

Colorado Springs 2023

REGRETS

Yes, we all have them ... and sadly some last a lifetime

By far, for me, the most significant regrets I have now are about lost time. I used to have a real sense that it is getting increasingly likely that I will die without having ever seen the Amazon River, or learning to speak Spanish fluently, or having built my own vacation house in the mountains. As I grow older, the opportunity cost of truly pointless hours piles up. What could I have accomplished instead of playing computer games or spending countless hours watching television? There isn't enough time left in my life for me to become a millionaire, a rock star and much less to be elected president of the United States. So, if I don't draw the wrong card in the near future and get prostate cancer at age 80, I might make it to 10 or 15 more of the "1,000 things I want to see and do before I die."

It would be so sad (to me) to have even one single member of the USMC VTA pass away without having attended at least one of our reunions. And almost as important, to not have taken the time to be able to tell us his own story about his time in Vietnam. Either in a podcast, a video interview or a written document that we publish in our magazine.

The Board of Directors discussed the following points during several of our past board meetings and we agreed to make a concerted effort to contact as many of our own Vietnam Marine tanker buddies as we can and to do these four things:

- 1) Encourage each of them to attend the 2023 Colorado reunion keeping in mind their own personal economic situation and if necessary, to find out how we may help them.
- 2) Suggest that they gather their Vietnam mementos & photos, assemble them in an album and to bring it to share with us in the Slopchute hospitality suite.
- 3) Ask them to consider participating in the personal interview process.
- 4) Recommend that they in turn contact all of their other tanker buddies to encourage those men to do all four of these suggestions.

If each one of us could contact two or three of our Marine tanker buddies and if those two or three buddies could contact two or three other buddies then we could very well have the largest (and best) reunion ever ... and quite possibly, we'll be able to greatly increase the VTA membership rolls.

“Our biggest regrets are not for the things we have done ... but for the things we haven't done.” – Chad Michael Murray

**Tuyen: Each of the below announcements needs its own framed box...
Either plain background, half tone or black with reverse type**

Colorado Springs 2023

USMC VTA 2023 REUNION

SEPTEMBER 13-18, 2023

Embassy Suites – Colorado Springs

7290 Commerce Center Drive

Colorado Springs, CO 80919

HOTEL ROOMS: Call the reunion hotel directly: 719-599-9100 and be sure to mention **“USMC Vietnam Tankers Reunion” (Code XVT)** for the special room rate of \$149.00 per night. The special room rate is good for three days prior and three days after the reunion dates as well. Please note the regular hotel room rate is \$217 per night.

You can also call the hotel sales office and speak to **Veronica Kellerman** (719) 955-6826.

If you choose to make an online reservation the website link is:
<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/coscces-xvt-e1277f05-e5ad-46a3-964d-3466ec409ea7/>

You must make your own hotel room reservations by Aug 1st to get the reunion room rate!

ARRIVAL: If you are flying to the reunion, you can fly into Denver and rent a car (it is about 60 miles to The Springs). Or you can fly to Colorado Springs and take a taxi to the hotel (which is about 20 miles from the airport). Unfortunately, there is no hotel shuttle for our reunion hotel.

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2023 REUNION SPECIAL EVENT

Of the many incredible “touristy” offerings that the Pikes Peak Region (a.k.a. Colorado Springs) offers and one of the most spectacular and awe-inspiring venues is the ***Pikes Peak Cog Railway***. The three and a half hours round trip up and down “America’s Mountain” offers some insanely beautiful views of the sights that inspired the beloved anthem, “America the Beautiful.” As you read the description below, we are hoping that you agree with us that the trip will be worth the additional \$60 cost and it may be remembered for decades to come. Please note that the trip is optional and not required.

DESCRIPTION: This is the world’s highest and the world’s longest cog railroad in the United States and the entire Northern Hemisphere. Nine miles to the summit of “America’s Mountain,” one of the most famous mountains in the United States. The first passenger train arrived on the summit in June 1891 and has seen many modern developments over the years. Most recently we have taken three years to rebuild and bring Pikes Peak Cog Railway into a new era, with new trains, new track, new depot and a beautiful new Summit House for visitors at the top <https://www.cograilway.com/the-new-experience/pikes-peak-visitor-center/>. A train ride, yes, but this is an adventure experience that is so much more than just a journey on the train.

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Election of Association Officers and Directors

If you would like to run for a position on the Board of Directors of the USMC Vietnam Tankers Association, you will need to submit your name and your desired position in writing. Elections will be held during the business meeting of the 2023 reunion in Colorado Springs. Positions available are: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and four director chairs. You must be a member in good standing to be eligible to run for office. All who want to be considered for election must submit the request in writing to the Nomination Committee Chairman: Sgt Maj William “JJ” Carroll, USMC (ret), 4806 Heather Ridge Road North, Oakdale, MN 55128 no later than July 31, 2023. If you have a question, you may call Sgt Maj Carroll for details at (651) 440-9924 (CST) or you can send him an email at sgtmajwfc@comcast.net

Colorado Springs 2023

Your USMC VTA History Project Team is continuing our video interviews of your personal experiences in Vietnam and in the US Marine Corps. Please help us capture your Vietnam history so that future generations can learn from and better understand our war.

VIDEO INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE COLORADO REUNION

Hey Marines, we are now scheduling video interviews for the USMC VTA 2023 reunion in Colorado Springs. The interviews will be between thirty (30) minutes and an hour in duration and will be held on Sunday, September 17, 2023, from 0900 to 1500 in the conference rooms at the hotel.

If you would like to be interviewed or if you have questions, please contact Bruce Van Apeldoorn by phone: 585-613-6564 or via email: bvanapeldoornsr@gmail.com. And just so you know, the interview schedule at the 2021 Providence, RI Reunion was 90% full prior to the reunion, so please schedule your interview now to insure you get a slot.

If you would like to view the wide assortment of interviews from our previous reunions, please go to the VTA website and click on "Members Stories ... Reunion Interviews."

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How To Win A Free Hotel Room!

You can win a free hotel stay for this year's reunion when you fill out and submit the entry coupon that will be provided in your reunion Welcome Bag and then bring and deposit it when you arrive at the Thursday's Opening Meeting no later than 07:59 Mountain Time (MDT)

Rules: The free room drawing coupon will be your raffle ticket to be surrendered at the door of the meeting room before 08:59 MDT for a chance to win a free 4-night stay during the reunion. The prize covers the basic room rate (\$149) plus taxes. Prize value: \$596.00+.

The drawing will be held at the conclusion of the same meeting. Tickets will be selected from the people who are in the meeting room prior to 08:59 MDT. No latecomers will be permitted to enter in the drawing. Correct time is determined by the President's watch set to atomic clock standards.

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Vietnam Photos

WE NEED YOUR HELP! For whatever reason, it seems as if we have gotten away from something that used to be very meaningful for our reunion attendees. In the not so distant past, many of our reunion attendees would bring with them their Vietnam photo albums. They would place their albums on the tables in the Slopchute hospitality room so that the rest of the attendees could go through the album seeking photos of friends and find other common interests. Please bring your Vietnam photo albums with you when you come to Colorado this September.

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The Auction Items

One of the VTA's biggest and most fun-filled fund raising activities are our "live" and "silent" auctions. Please look around and find some really neat collectables to bring and donate to our fund raising events.

In order to be better organized; to not have a lot of duplicate items and as important, in order to reduce our tremendous workload, we would like for each and every reunion attendee who is planning to donate items for our auctions to please call or email Jim Raasch, the Chairman of the Auction Committee and let him know what you are planning to donate prior to the actual reunion event.

Jim's email address is: jraasch47@gmail.com

And his phone number is: 319 551-1675
