intense. I started having daily contact in certain pockets of the sector and from these sighting and other sources of intelligence a pattern had developed; enough so that small unit operations by the ARVN Rangers started occurring daily, with our MAACV Advisors right in the middle of them on the Company conducted combat sweeps.

I was flying cover on all of these missions and could feel the advisors confidence in their new Shotgun 49 growing by the day. There was always that niggling question in the back of a sector pilot's mind whether or not he is doing the job to the very best of his ability and if it's satisfactory enough for everyone involved in the outcome. You never know for sure if it's enough and any positive acknowledgement by the parties involved is like plasma to the blood starved.

This all led to the following chain of events and resulted in, not only the best R&R vacation a person could ever wish for, but a very satisfied feeling of completion in what had become a search for solid acceptance by the Advisory Group in the Soc Trang Sector. I wanted to hear, **“Call Shotgun 49!” “He'll be able to tell us what is up and what to expect around the corner.”** After all, isn't that what any Shotgun Pilot would want to hear?

It all started innocent enough; an early take off, ***check***; a quick recon of the operations area, ***check***; a '*report-in call*' to the advisor on the ground, **CPT Houck, *check***; with everything

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going smoothly, CPT Houck informed me to just keep the area ahead of their troop movement under a close eye and stay in constant radio contact. By now all the locals in that area were used to seeing me on a daily basis so they shouldn't be alerted to anything unusual happening. Then, on one of my passes, approximately 500 yards ahead of the troop movement, I thought I saw some innocent looking brush movement; sure enough, upon closer inspection, it turned out to be about a platoon of VC dressed in their very best 'hey, you can't see me camouflage'; I called this back in to CPT Houck and told him they were about to walk into an ambush, and were set up in their U shaped formation to get that job done. He informed his counterpart and then asked me to mark the closest units with smoke, the rest is history. They broke up the ambush, got a good body count with only one wounded on our side. **End of Action.**

When CPT Houck, a career infantry officer from Hawaii, saw me the next time it was embarrassing because of all the praise he was heaping on me. (Of course this sealed my position with the team from that time forward.) But all I could say to CPT Houck was, *"This wasn't any different from any other day and in fact, was one of my easiest days so far."* **All I did was what I was supposed to be doing in the first place** and it was him, his counterpart and his company of Rangers that had done all the real work. He couldn't buy me enough drinks and made a vow to me at the time; *"When you go on R&R, go to Hawaii, let me know when and I'll take care of everything else."*

This was September and I wasn't even thinking of R&R at that point so I just filed that under; *"Sure, sure, when pigs fly."* And let it go at that. Well, the following month, October, **CPT Collins, Shotgun 46**, was stacking arms, getting ready for his rotation in November and I was fingered as his replacement. Besides, Hank hadn't been beat in cribbage lately so I figured I'd take care of both tasks in one move. All the Soc Trang Advisors could think of was, *"Well, here we go again."* But they had nothing to worry about, **1st Lt Johnson (not CPT P Johnson)** took over for me, fit right in and it was business as usual in the Soc Trang Sector. I, in the meantime, departed for **Bac Lieu** to become **SG 46** and the new cribbage champion.

In the meantime, **CPT Houck** was promoted to Major and rotated to Hawaii (his home town) in January 1967. Before he left he reminded me of his promise and said to let him know. I was still mumbling something about *pigs flying* and again filed the information.

March 1967 rolled around and it was my turn for R&R. I wasn't married but told my Mom and Dad I was going to Hawaii for R&R. They said they would meet me there. I wrote **Major Houck** about my arrival time and told him I'd see him there, (still thinking about *flying pigs*.) As you all know, you had to find your own transportation to Saigon. I did and got there several hours early. I met a **CPT John Gardner**, an AF F4-C Pilot, in the deserted Tan Son Nhut Airport bar, we got acquainted over several warm beers and ended up sitting side by side on the same plane to Hawaii. I ask him where he was staying and he had no clue, I didn't either, so we were both homeless upon arrival.

I had \$200 on me for the trip but had understood Mom was bringing me some funds. Upon arrival in Hawaii, while Gardner and I were looking for a taxi, a fellow in chauffer clothes passes by with a sign that advertised, **"CPT Stockton"**. I acknowledged and informed him his search was over. He said, *"Major Hauck had sent him with a car and to follow him."* I pointed out that I didn't know where I was going and I also had a friend, the famous **CPT Gardner**, who also didn't know where he was going; had he ever heard of him?

The driver admitted that he had not, but that was **"OK, we have room."** On the drive to 'unknown places' I informed the driver that I didn't have a place to stay yet. He replied, *"Not to worry, Major Hauck was taking care of that."* *"What about my friend here?"* Again, *"Not to worry, the place is big enough for him also. Major Houck is taking care of everything."* With that piece of info we proceeded to the Hawaiian Hilton where I again, informed the driver, *"I can't afford this place."* Perplexed but persistent, you guessed it; *"Not to worry, Major Hauck is taking care of everything."* Upon check-in all they wanted was my ID and that was it. Again, *"Aloha CPT Stockton, Major Houck will be taking care of everything."* We were escorted to the top floor of the Hawaiian Hilton, an enormous, beautiful, two bedroom suite with a

living room, a large bar and a balcony overlooking **'everything'**.

The driver informed me at that time he was to hang around in case I needed anything or.....I could just keep the car for my own use. I told him I didn't have any use for the car and wouldn't know where to go anyway, tried to give him a \$20 bill which he refused. I said, "*Never mind, I know, Major Hauck has already got it.*" With a grin and a hearty, "*Have fun, Major Hauck will be here in a little while and in the meantime all the champagne you can drink is at your disposal.*" He left.

As he left a room service valet entered with a push-cart full of chilled champagne. He poured and as he was leaving mentioned if we needed any more just to call him and; *yep, you guessed it.* We started in, just to see if we had "*all the champagne we could drink.*" We did. This story goes on and on for six days and nights. Gardner's girlfriend arrived the following day and they left for another hotel of their choice. Mom and Dad arrived the following afternoon, met everyone, including Major Hauck, who invited us all to a private dinner in a restaurant where we were the only guests. What a fantastic dinner and treat. Come to find out it was his brother's restaurant and only opened up for us on their closed day. Dad enjoyed all of his drinks, and wanted to know if Major Hauck and his brother were in the Mafia, what with all the perfect arrangements. Come to find out later he had another brother, who had a Hawaiian band, and we were the guests of honor in the 'Bare-Foot Bar' one evening and closed it up. Hope some of you reading this will remember that bar.

So, just remember "**Sometimes ain't nothing wrong with doing just what you are supposed to be doing, and that should be good enough.**" Worked out well for me.

EPILOGUE:

I've never been back to the big island since that time. I don't want to ruin the memory of a lifetime.

I returned to Bac Lieu with about \$75 of the \$200. Try doing that sometime.

I have not had contact with Major Hauck since that date. And don't know what has become of

him since. I've attempted but never with any luck finding him. I only hope I thanked him properly. I was still in a fog and don't remember if I did it right. I hope so.

CPT John Gardner and I have been friends now for over 44 years. We still see each other and I introduced him to his wife Mona. They live in Littleton, Colorado.

Dad took movie pictures of most of the R&R and I still haul them out once in awhile to reminisce. Mom and Dad have been gone now for almost 15 years. They were from Kansas City, Missouri, where I grew up. I miss them very much.

I have told this story several times since its happening and its part of our Stockton Folk Lore. It can also be found under the heading **Stock Exchange** of "**Stock-Art**" in our family papers.

I hope you all enjoyed this; it's one of my most memorable days of the 60s. And guess what, **'Maybe Pigs Do Fly.'** With enough champagne, mine do.

End of adventure.

Larry



Shotgun 46, Bac Lieu Airfield 1967

“Read the book! Really enjoyed it. Of course as a Mom, I see things from an entirely different perspective... I very well remember the Vietnam War and the unrest that went along with it. I am grateful EVERY DAY that my son serves today and not in those times. The most poignant point was taken when she described a young woman spitting at her husband as he gassed up the car. I remember these things happening. My father who was a veteran of WWII was horrified by the public opinion. I just wanted my friends and relatives out of Vietnam and home safely. With that in mind, I recall a trip we made to bring my son back to Ft. Gordon after he had been home on leave. It was dark as we pulled into a gas station off of I-10 in a small town east of Atlanta. My older son and I went into the building to “use the facilities” and get something to drink. My younger son, in uniform, stood near my car gassing it up. As I peered out of the window, I saw a very large pickup truck with a rebel flag come to a screeching halt right behind my car. Visions of what Fran described came rushing to my head. I scurried out of the building as fast as my old legs would allow - - no one was going to harm my child! As I approached the car, these fine southern gentlemen approached my son with out-stretched hands. As they shook his hand, they said, “Thank you. We appreciate what you are doing for our country.” Then they walked away. I stopped in my tracks, lump in throat, and marveled over how far our country has come. I am also thrilled that Fran liked Sierra Vista. I fell in love with the place the first time I arrived there! It really would be a nice place to retire... And, I marvel at how far communications have come. I get to Skype with my son on occasion, and talk to him on the phone. I e-mail him often. That part is also so much better. I remember the fear when letters didn’t arrive regularly. I remember my grandmother telling about waiting for letters from my Dad. The one constant is the love we all have for our special someone off on foreign soil - - be it child, spouse or parent.”



From a review on the website of the 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion...Ed.

OK, All you frustrated FAC's that are looking for a sweet ride, we have just been notified by Fritz Guenther, Shotgun 8, that he and his son have completed their RV-7 and it is now available. For additional information contact Fritz directly.





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