

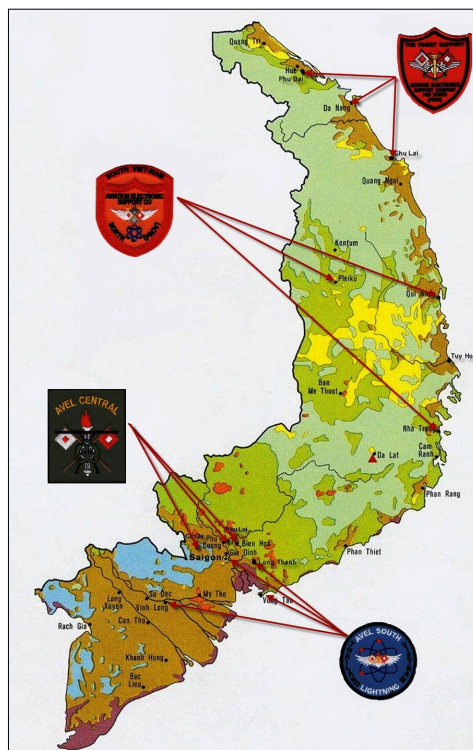
AVEL VIETNAM

Newsletter - February 2017

Celebrity Vietnam Vets

Larry Wilcox

Larry Dee Wilcox was born in Wyoming in 1947. In May of 1967 he joined the Marine Corps serving until 1973. He was sent to Vietnam serving with the 12th Marines during the Tet Offensive in 1968. Wilcox was part of a recon survey team which was inserted by helicopter to survey a mountain top or area for an Artillery Fire Base and upon completion would then run the FDC (Fire Direction Control) for 105 Howitzer, 155, 175 and 8-inch Artillery.



Like many Vietnam vets, his homecoming was not the joyous event it should have been. “My memories of my returning home to San Francisco were ugly and I did not understand why people spat on you for risking your life,” he remembers.

I have handled the negativity with a certain amount of denial and anger over the years. Then Vietnam became fashionable so the guys who did not go to Vietnam who are my age usually apologize in some subtle or overt way when they talk about Vietnam and how they were not drafted, or they write some “script” that I listen with quiet sensitivity to and know that it is fiction. In most cases “they” are now in denial to some extent.”

Like many vets, Wilcox says he brought home the demons of war with him and believes he suffers from some form of Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD). He also wonders about the use of Agent Orange. “I think that anyone who spent 13 long months in the Jungles of Vietnam has some PTSD, including me. The subtlety of PTSD is often part of a reclusive life and anti-social behavior. Anyway, I have never felt that anything but forward motion should be addressed and not inertia. I believe the friction coefficient for forward motion is reduced with psychological counseling.

I used to not believe I suffered from PTSD, however I had some alarming signals that I did not recognize in my past. Sobbing at speaking engagements on Memorial Day or a police funeral were wake up signs. Being a celebrity spokesperson for Save the Flag video and sobbing as I tried to get through the provocative dialogue was another signal. Bugles saying goodbye with the melancholy TAPS always elicits a lot of pain and memories for me. What helps me to avoid it is to never listen to TAPS, never speak at funeral-like ceremonies, keep busy with work and some continued counseling coupled with a family support system.

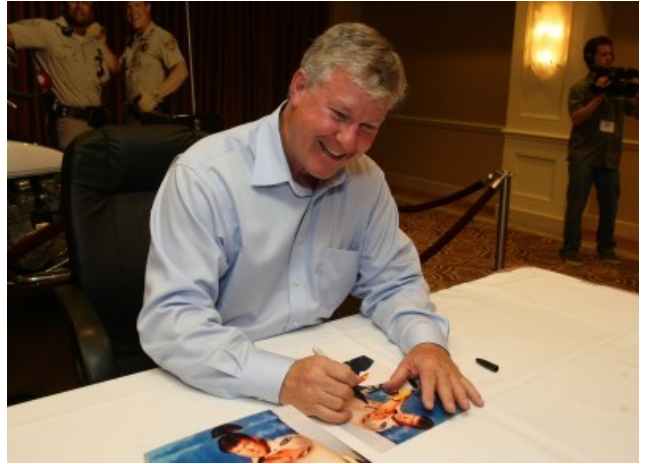
To the best of my knowledge, I do not believe that I have any issues with Agent Orange; however, I did have a very large 8 cm fibrous tumor removed from my lung and heart area that was growing like a head of lettuce. Not sure where that benign fibrous tumor came from.

Don't forget to join us on Facebook. Search for the group: AVEL Vietnam.



Despite the pain and horrors of Vietnam, Wilcox says he doesn't regret his own service to the country. "I am very proud to have served with the Few, the Proud, the Marines. The evolution of such a person, his character, his quiet honor, and his core beliefs comes from many experiences that shed a unique light on something called truth. Truth can change with geography, and can change with history and time, but one's inner truth in war, is searing, and more clearly defined. This definition of truth runs deeper than a spectator's definition.

Perhaps my joining the Marines was a positive, adding enormous amounts of clarity for my soul. I had and have relationships in Vietnam that I will never have again. But it



was lonely and scary and I know I must have had some protective golden shield around me from my poor old Mom or God. Night often brought the scream of an incoming rocket, or the hiss of an artillery round coming at you as small arms sounded like July 4th fireworks. Think of the boys who slept with "death" as their friends lie bleeding or dead in the night of a monsoon soaked triple canopy jungle waiting for daylight and the angelic hum of the MediVac with body bags. I often wondered about the "reciprocity of their truth" and their inner reward or injury.

Now that I am older, and grateful for the over 50,000 men and women who gave their LIVES for this country I know my destiny was defined with the honor to make this choice. As Vietnam Vets continue to move through the wall and into the dimension of death, one struggles with the rhetoric and our futility within a system encumbered with greed, with economics, with health, with religious crimes and terror being defined by the new and mercurial rules of engagement."

Wilcox became an actor after the war and appeared in many TV shows in the 1970's but gained fame for his role as Jon Baker in the TV series CHiPs (1977-1983). He still appears on TV occasionally.

Welcome Home Larry!

AVEL "Gathering", Charleston 2017

We are having a Gathering of AVEL Vietnam vets in Charleston this October. We are not having a formal Reunion this year but will have a much more relaxed, informal get together. We will have a Hospitality Room as a meeting place to talk, share a cocktail and look at the slide show to bring back all those fond (for the most part) memories.

There will be NO Reunion cost. There will be no banquet or guest speaker. Just enjoy each others company and the beautiful city of Charleston. You will pay for your own room, meals and libations. We will most likely have a group dinner for those interested.

PLEASE REGISTER ON THE WEBSITE! There is no obligation but if you think you are coming **PLEASE REGISTER** so we have an idea of the size of the crowd.

Go to www.avelvietnam.com website to register.

RESERVE YOUR ROOM! We have a room block which can be increased so **PLEASE RESERVE YOUR ROOM IF YOU THINK YOU ARE COMING!**

Dates: 9 October - 12 October 2017

Room Rates: \$101.00/night. We have a rate for the weekend before and after the Gathering at \$139.00/night.

Location: Town & Country Inn and Suites
2008 Savannah Highway
Charleston, SC 29407

Reservations: Call the hotel at 800-334-6660. Tell them you are with the **AVEL Group** and quote the rate.
Once again, if you have any problems call Jack at 847-778-3473.

I hope you can make it! Looking forward to seeing you in October!



Georgia Vet With PTSD Is First Person Executed in 2015

A decorated Vietnam veteran who killed a sheriff's deputy in 1998 was the first person to be executed in the U.S. in 2015 after the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear his argument that the post-traumatic stress he suffered from combat should make him exempt from capital punishment.

Andrew Brannan, 66, was put to death at 8:33 p.m. ET in Jackson, Georgia, the state attorney general's office said, less than an hour after the high court denied his petition without comment.

Brannan's lawyers had argued in court papers that "the very impairments which must now render Andrew Brannan and other combat veterans like him ineligible for execution were trained into them by our government in order to make them better soldiers on the battlefield."

"They should not face the ultimate punishment when the damage done by these experiences contributes to catastrophic violent behavior at home.

"That Andrew Brannan and veterans like him willingly exposed themselves to, and actually endured, the physically and mentally destructive realities of war further sets them apart as a class for whom it is appropriate and necessary to establish a categorical exemption from the death penalty."

Brannan was convicted of murdering Laurens County Deputy Kyle Dinkheller, who had stopped him for driving 98 mph. Dash-cam video showed Brannan dancing in the street and saying "shoot me" before he pulled a rifle from his car and fatally shot the 22-year-old cop.

His lawyers argued in a clemency petition that the jury did not get all the details of his military service and mental illness. Brannan, who received two commendation medals and a Bronze Star, was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder in 1984 and with bipolar disorder a decade later.

He lost a bid for clemency on Monday night, and on Tuesday afternoon he was denied a stay by Georgia's top court, leaving the U.S. Supreme Court as his only hope for a delay.

Brannan's lawyer, Joe Loveland, said he was "profoundly disappointed" by the five-member parole board's decision. "The death of Deputy Sheriff Kyle Dinkheller was a terrible tragedy," Loveland said in a statement to NBC station WXIA of Atlanta. "Executing a 66-year-old decorated Vietnam veteran with no prior criminal record who was seriously ill at the time of the crime only compounds the tragedy."

NEW AVEL, AVIONICS AND VIETNAM VETERANS REGISTERED

Argenziano, Charles (SP/5)

7 Lamington Drive
Succasunna, NJ 07876
201-317-7577

Avel North, Chu Lai: June 1967-June 1968

Cargen7@gmail.com

MOS: 35N20 (became Avionics Line Chief)

AGENT ORANGE

Comments: Started in Dong Ba Tin but was taken to Chu Lai and worked on the flight line then became Avionics Line Chief doing flight checks on Choppers and some fixed wing.

Kelso, Carl (SP/4)

9029 Davis Creek Ct.
Dallas, N.C. 28034
704-922-1286

Avel Central, Phu Loi: Feb. 1967-March 1968

carl.kelso@att.net

MOS: 35M20 Navigation Equipment repair

AGENT ORANGE

TAPS

None Reported

PHOTOS

In the process of organizing my house after the big move I came across a CD someone sent me (I don't know who or how long ago) titled *The Tan Son Nhut Association - A Pictorial Remembrance*. There are a lot of photos here including some of the damage during Tet of 68. They are posted on the website on the Avel South page, Saigon Platoon.

I also came across a bunch of photos from Garry Burson of Avel South (AMMC). They are posted on the Avel South page in the Saigon and Vung Tau Platoon.

Photos are posted on the website: www.avelvietnam.com

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Jim Johnson (Avel South)

1658 Treasure Isle Rd
Hot Springs, AR 71913

Roger Shiley (Avel Central)

100 College Row Apt. #251
Brevard, NC 28712

Marvin and Gale York (Avel Far North) had the pleasure of meeting up with Denni & Joyce Kanetake (Avel Central) while vacationing in Hawaii.

Wish I could have joined them!



1st Lt. William C. Ryan comes home

On May 11, 1969, Ryan was the radar intercept officer of an F-4B aircraft, for the Marine Fighter Attack Force 115, Marine Aircraft Group 13, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, Fleet Marine Force Pacific, on a combat mission over Savannakhet Province, Laos. While pulling out of a bombing pass, the aircraft was hit by enemy fire. The pilot lost control and called several times for his radar officer to eject, but received no response. The pilot ejected before the aircraft crashed, and other members of the flight only witnessed one parachute leave the aircraft. The location of the crash site precluded a search and recovery effort, but the pilot was rescued. Ryan was declared deceased as of May 11, 1969.



From January 1990 until May 2012, joint teams with the U.S., Lao People's Democratic Republic and Vietnamese Office for Research and Investigative Teams interviewed numerous witnesses to the crash, gathering information regarding where Ryan may have died.

From May 2012 until January 2016, joint teams conducted six excavations of a crash site near Ban Alang Noi, recovering life support items, aircraft wreckage and possible human remains. On Feb. 17, 2016, the remains were sent to the DPAA laboratory for analysis.

Billy Ryan will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on May 10, the eve of the crash anniversary.

IN-COUNTRY



MAIL CALL...HIGHLIGHT OF THE DAY!

IN-COUNTRY



TRYING TO GET SOME APPRECIATION STIRRED UP!
(AMONG OTHER THINGS.)



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