

Summer 2009

Koh Tang Mayaguez Veterans Newsletter

www.kohtang.com

Koh Tang Beach Veterans
c/o Al & Tina Bailey
6914 Deer Valley Road
Highland, MD 20777

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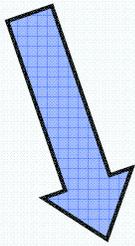
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no computer or e-mail



YOU
ARE
NOT
FORGOTTEN



Al & Tina Bailey
EDITORS



YOU'RE INVITED ANNUAL KOH TANG CAMPFIRE GATHERING 2009

ODON, INDIANA *Where?*

We try to move the summer gathering around and pick up more people every year. This is a family friendly event and is a great and relaxing time. Tom & Shelba Noble are hosting this year. The gathering coincides with the towns annual celebration to add to our fun. Accommodations for all, Campground, Hotels.

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

Date:

July 31st thru August 7th, 2009
Come for a day or for the week

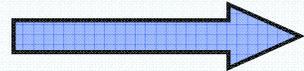
Questions???

Call Tom Noble at (812) 636-8002

Camp ground is filling up fast so
make your reservations now.
Watch KohTang.com for the
latest information.
Pets & dogs welcome

Planned Events / Things to do:

2nd Annual KohTang Golf Scramble
(Fund Raiser for the Beach Club)
Swimming pool at Tom's house
Lars around the campfire.
Fishing, boating



2008 Golf Scramble & Cook-Out

EAGLE VIEW GOLF COURSE





2nd Annual Koh Tang Veterans Golf Scramble



Saturday, August 1, 2009

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

- Four Person Scramble
- 90 % back entry fee 1st 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, 2009** 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

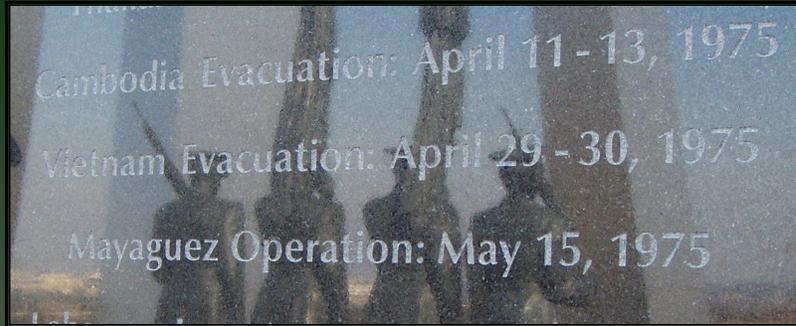
Who are the Koh Tang Island Vets?

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

The United States Air Force Memorial Washington, DC



GET VETERAN BENEFITS YOU DESERVE

“Lt Dan” Hoffman has become an advocate for getting disability benefits for Koh Tang Veterans. Since becoming 100% disabled himself in 2005, in part with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Dan has counseled and helped several of our Brothers to get VA Benefits or increase their level of compensation. If you have questions or concerns about your VA eligibility or benefits contact Dan at dhoffman@sc.rr.com or call (803) 422-6842 evening after 9:00 pm or weekends only.



Calling All Koh Tang Vets

Posted on Web 2/16/09

Back in August of 2008 there was a posting to the Koh Tang Guest Book from Author Scott Baron informing us he was writing a chapter of a book about the Cold War for the Naval Institute. The chapter was to be about The Battle of Koh Tang / Mayaguez Rescue Mission. Several Koh Tang vets contacted Scott and he soon realized he had much more than a chapter on his hands. Several of us have read the chapter that was going to be published and it is very good. He does not have a political agenda. He and the Naval Institute want the story, our story, told. The following is Scott Baron's request in his words.

To the veterans of Koh Tang

My name is Scott Baron, and along with Capt. James Wise Jr., am writing a book for the Naval Institute Press on the Battle of Koh Tang. Originally planned as a chapter in a forthcoming book on the Cold War, the chapter will serve as an outline for a more comprehensive exploration of the events occurring prior to, during, and following the battle in May 1975. Below is the proposal for the book sent to the Naval Institute which was approved; **my contract is SIGNED and the book WILL be out early 2011.**

PROPOSAL

THE 16 HOUR WAR – Valor on Koh Tang and the Rescue of the Mayaguez

The below authors propose to write a book entitled The Sixteen Hour War – Valor on Koh Tang and the Rescue of the Mayaguez. This book will be a comprehensive examination of the efforts by US Marines, Sailors and Airmen, one of the earliest Joint-Service operations, to rescue the crew of the SS Mayaguez, seized by the Cambodians on the high seas in May 1975. Although it occurred more than two years after the capitulation of South Vietnam, it is considered the last action of the Vietnam War, and the names of those killed are the final names on the Vietnam Memorial.

Although other books have focused on the decisions of the commanders, the actions of the crew of the Mayaguez, and the efforts of the helicopter pilots in effecting the recovery of the rescue force, no book has yet been written detailing the heroic efforts of the Marines on the ground who went in to rescue the crew and recapture the ship.

Although a force of Marines, most of whom were 18-19 year olds who had never seen combat, was sent onto a Cambodian island expecting to encounter resistance from 20-30 irregular militia, what they found instead was a force of 600-800 veteran combat troops supported by heavy weapons. Plagued by incorrect and incomplete intelligence and a cumbersome Command and Control component, which extended all the way to the Oval Office, the Marines found that the difficulty of getting onto the island was exceeded only by the near impossible task of getting off. Their success is a testament to their tenacity and fighting spirit.

The book will be written with the support and collaboration of the Koh Tang Beach Club, an association comprised of Koh Tang veterans and will include first-hand accounts of the battle in their own words. Included will be recollections by 2Lt. James McDaniel, among the first Marines ashore who was awarded the Navy Cross, Lt. Robert Blough, a pilot of one of the extraction helicopters, Tom Noble, a sailor aboard Black Velvet-1, the captain's gig which provided off-shore fire support, LtCol. Randall Austin, the ground force commander, Cpt. James Davis, Golf Company commander, 2Lt. Dan Hoffman, a platoon commander, GySgt Francis McGowin, the regimental intelligence officer, Fred Morris and Al Bailey, Marines on the ground, and many others. The story will be told by the men who were there.

The purpose of the book will be to bring to light an event long overlooked by historians and unknown by the general public, and to acknowledge the valor of young inexperienced Marines who successfully fought a superior and entrenched enemy force under unanticipated conditions to complete their objective.

We are especially interested in interviewing Marines located on the East Beach, and those who went down aboard Knife-31, pilots and crew of the aircraft, but am interested in any untold stories.

Those interested can begin by compiling a brief biography of their experiences both before (birth, education, prior service, etc) and subsequent to (career, marriage, kids) the battle, as well as recollections of the action itself. This will serve as a basis for subsequent telephone interviews

Since the intent is to relate events hour-by-hour (16 hour war) it will be useful if you can recall times thing occurred (as well as 30 plus years memories permit). Those interested can either advise Fred Morris or contact me directly at SBARON7827@aol.com or call me at (831) 761-3209.

My gratitude in advance for any assistance provided. **It's YOUR story.** We only wish to tell it well. Semper Fi, Scott Baron

VFW Mayaguez Memorial Post #11575

Post 11575 History: The VFW Post 11575 was established on 15 May 2000, under a Charter issued by The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and signed by the Commander in Chief, John Smart. The Post was started with 42 active members that are listed on the Post Charter.

Post Name and Number: The Post was named in memory of 18 KIA, 3 MIA and 41 wounded servicemen during the Mayaguez Incident. The Post Number, 11575, was selected in memory of the date (11 May 75) that the Mayaguez Containership was seized by Khmer Rouge forces. I know that the date was actually 12 May but this is what I was told when I joined the Post. It may have been an error when the number was requested.

Post News: We had a great Memorial Day BBQ. We co-hosted the BBQ with AMCHAM and had the US Ambassador in attendance along with approximately 70 visitors. We had members of an Army Reserve Unit from Utah also attend as they had just finished providing some training here in-country.

We are also currently planning the Fun 4th of July Party. The party will be held on the 4th at the US Embassy and will be co-hosted by Post 11575 and the AMCHAM. We have 1300 tickets for sale and are expecting nearly 1000 attendees. The VFW will be partnering with the Marine Detachment to sell beer and polo shirts.

We will have a live band, circus performers and 20 vendors, seven different food vendors, including two US franchises--KFC and Swenson's. The Marines will also provide the color guard detail. It's not much but we try to do our small part.

Thanks, Jay Steed (Post Commander)

FALLEN HEROS

Daniel Benedett - Jimmy Black
Lynn Blessing - Walter Boyd
Bobby Collums - Gregory Copenhagen
Gerald Coyle - Thomas Dwyer
Bob Ford - Gerald Fritz
Laurence Froehlich - Andres Garcia
Bernard Gause - Jackie Glenn
Gary Hall - Darrel Hamlin
Gregory Hankamer - Joseph Hargrove
David Higgs - Faleagafula Ilada
James Jacques - James Kays
Michael Lane - Dennis London
Ashton Loney - Ronald Manning
Danny Marshall - Robert Mathias
James Maxwell - William McKelvey
George McMullen - Edgar Moran
Tommy Nealis - Jim Pearson
Paul Raber - Richard Rivenburgh
Robert Ross - Woody Rumbaugh
Antonio Sandoval - Kelton Turner
Richard Van de Geer - Robert Weldon



Photo by Greg Schmigel/VVMF 2009 Calendar

Hello Brothers and their families,

When I began this journey 12 years ago to reach out and touch someone, I did not know what I was getting myself into. The first person that contacted me after I initiated the original website was someone from the Jolly Greens. And from there so many others have been found. There have been friendships formed and pieces of the puzzle added. We have become truly a "Band of Brothers." There are many more that we would like to locate and share what we each have found in being able to talk and get together. Our group is unique in the fact that we all shared the same experience. We will always remember and honor those that did not return with us and those that have gone on since then. On that note, remains were recovered last year on Koh Tang. But to date information concerning the identification has not been released. Please keep these families in your thoughts and prayers, along with those that are struggling with health issues and financial problems. I encourage each one of you to reach out and touch someone. I feel so blessed to have the opportunity to know each one of you.

I want to give a great big thank-you to Al and Tina Bailey. Al has been calling each person on the roster and Tina put this newsletter together. Thanks to all for your help in continuing this journey.

Sharon and I look forward to seeing everyone at this summers gathering in Odon, Indiana. The 2nd Annual Golf Scramble and Cook-Out fundraiser will be a fun time. The food will be plentiful and delicious.

Semper Fidelis, Larry Barnett

Picture Request



Don Raatz-USAF



Jeff Kern -USMC



Bob Blough-USAF



Tom Noble -USN

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

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

E-mail to trbailey@comcast.net or mail to Al Bailey

6914 Deer Valley Road
Highland, MD 20777

2010 REUNION

May 13 – 16, 2010
Branson, Missouri

Branson is one of the top vacation spots in the country, known for its hospitality and for being a friend of Veterans and their families.

www.kohtang.com

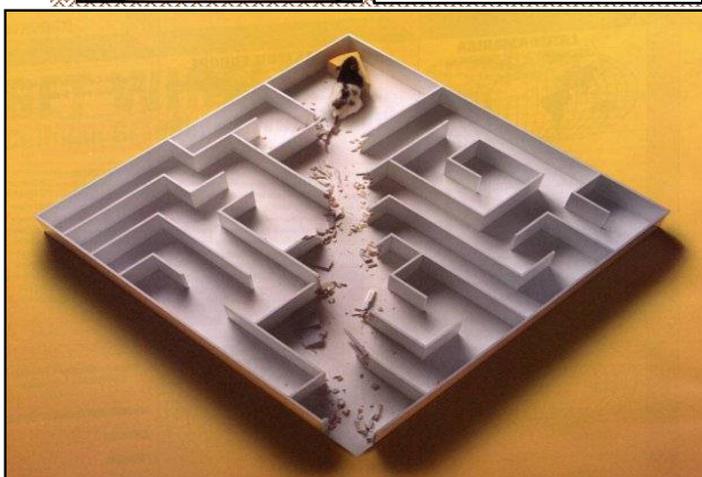
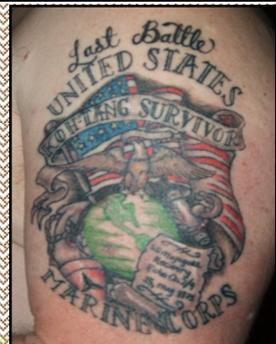
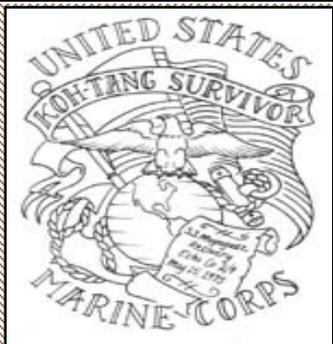
More details this coming August

JOINT EFFORT TO FILL IN THE BLANKS

My Brothers, time to come to the table and help locate each and every swinging dick involved with our mission. Hundreds of hours have gone into this effort and the web site has proven to be a great source for those reaching out, but it is not enough. More names have no contact information, than those that do, and way too many names are missing altogether from the list. Many of our brothers are in need of fellowship with those involved with The Battle of Koh Tang and the Rescue of the SS Mayaguez. The veterans and family members I have spoken to are extremely grateful for the reach out and are looking forward to the reunion in Branson, Missouri. This has to be a joint effort to locate and fill in all the missing contact information. Help with this effort to locate each other, call me with any questions or information that would be helpful.

Go to the web site and pull up the **Participation List** under Contact Us.

Semper Fidelis, Al Bailey



If you don't understand this, you've never met a Marine!

KEEP
SMILING
IT MAKES
PEOPLE
WONDER
WHAT
YOU'VE
BEEN UP TO

Embrace Diversity
Share Similarities
Dress Casually
Speak Frankly
Talk Slowly
Drink Well
Simplify
Thank Fast
See Clearly
Take Chances
Experience Life



KOH TANG STORE

ORDER FORM

8.25" Patch



After Action Recordings
 Over Eight Hours of original Koh Tang/Mayaguez Mission Vets telling it like it was on May 15, 1975

Data DVD of .mp3 recordings
 These are the original recordings, quality varies depending on equipment used and distance from the mikes. Use bass & treble controls or equalizer to optimize.

Col James Dinkelopoulos	Capt Walter Wood	Sgt William Owens
Sgt Hagen	Cpl Paul Carter	Lt Col Dennis Wood
Cpl Billy Fischer	Maj John Hendricks	Cpl Gilbert Lutz
Cydril Lester Backman	Cpl Harry Williams	Cydril Francis Backman
Lt Larry Branson	Capt Jim Davis	Lt Michael Eastin
Lt James Keith	Lt James McChesnut	Lt William Smith
Lt Joe McManis	Sgt George White	Sgt Fred Tubule
Pvt Timothy Trull	Cpl John Johnson	Capt Mike Staid
Cpl John Standfast	Lt Terry Tonkin	Maj David Quisen
Lt Col Austin		

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	COST EACH	QTY	Total
After Action .mp3 DVD	After Action Recordings - Data DVD of .mp3's 28 Marines, 8 hours of recordings. Also includes Squawk Box recordings, the radio traffic from the rescue mission. For use in computer DVD drives. Most newer dvd players that can play .mp3 files will also work.	\$20.00		
Coin 06	2006 Mayaguez Recovery Mission Reunion Commemorative Coin (while they last)	\$15.00		
Coin 08	2008 Mayaguez Recovery Mission Reunion Commemorative Coin	\$10.00		
Hat	Mayaguez Recovery Mission Embroidered Hat	\$15.00		
Back DVD	Back to Koh Tang 2000 DVD	\$15.00		
Picture CD	All the Pictures from the Web site and then some. Past reunion photos too.	\$10.00		
8" Patch	8.25" Embroidered Battle of Koh Tang White Patch	\$25.00		
Postage & Handling	All mail orders C:\DK\Koh Tang Island\Doc's\Koh Tang Store Order Form2.wpd	\$7.50	1	\$7.50



MAIL ORDER TO:

Koh Tang Beach Vets
 c/o Fred Morris
 208 Grand Blvd.
 Evansdale, IA 50707

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

Send your order to:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip _____ Phone () _____
 email Address _____



CALL FOR

WRITERS and CONTRIBUTORS

Submit an article/picture for publication within the Winter 2009 newsletter or if you have an idea, send to 6914 Deer Valley Rd, Highland, MD 20777 or trbailey@comcast.net.

Deadline for submission is October 30, 2009

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