

# NATIONAL DUSTERS, QUADS & SEARCHLIGHTS ASSOCIATION, Inc.

## NEWSLETTER – April 2026

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### President's Message - Joe Belardo

Dear NDQSA Brothers & Sisters,



Hope all of you had a fantastic “Holiday Season and a Happy New Year.” There is nothing more heartwarming than spending time with family and friends. Enjoying each other’s company with all kinds of delicious food and drinks, “LA FAMILIA.”

Brothers just think back about half a century ago, and our holidays were spent eating those good ole’ C - Rations. Don’t you wish those days were back?

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund in DC voted NDQSA as the most continually recognized veterans’ group and wreath layers at The Wall. This year our own Bruce Geiger was given the honor of leading those in attendance and the world via TV in the opening Pledge of Allegiance. Bruce also arranged the laying of a beautiful Duster, Quad & S/L wreath and a Khe Sanh wreath. I also want to thank Barry Willever, Becky Gorby, Paul Peters, and Richard Burmood for braving that cold DC November Veterans Day and helping lay our wreaths. At the same time 1422 miles west at Fort Sill, Oklahoma our brothers Luke Clark, David Vaillancour, Richard Russell, Rick Liebendorfer, Dave McCray, Eddy McCann, and Pat McLaughlin had a Veterans Day Service at our NDQSA Memorial. I know I speak for all NDQSA members and want to thank both groups of heroes for stepping up and recognizing our fallen brothers on Veterans Day.

WOW! The year 2026 is here, and where all those years have gone since I left Nam in August 1968? I have been blessed to be married to Nancy for 58 years and have three wonderful children and four beautiful grandchildren. Besides the importance of family, my life has been surrounded by working with veterans, bird watching, and being a fanatical fisherman. But I am most proud of working with John “Tank” Huelsenbeck and others helping create the best veteran association in the world, “NDQSA.” I think in our present active membership, I may be the last of the original starting members. I am really looking forward to this year’s 43rd Reunion “Operation Grand Slam” in Louisville, Kentucky. Our first four reunions at Steve Harris’ home and Tank’s farm, were held in old army command tents. It was a giant BBQ with hot dogs and hamburgers, And we smoked a giant 200-pound pig. At Steve Harris’ house we had a running Duster and a Quad 50. Sadly, we destroyed poor Steve’s farm driving that Duster nonstop all over his property. The Quad was propane-fired, and we just kept buying more propane and shooting. Steve was really lucky there were no bullets. We’ve come a long way to the beautiful city of Louisville, and we will all enjoy what the city has to offer. This year is an important election year. I will not be run for reelection. We will be having members run for president, 1st VP, 2nd VP, secretary, and treasurer. Please check out the bios of these fantastic members who want to move up in position or be elected. Remember we have been blessed since John “Tank” Huelsenbeck created NDQSA that we have truly dedicated members running our association. Please remember, any paid member can run for an executive officer’s position. I also want to thank our members who stepped up and paid their dues so we can continue to mail you our newsletters and reunion information.

God Bless All My Brothers and Sisters.

See you all in Louisville.....

Joe



Washington DC, Veterans Day 2025, the WALL ceremony  
 L to R: Bob Cuce, Barry Willever, Paul Peters, Ray Villanueva, Bruce Geiger



Fort Sill, Oklahoma, Veterans Day 2025, the NDQSA Memorial  
 Front L to R: Luke Clark, David Vaillancour, Richard Russell  
 Back L to R: Rick Liebendorfer, Dave McCray, Eddy McCann, Pat McLaughlin

## Wesley Chisholm “Charlie Battery” – 5th/ 2nd Artillery 68-69

This story is a bit different from most “Duster” experiences. I was not part of a Duster crew, although I did serve in a Duster unit. I even had the opportunity to drive one and even fire the guns. I accompanied Dusters on firing missions many times, sometimes aboard, but generally in a Jeep driving for our unit’s battalion commander. To better illustrate my tour with Charlie Battery, 5th/2nd Artillery, let me describe the area of operations. C-5/2 operated out of Dong Tam and Ben Luc. We were attached to the 9th Infantry Division. Dong Tam was located alongside Song My Tho, a huge tributary of the Mekong River. The entire base was barely above sea level and was created by dredging sand from the river to form an island slightly higher than the surrounding terrain. The Brown Water Navy was also stationed at Dong Tam and operated swift boats and air-cushioned boats as well as other assets on the river and its many channels. The entire area of operation was traversed with a network of canals which were utilized by farmers for growing rice. Rice paddies stretched for miles in every direction whenever water could be used to flood those fields. Any areas not suitable for rice growing were filled with dense jungles. Most roads were cut through those jungle areas. The dry season was the easiest for movement of the Dusters, and the rainy season was very difficult. Dusters would slide off berms into flooded rice paddies and become hopelessly mired, coming to rest at a 45-degree angle on its side. At Can Giouc, one Duster was in that very predicament with filled fuel tanks. The fuel spilled onto the hot engine and caught fire. The CO2 failed to extinguish the fire, and the Duster was destroyed and even some of the 40mm ammunition cooked off. Another time, a Duster ventured into a mire and was buried to its deck. The sister Duster failed to extract it, but it was finally extracted by a track recovery vehicle.



As far as my personal experiences, I don’t think it was particularly different from most in Vietnam. Sometimes rather boring, sometimes terrifying, but always interesting. I volunteered for the draft after my freshman year of college. After basic training at Fort Lewis, I was sent to Fort Benning to be trained as a field radio mechanic and then next a 30-day leave, sent to Vietnam. I was assigned to C-5/2 Artillery with



Duster being loaded aboard a Mike-8 landing craft

IIFV in the Mekong Delta in September of 1968. The unit was comprised of 16 Dusters, a Searchlight section, Quad 50’s, and Vulcans. The Dusters worked in pairs at various fire bases and were utilized for convoy escorts. They were attached to the 9th Infantry Division units. Besides providing security at the 9th Infantry headquarters at Dong Tam, they were at fire bases such as FSB Danger, Cam Giouc, Tan An, Ben Luc, My Tho Airstrip, FSB Moore, FSB Tombstone, Cai Lay, as well as providing security sweeps along the various river channels and while aboard Mike-8 landing craft supplied by the Mobile Riverine Force.

When I arrived at C-5/2, the unit had just arrived at Dong Tam from Bear Cat, northeast of Saigon, along with the 9th Infantry Division. The barracks consisted of tents for the first few months until hooch’s were built. The entire area was one huge mudhole and everything was soaking wet. My first assignment was to fix all the unit’s deadlined radios. It seemed that most of the radios were inoperable. I traveled with the

track mechanic for several weeks as he visited all the fire bases to perform preventative maintenance on the Dusters. It never took me long to fix the radios, so I assisted the mechanic with his work. I learned a lot from him which came in handy down the road. Once all the radios were fixed, I worked at the headquarters commo shack, providing relief for the radio operators who maintained the radio and switchboards 24/7.

Toward the end of October 1968, the battery commander's driver was due to DEROS, and Captain Stender was moving to the battalion headquarters. C/5/2 got a new battery commander. The first sergeant asked if I wanted to drive the battery commander since I was one of the few that knew the roads to all the fire bases where we had Dusters co-located. I accepted that job along with my regular duties. When Captain Stender was relieved of his duties, Captain Elrod assumed command. He was on a short tour (4 months) as he was up for promotion to major. He was one very heroic fighter that insisted on being in the middle of the action. Where he went, I went, with lots of bullets flying. Captain Elrod was awarded a Silver Star, on one of those operations, and he received a Bronze Star for another.



Major Elrod

Captain Elrod was promoted to major and was replaced by Captain Welch, a very junior captain. He was another go-getter, who also led from the front. This was his first assignment as battery commander, and he insisted on being personally involved in ongoing operations. I specifically remember several operations which involved partnering with self-propelled 155's along with infantry during the dry season. An infantry sweep initiated an attack on a Viet Cong stronghold supported by Phantom F-4s dropping 500 lb. bombs. A pair of Dusters and a pair of self-propelled 155s cut off the VC's escape route and blasted directly into the



Vulcan 20mm Combat Team

dense jungle. My Jeep was the only wheeled vehicle on the ground as all other vehicles were tracked vehicles like the Dusters. One of our platoon leaders, 2nd Lieutenant Pressly was wounded while standing on his Duster. He was knocked to the ground and landed where I had parked my Jeep behind the Duster to avoid shrapnel. Stars & Stripes had a write-up of that engagement. Jeffery Sapp, who was attached to our Vulcan unit, was killed when an RPG struck the Vulcan as it was being transported on a Mike-8 Landing Craft on a patrol mission. C/5/2 suffered many casualties during my tour. Most were shrapnel wounds due to all our crew working in open turrets. These men fended off attack from very exposed positions.

Whether on firebases or convoy escort, not all casualties happened in the heat of battle. Spec.4 Charles Nolan was wounded by a sniper just riding up in a Jeep along the berm-line at Dong Tam. He was on his way to a corner bunker to pull night guard duty. He was a TAERS clerk, and everybody took their turn at perimeter security.

During my tour, Dong Tam's ammo dump was hit by the VC. I was in the TOC and commo bunker at the time. There were many large explosions and tremendous amounts of stockpiled ordinance cooked off for hours after the first explosion. A pair of Vulcans were on the perimeter that night, very close to the ammo dump. They returned fire across the river to where the enemy rockets were being fired. At dawn, I drove Captain Welch to their location. The ground over which I drove was covered by chunks of shrapnel from the tons of exploded ordinance. I had to replace all my tires as they were cut up after that drive. The Vulcan crew was okay, but there were many casualties at the Mobile Riverine Force base along the river. Being on the very narrow roads surrounded by jungle was very dangerous at times, especially at night, which we tried to avoid. Sometimes when moving Dusters, it was not always possible, but the fire power of the Twin 40s generally kept the VC quiet. The 9th Infantry was one of the first units to pull out of Vietnam and gave up their base at Dong Tam to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam in September 1969. C-5/2 was moved southwest of Long Binh at that time, except for our 2nd platoon unit, which stayed in place.



Famous olive/black commander's jeep

A new battery commander, Captain Stewart McGregor, came during the last month of my tour. I thought his jeep needed a new paintjob. So, I took it upon myself to be the painter. I added a little black paint to the standard olive drab which I thought gave it a distinctive look from all the other commanders' vehicles. I was so proud that I was responsible for painting the CO's personal jeep. Yes, and I got away with it. I had extended my tour so that I qualified for an early out of the service after serving 19+ months in the Army with 14+ months in Vietnam. I got the re-up talk like everybody else, including an offer to OCS, but declined. I knew that the war would most likely continue, and it would mean another tour in Vietnam. I had too many

chances to get wounded or killed already, and I knew that luck could only carry us so far. Everyone in Vietnam was in danger every minute you were in country. I was ready to head back to the world before my luck ran out. I had been in the line of fire enough for me. I came home and out of the Army with a couple of Army Commendation Medals for valor and some other awards as an E-5. Promotions seemed to come quickly in wartime, at least if you do a good job and if you stayed out of trouble and survived.

## Keep Your Vietnam History Alive

Dear Brothers,

For years the newsletter committee has been asking for your Vietnam stories. Our newsletter is predicated on our members emailing or mailing in their stories. Without these stories your personal Vietnam history will no longer exist. I know from attending our reunions, and hearing hundreds of stories, all of you have a story to tell. Plus, your Vietnam story with photos will become part of your family's heritage.

Don't worry about spelling or grammar, our committee will help make your story come to life. If you submit paper photographs, after publication they will be returned. Any questions, please give Joe Belardo a call. NDQSA newsletters are donated to the Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive which preserves them in a state-of-the-art-facility located on the campus of Texas Tech University.

The NDQSA official website <https://ndqsa.com> is dedicated to your heritage preservation. The website is ideally suited for shorter stories, photo essays, and video streaming. The NDQSA Memorial Trust will fund website hosting and maintenance under the umbrella of the ADA Association, so that your photos and stories remain accessible long after we are gone. Newsletters have already been archived there. Over the next year the website committee is going to sift through all the newsletters and pull out the stories you submitted. A special page will be built with indexing so visitors can easily find any story of interest.

**REMEMBER WITHOUT YOUR STORIES THERE IS NO NEWSLETTER!**

Also, don't forget the valuable motivation offer we made a year ago. The author of stories published in the newsletter will receive a one-year membership credit.

PLEASE mail or email your personal Vietnam stories

with accompanying photographs to:

NDQSA Historian  
c/o Joe Belardo  
527 O'Donohue Avenue  
South Plainfield, NJ 07080  
Email: [josephbelardo@yahoo.com](mailto:josephbelardo@yahoo.com)  
Cell #: 908-510-4349

*Special*  
**GIVEAWAY**

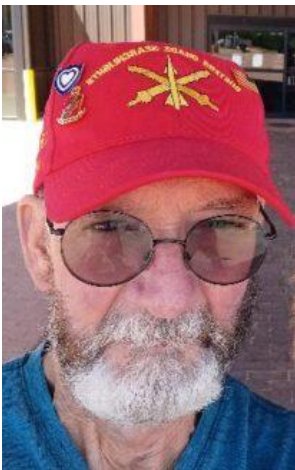
<b>1</b> Write Story	<b>2</b> incl 3 - 4 pictures	<b>3</b> Share w/Joe
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One Year Credit  
Membership Dues  
when published in Newsletter

## Candidates for Director Positions

Your nominating committee has solicited the membership for candidates interested in serving on the NDQSA board of directors. The board of directors consists of thirteen voting members. The six executive officers are elected on even years for two year terms through mail in ballots and in person voting at the annual business meeting, where nominations may also be made by any active regular member in good standing. The election for the remaining seven directors is held on odd years. In accordance with the association bylaws, members must be in active status (current dues paid for the fiscal year) to receive a ballot and for their vote to be valid. Ballot packets go out 90 days in advance so make sure your 2026 dues are paid before then.

These six members are the qualified candidates currently identified by the nominating committee for the six executive officer positions in the 2026 election. Collectively they reflect years of experience and dedicated service to NDQSA.



### Candidate for President

**Rick Liebendorfer C/1/44 1969-70 SP4 16F20**

I trained in the spring of 1969 as a 16F at Ft Bliss, TX. In July 1969 after AIT they shipped me to 1st/44th and assigned me to Charlie Battery. Spent my first twelve months along Highway 9 on the DMZ. Charlie Battery was based at Vinh Dai, the Seabee rock crusher site off Highway 9. We worked all along Route 9 doing the normal Duster stuff. Then extended six months and went with the battery when we were pulled down to Chu Lai in the fall of 1970 to support Americal Division. I was squad leader on C221. The NVA destroyed my Track on 3 October 1970, killing SSGT Upshaw. He was the last Charlie Battery KIA. I left Vietnam December 30, 1970, with the Army sending me to Germany for my final 11 months in service. I got out a week before Christmas 1971. Married by best friend "Linda" six months later. She still puts up with me today, does a lot of head shaking for some reason. After a career in the ceramic tile industry in Colorado, I did another stint as a

Corrections Officer with the State of Missouri, retiring 2018. Linda and I live in rural northern Missouri with our dog Earl. I have dedicated myself to assist in maintaining the unique history we Duster, Quad 50 & Searchlight Brothers share. I am proud of the accomplishments La Familia has made getting our association's history documented to this point and look forward to those continued efforts.



### Candidate for 1st Vice President

**George Walko B/29 SL 1967-68 PFC 52D20**

I served in Vietnam from January 1967 to 68 with Battery B, 29th Artillery Searchlights providing searchlight repair, then later as a searchlight operator attached to the ROK White Horse Division. After the Army I returned to the banking industry and completed my Banking, Finance and Investments degree at Hofstra University; later earning my Finance MBA at the University of North Florida. Sandy and I married in 1984 with a combined family of two daughters and a son. My career includes nearly 20 years with bank holding companies until I left as VP of Commercial Loan Operations to start a software company. After selling it, I joined a small communications startup as Controller before I retired. I am now Treasurer for VVA Chapter 1134, Chapter representative to the VVA Florida State Council, and an American Legion member of Post 83 in Florida. I joined NDQSA in 2013 and have participated in every reunion since

2014. I am currently an appointed advisor to the board of directors, serve as webmaster on the website committee, and am the board appointed chairman of the nominating/elections committee. I am seeking the position of 1st vice president and ask for your support and vote so that I can continue to serve the membership.



**Candidate for 2nd Vice President**

**Roger Giza A&B/4/60 1970-71 SP4 16F40**

In Vietnam I served with both Batteries A & B of the 4th Battalion, 60th Artillery; primarily at Whiskey Mountain and Weight-Davis. I have been a member of NDQSA since 2010 and have attended every reunion but one (death in the family) since 2011. After the Army I worked as a union mason for 36 years, 10 years with my tools, 3 as a foreman, and 23 as an estimator with a large commercial masonry company. I have been married to my lovely wife Suzanne for 51 years, have 3 children and 9 grandchildren. I am currently on the board or directors and am chairman of the membership committee. I seek a new position as 2nd vice president. With your vote I will do whatever it takes to help this great organization. ===thank you, Roger Giza



**Candidate for Secretary**

**Richard Burmood C/1/44 1971 SGT 16F40**

I am currently serving as your secretary on the board of directors and would appreciate your vote so that I can continue serving you and NDQSA in that capacity. I bring to the position of secretary my years of experience in project management and am a team player who supports others in their efforts. Since my last election I have taken on more board committee responsibilities and am also fully involved as a webmaster for our ndqsa.com website. Many of the tasks ahead for NDQSA involve preserving our heritage and honoring the men who served in the ADA units in Vietnam in perpetuity. I highly encourage every member to share their pictures and stories so that they are not lost to future generations. I have helped many members with their scrapbooks or stories and am committed to helping you with yours. This is not an imposition to me but an honor that you trust me with your memories. Thank you.



**Candidate for Treasurer**

**Allan Penwell C/5/2 1967-68, 1LT**

I have been treasurer of NDQSA since 2009 and provide accounting and financial guidance to the board. This is an active board position that includes accounting, our post office box, bank deposits, tax reporting, and reunion registration. My brief Army career included an ROTC commission, two years of active duty, and four years in the reserves. I was a platoon leader and XO with C/5/2 in 1967-68 in the Mekong Delta. Following active duty, I completed an MBA and was a commercial banker for 43 years. I am committed to our organization and feel personal responsibility in making it special for our members and heritage. I want to continue serving NDQSA for another term.

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The nominating committee is proud to present these six candidates. If there are any members who would like to run against them please advise us at [NDQSA\\_secretary@outlook.com](mailto:NDQSA_secretary@outlook.com) and we will get you in touch with this year's nomination chairman David McCray. There is still time to get you on the ballot before the election, currently scheduled for October 3, 2026,

## The Jack Ryan Story – August 24, 1970

By Jack Ryan, 1LT platoon leader with A/5/2  
Platoon headquarters at Phouc Vinh  
Purple Heart, ARCOM-V, BS-V  
March 1970- February 1971

This story comes from notes I wrote down on a pad, hence the names and numbers, as well as my memories. I was in Alpha Battery, 5th Battalion/2nd Artillery and attached is a story I wrote some time ago from notes I had written back when it happened. When I arrived at the battery in March of 1970 the battery commander had all the Dusters named “Roaring Forties.” After he left some of the guys took it upon themselves for more attractive names. Some of the names I remember are “Frank Zappa and the Mothers” and “Watts 101st Street Rhythm Band,” and there are others.



It was just another day at Bu Dop. I always hated that artillery firebase where the village came right up to the perimeter of the berm. That village always unnerved me. It was in very northwest III Corps close to the Cambodian border. At approximately 4:40 p.m. Captain Phillips, battery commander of Charlie Battery, 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery asked me if our Dusters would accompany one of his armored personnel carriers (APC no. C42) to secure an Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) company which had encountered a Viet Cong automatic ambush. All we would have to do is secure the road as the wounded were carried out of the jungle. This jungle area was very heavy triple canopy jungle with swamps just for fun. I checked with my guys, and they said sure we will go.

At about 5:05 p.m. our A/5/2 Duster section of A231 & A232 accompanied by the APC C42 of 6/27 arrived at FSB Union where we picked up Captain Rogers, a Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) advisor. We continued south on QL14A to the vicinity of coordinates 953211 arriving around 5:30 p.m., where we set up security for a medivac LZ and provided security for the ARVN company which was set up at the side of the road. The first four ambulatory casualties came out and were medivaced by 6:30 p.m. At this point three men from C/6/27 went into the jungle to render aid. They were SGT Hendryx, SP4 Luis Grier, and SP4 Bobby Ransom. Ransom called out for bandages. None of the ARVNs would go back in.



There was sporadic fire heard, maybe a sniper...maybe not? I think the ARVNs were in fear of a second ambush. At this point I was feeling guilty about not going in with the others. So, with the Dusters all set up securely on the road, I left them and joined PFC Bora from the APC. We loaded up with bandages in every pocket and place we could manage and brought the bandages into the jungle. We moved in about 600 to 800 yards. The area was thick jungle with 4 to 6 feet head clearance and still hearing sporadic fire and hoping

we would not set off our own automatic or live fire ambush. At some points we were almost up to our necks in swamp. All I could think of was from my youth and Tarzan movies where leaches stuck on to your skin and had to be burned off. The underlying fear of death at any time is always there. You just walk through it. Moving along with the story. At other points of this trudge into the jungle, we had to practically low crawl under heavy brush and fallen trees. We finally reached the four wounded and administered first

aid. Attempts had already been made to airlift the wounded by dropping a line through the jungle from a helicopter but were not successful. Nonetheless, I called for medivac helicopter support. There was no way we could carry these wounded out. We needed help, which finally arrived in due time. The medivac bird tried dropping a line down to us, but the lines constantly got caught up in the canopy and were unsuccessful. Again, it didn't work, and the helicopter had to leave. We had to do it ourselves. I carried one man out. This poor guy, you could read a newspaper through his arm before I bandaged him up, and he was wounded all over. There were three other, severely wounded ARVNs which were taken care of by the men of C/6/27. While this was going on, the remaining men of C/6/27 on the APC led by SP4 Wilson started to break through the jungle with the APC and actually managed to negotiate about 200 yards. On our way out, we met up with the APC and were out of the jungle at about 8:30 p.m.

Here, I did what I am most ashamed of myself for in my entire life. As I came out of the jungle, carrying this dearly wounded ARVN soldier, exhausted and dying of thirst, I came up to the ARVN company first sergeant. He was drinking water from a canteen. Now these are the people who refused to go back into the jungle for their own people. I asked the SGT for a sip of water. He refused me. I don't know if I was feeling rage, betrayal, whatever, but I dropped the wounded soldier in his lap and told him to carry the wounded man. The thought of doing that haunts me to this day.

Medivac was called again out on the road. Once the ARVNs were all lifted off, the Dusters and APC moved out for our return trip to Bu Dop. We didn't get far because at coordinates 961221 the APC hit a hole in the road. SP4 Grier tumbled to the floor of the APC. Everything stopped. We thought he had a possible broken neck and immediately called for a medivac. All medivacs were grounded due to monsoon rains. We were here until about 10:30 p.m. when a medic from an ARVN District HQ arrived and determined the man did not have a broken neck and could be moved.



We, the Dusters, APC, and ARVN company moved out again. And again, we didn't get far when we were attacked in an ambush from our west. Both Dusters positioned to the west and began returning 40mm fire while moving our convoy through. From the back deck of A231, I called for artillery illumination. Everything was too close to call for HE (High Explosive), but I thought if I could drop illumination rounds behind them and silhouette them, they would be easier to see and maybe take cover then we could move through. This is all happening so fast...bam-bam-bam...you barely have time to think while thousands of thoughts are streaming through your mind. Now, over all the noise, I am hearing swish-swish-swish thump, swish-swish-swish thump. WTF is that? I had heard that a lot of VC ammunition were duds because they captured US unexpended rounds as well as their own not working. And the thought ran through my mind, "These sons of bitches are mortaring us." Then in almost a nanosecond the real issue came to my mind. Artillery illumination rounds are base ejected through the bottom of the projectile at which point the projectile loses all ballistic characteristics...it just tumbles. So never be down range from an illumination round and the artillery battery fire direction center (FDC) should never fire an illumination round when the good guys are down range in the trajectory path. Our fire support came from a two-gun 105mm ARVN artillery section, and I guess they forgot about down range good guys.

As soon as our convoy moved safely through the ambush, we moved out. We arrived at FSB Union at approximately 10:55 p.m. A Lieutenant Colonel (US Type) Special Forces assigned to the ARVN Regional Headquarters advised us to RON (remain overnight) at FSB Union and return to Bu Dop in the morning. However, the 6/27 Charlie Battery CO CPT Phillips, never thinking we would encounter all that we did, wanted us back at Bu Dop. We did return but had to wait until 12:15 a.m. to leave because of needing



clearances from ARVN forces working in the area. While at FSB Union SP4 Grier was medivaced out around midnight. Let me say at this point that Dusters have big, massive gasoline engines and they make a lot of noise, but also in this region there were logging operations by the Vietnamese. I suppose you could mistake a logging truck for a Duster. I am not sure. So, we are now accompanied by an escort of 2 ARVN Jeeps for the trip from FSB Union to Bu Dop. As we proceeded down a dirt road with lots of tall vegetation on both sides of the road - and not having had enough fun for the day - we came up to an intersection in the road. Simultaneously, we encounter 6 or 8 Vietnamese all carrying an assortment of weapons AK-47s, M-16s, whatever, not in

any uniform, black pajamas etc. Are these VC or are these villagers walking a protective defense of their village ... at 12:15 in the morning. We didn't engage them. Everyone stared at each other, and I mean - us to them and them to us. Just waiting for someone to make a wrong move. But no one did and we passed without incident. All the guys from my Vet Center group say they were VC. I don't know. We arrived back at BuDop around 12:30 a.m. It was nice to get back there, but I still hate Bu Dop.

## Your NDQSA Website

Sometimes people of our age and maturity are treated as if we did not have the intelligence to adapt to change and technology. We reject that assessment. With maturity comes wisdom. We live in a world where dealing with your bank and doctors often entails using some electronic device and interacting with a web site. Our phones have more computer power than a 2008 desktop PC. A third of our active members have chosen to receive their newsletter by email instead of USPS. That is partly to save the association printing and mailing, but many prefer it for convenience, the ability to enlarge print and pictures, and the hot links.

Your NDQSA website is designed to be viewed on computers, tablets, and even phones. It has become your go-to location for current association news and well as preserving your heritage. Treat it as a friend that you don't need to see every day, but you call frequently to check up on and reminisce. Consistent with the association's new focus on serving the active membership, the website prioritizes your interests.

During the past year we established a YouTube channel for our reunion videos and are linking to them through our website page: <https://ndqsa.com/news/ndqsa-reunion-videos/>

We are very proud of the Mitchell Stout pages. They reflect the most comprehensive internet based collection of information focused on one single Medal of Honor recipient that we know of: <https://ndqsa.com/sgt-stout-khe-gio-bridge/> and <https://ndqsa.com/sgt-stout-honor-and-remember/>

Your webmasters have invested many hours helping members tell their stories. Adapting to technology is no longer just posting a printed heritage story written 20 years ago, even though they are great. Bruce Geiger's story about Khe Sanh will always stand the test of time. [https://ndqsa.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Khe-Sanh-Article\\_bg24.pdf](https://ndqsa.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Khe-Sanh-Article_bg24.pdf)

We now make short slide-show scrapbook videos when all we have is pictures like we did for Bernard Boimann, HQ/4/60 Camp Radcliff 1971. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=70e-oQ22rUM>

It is probably a good time to take a break from looking at those links and be glad you get your newsletter

as an email PDF, so you weren't trying to type that whole URL into your computer browser. Don't despair. We understand perfectly why many of you prefer the paper version. Easy to pick up and look at when you are bored by TV, easy to take to the legion and share. Some of us simply choose not to surrender to all the bad things that come with using email. We will have those current newsletter hot links on the website.

Let's talk about webmaster work effort and how much time we have left to preserve our heritage. Time runs out. We spent years trying to get Jackie Carver to help write down his story. He would tell parts of it at reunions and veteran gatherings, but to write it down was always something he might get around to someday. Obviously, that did not happen, and now there is a blank space in our Vietnam heritage that can never be filled. We plead with you – if you have a life story to preserve – don't leave a blank page.

John Mowatt's 53-page scrapbook took two years to complete. [https://ndqsa.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Mowatt-Scrapbook\\_Lf2\\_250917webpub.pdf](https://ndqsa.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/Mowatt-Scrapbook_Lf2_250917webpub.pdf) That is also about how long it took to finish Vince Tedesco's scrapbook. <https://ndqsa.com/vincent-tedesco-scrapbook/> They are both great, and we are fortunate to have them, but author's time to prepare and webmaster time to publish are entering the critical phase for preserving our heritage. It is rapidly approaching when "want to" and "can do" will disconnect and time becomes an obstacle that can't be overcome. Richard Burmood, webmaster

## TAPS

### MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED

Name	Unit	Yrs	Date	Loc
Robert Altig	5/2-H	68-69	9/30/21	OR
Rodney Spendlove	6/56 Hawk	67-68	1/18/24	UT
William Cameron	5/2-C	66-67	3/20/19	MA
Donald Dupuis	B-29 SLT	66-67	8/20/23	CO
James Ferebee White	5/2-C	66-67	11/10/25	MD
Richard Fezzey	1/44-B	66-67	12/7/22	MI
Leo Jezierski	D-71 Quads	66-67	1/15/20	NH
Guy Kelley	4/60-B	71-72	1/28/23	AZ
John Brychta	4/60-A	68-69	9/10/25	KS
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.ymlfuneralhome.com/obituaries/John-J-Brychta?obId=45299442">https://www.ymlfuneralhome.com/obituaries/John-J-Brychta?obId=45299442</a>	
James Anhalt	4/60-H	67-68	3/11/25	CA
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/james-anhalt-obituary?id=58009511">https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/james-anhalt-obituary?id=58009511</a>	
Eugene Mitcham III	1/44-H	67-68	8/7/25	AL
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/huntsville-al/eugene-mitcham-12479329">https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/huntsville-al/eugene-mitcham-12479329</a>	
Lewis Goldberg	5/2-D&H	70-71	10/11/24	VA
	obituary=		<a href="https://www.everlywheatley.com/obituaries/Col-Usa-Retired-Lewis-Lew-J-Goldberg?obId=33384548">https://www.everlywheatley.com/obituaries/Col-Usa-Retired-Lewis-Lew-J-Goldberg?obId=33384548</a>	
Walter Whittenburg	4/60-H	68-69	2/10/26	TN
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.springfieldfh.com/obituaries/walter-whittenburg">https://www.springfieldfh.com/obituaries/walter-whittenburg</a>	
Carroll Shaddock, Jr.	5/2-H	69-70	11/27/25	LA
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.johnsonfuneralhome.net/obituaries/carroll-shaddock">https://www.johnsonfuneralhome.net/obituaries/carroll-shaddock</a>	
Wayne Savage	4/60-B	1967	1/14/25	NY
	obituary:		<a href="https://fullerfh.com/tribute/details/3090">https://fullerfh.com/tribute/details/3090</a>	
Paul Sousa	6/71-C Hawk	67-68	11/11/25	AZ
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.patriotledger.com/obituaries/pneo1340098">https://www.patriotledger.com/obituaries/pneo1340098</a>	
Thomas Eddy	D-71 Quads	66-67	2/17/24	SC
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.harleyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/tommy-eddy">https://www.harleyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/tommy-eddy</a>	
Joseph Kotarba	G-55 Quads	70-71	3/17/26	IL
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.colonialmchenry.com/obituaries/Joseph-S-Kotarba?obId=47777171">https://www.colonialmchenry.com/obituaries/Joseph-S-Kotarba?obId=47777171</a>	
David Mace	1/44-B	71-72	6/6/25	TX
	obituary:		<a href="https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/the-woodlands-tx/david-mace-12407926">https://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/the-woodlands-tx/david-mace-12407926</a>	



**They will be missed, and we give honor to their service and to their families.**

## **Members Reports of NDQSA Board of Directors Meetings**

The NDQSA Board of Directors meet several times a year, usually via telephone conference calls. Official minutes of these proceedings are maintained by the secretary in accordance with the NDQSA Bylaws. These members' reports capture and condense the most relevant information. They are shared in the newsletter and are also posted to the website, which affords another opportunity to keep the NDQSA membership informed about the business of the association. With the change in newsletter policy, the website becomes even more important to the regular members who are in inactive status.

### **Members Report NDQSA Board of Directors Meeting December 2, 2025**

A regular teleconference board of directors (BOD) meeting was held on 2 Dec 25.

The NDQSA memorial trust currently has \$35,000 deposited with a market value of over \$40,000. The initial capitalization goal remains at \$50,000.

As a result of the change in policy, that only active members will receive the newsletter, 44 members have joined the active rolls for a total of 476 active members. Of those, 115 are lifetime members. What is unknown is how many of the 1782 inactive members will pay their dues and become active again.

The 43rd NDQSA reunion will be Wednesday, 30 September 2026, through Sunday, 4 October in Louisville, Kentucky. The hotel contract is with the Holiday Inn Louisville East. The hotel reservation flyer will be in the March 2026 newsletter. The reunion committee is working on the reunion schedule and what special activities to do.

The nomination committee has received bios from some individuals and is still accepting applications from candidates interested in serving the association for two years as board executive officers. These are the positions of president, vice president, 2nd vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

NDQSA currently has thirteen women in the Family Outreach Program. Many of these wives of our deceased Brothers continue to attend the reunions and all have chosen to remain part of the association. We thank them for who they are and welcome them always.

### **Members Report NDQSA Board of Directors Meeting March 3, 2026**

A regular teleconference board of directors (BOD) meeting was held on 3 Mar 26.

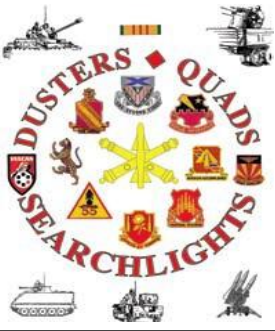
The association is financially strong with no identifiable expense shortfalls and adequate annual income anticipated for at least five more years of normal operations. As a result, the board had the confidence to commit \$14,590 from the treasury and fully fund the NDQSA Memorial Trust to its initial capitalization goal of \$50,000. Donations will continue to be accepted, and we thank all those who have committed their hard-earned money to preserving our heritage.

The 43rd reunion will be 9/30/26 through 10/4/26. Hotel and Registration flyers are in the April 2026 newsletter and near the top of the NDQSA website News and Events page.

The president will send a letter to inactive members, who have lapsed in paying their \$25 annual dues, asking them to become active again so they can receive the newsletter and participate in managing the association.

The website committee is now responsible for posting timely meeting notices stating the date, time, and place of any meeting of the members on the official NDQSA website so that all members are informed about future meetings of the association.

The nomination committee has received candidate bios for all executive officer positions but will continue to accept them up through floor nominations at the annual meeting.



# 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual NDQSA Reunion

## “Operation Grand Slam”

### Louisville, KY

### Sept 30<sup>th</sup> – Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026



NDQSA is pleased to announce our  
43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Reunion at the  
Holiday Inn Louisville East  
1325 S. Hurstbourne Parkway  
Louisville, KY 40222  
(502)426-2600  
<https://www.hihurstbourne.com>



**Room Rate: King or 2Queens \$119++**  
(Sales Tax:17.66%)

Complimentary Parking

\$15 Hot Buffet Breakfast (Ask for Coupons@Checkin)  
NDQSA Group Rate 3 days pre/post (9/30/26 - 10/4/26)  
Based on hotel room availability!!!

**Reservation Cutoff Date: Sept 14, 2026!!!**

**Phone & Online Reservations Must Mention:**

[NDQSA Reunion](#)

Online NDQSA Reservation HotLink:

[NDQSA 2026](#)

Holiday Inn Louisville East Reservations:

**Group Code: [NDQSA](#)**

Problems (502)426-2600 Ask for Group Sales  
Office hours only: (Monday-Friday 9am–5pm Eastern)

**[Book Your Hotel Reservations ASAP!](#)**

**[Registration Form for Reunion Events to Follow!](#)**



## 2026 NDQSA REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

**43<sup>rd</sup> Annual NDQSA Reunion, Louisville, KY Sept 30<sup>th</sup> – Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026 ‘Operation Grand Slam’**

PLEASE READ EVERYTHING CAREFULLY AND MAIL THIS FORM TO THE TREASURER – SEE ADDRESS LABEL BELOW

**Holiday Inn Louisville East**  
 1325 S. Hurstbourne Parkway  
 Louisville, KY 40222  
 (502)426-2600

<https://www.hihurstbourne.com>

**Book Your Reservations ASAP!**

**Reservation Cutoff Date Sept 14, 2026!!!**

**Room Rate: King or 2 Queens \$119++(Sales Tax:17.66%)**

Complimentary Parking; \$15 Hot Buffet Breakfast  
 (Ask for coupons@Checkin)

NDQSA Group Rate 3 days pre/post (9/30/26 - 10/4/26)  
 Based on hotel room availability!!!

Holiday Inn Louisville East Reservations: **Group Code: NDQSA**  
 Problems (502)426-2600 Ask for Group Sales  
 Office hours only: (Monday-Friday 9am–5pm Eastern)



Name(print): \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse or Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Which days are you planning to attend the reunion? (circle)

Sept 27 28 29 30 1 2 3 4 5 6

Su M Tu We Th F Sa Su Mo Tu

Remember to make your hotel reservations ASAP to insure room availability.

If you have already made your reservations, check this box [  ].

If you are local or not staying at the reunion hotel, check this box [  ].



To help planning reunion activities including buses & meals, please pre-register now and send fees for the following activities.

As always, should unforeseen circumstances occur and you are unable to attend the reunion, you will receive a full refund.

Activity times are tentative and subject to change as plans are finalized.

### ACTIVITIES

Wednesday, Sept 30 <sup>th</sup>	Thursday, Oct 1 <sup>st</sup>	Friday, Oct 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Saturday, Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Sunday, Oct 4 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Setup/Registration</b> 10am-4pm Hospitality Room  <u>Sightseeing on your own</u> Don't Miss: <b>Louisville Slugger</b> <b>Factory &amp; Museum</b> <b>Downtown</b>  <b>NDQSA</b> <b>Board Of Directors Mtg.</b> 4pm-6pm  Evening Activities Hospitality Room closes at ~12 midnight	10am-3:00pm <b>Bus Trip to</b> <b>Churchill Downs</b> <b>Museum &amp; Guided</b> <b>Racetrack Tour</b> (est 5 hrs) <b>\$50pp</b> (Lunch 'Derby Café')  2:30pm board buses to Holiday Inn Hotel  Evening activities Hospitality Room closes at ~12 midnight	<u>Sightseeing on your own</u> Don't Miss: <b>Louisville Slugger</b> <b>Factory &amp; Museum</b> <b>Downtown</b>  <b>Hotel Ballroom</b> 5:30 PM-10:30 PM <b>NDQSA Dinner</b> <b>Banquet &amp;</b> <b>President's Party</b> Guest Speaker, Awards & Presentations <b>DJ Music/Dancing/Cash Bar</b> <b>\$65 pp</b>  Hospitality Room closes at ~12 midnight	9:00am to 11:00am <b>Annual Membership</b> <b>Business Mtg.</b> *Members required to attend!  9:00am to 11:00am <b>Ladies Continental</b> <b>Breakfast</b> in Hospitality Room  Afternoon Sightseeing On Your Own  <b>7pm Evening</b> <b>Activities, Auctions</b> <b>&amp; Raffle</b>  Hospitality Room closes at ~11 pm	9:00am <b>Chaplain's Farewell</b> <b>Svc.</b>   <u>Safe Travel Home</u>   Hope to See You Next Year at Our <b>44<sup>th</sup> Annual</b> <b>Reunion!</b>

#### Select & Pay for Activities

	No. of Persons	Amount
Thursday, Oct 1 <sup>st</sup> 10am-3:00pm Bus Trip to Churchill Downs Museum, Racetrack Tour	(\$50) x <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>	= \$ _____
Friday, Oct 2 <sup>nd</sup> 5:30pm-10:30pm NDQSA Dinner Banquet & President's Party (DJ & Dancing)	(\$65) x <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>	= \$ _____
Voluntary donation <b>2026 NDQSA Good Works Project:</b>	(any amount welcome)	\$ _____
Reunion Registration Fee: <u>Make sure you add it into your total.</u>	<b>(\$25 individual / \$30 per family)</b>	\$ _____
<b>Total &gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>		<b>\$ _____</b>

**NDQSA**  
 PO Box 149  
 Savoy, IL 61874

Make your pre-registration check payable to **NDQSA**  
 and mail to NDQSA Treasurer:  
 ← Cut out this address label and tape it to your envelope.

Tear off this  
 page, fill it out  
 and mail it in.

# National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association

## Membership Dues and Roster Update Form

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Spouse or significant other: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address:  
Street or PO box: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Vietnam Service Information:**

Dates of 1<sup>st</sup> Tour: (m/yr.): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour: (m/yr.): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Primary MOS: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Battery and Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Attached to: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Units if transferred or reassigned: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Combat Bases and major operations: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank (highest grade while in Vietnam) - Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ NCO: \_\_\_\_\_ EM: \_\_\_\_\_

**Valor Awards:** PH \_\_\_\_\_ DSC \_\_\_\_\_ SS \_\_\_\_\_ BS/V \_\_\_\_\_ ACM/V \_\_\_\_\_ Other Awards: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues \$25.00 per Year - Enclosed: 1 Year \_\_\_\_\_ 2 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 4 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 5 Years \_\_\_\_\_

Lifetime Membership Dues \$250.00 \_\_\_\_\_

**Donations may be designated below**

NDQSA Memorial Trust donation to provide perpetual care of the Fort Sill memorials: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to the association to support newsletters, the website, and other projects: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\* **Total Enclosed Check:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*Preference to receive your NDQSA Newsletter – Check One: Email \_\_\_\_\_ USPS \_\_\_\_\_



**Mail Check to:**

**NDQSA  
PO Box 149  
Savoy, IL 61874**

2026 newsletter form  
Membership status questions or roster  
information updates without dues may be  
emailed to: NDQSA\_secretary@outlook.com

NDQSA  
 PO Box 149  
 Savoy, IL 61874

**Forward Service Requested**



First to Fire...Last to Leave

**March 2026 Newsletter**

- Reunion Hotel Flyer
- Reunion Registration Flyer
- Member Stories
- Bios for 2026 Candidates
- Webmaster's Update
- TAPS for Our Members

**NDQSA Mission Statement**

The National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association™ (NDQSA™) is the original, official representative, and holds the longest, continual and official annual reunion for ADA Veterans who served in Vietnam. NDQSA is the only organization of Vietnam ADA Veterans officially recognized by the Air Defense Artillery Association headquarters in Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. As a tribute to the memory of over 220 ADA Warriors who lost their lives during the war in Vietnam, NDQSA members have funded, constructed and dedicated a magnificent monument in the Memorial Park at Ft. Sill. NDQSA was founded in 1981 by John Huelsenbeck et al and has grown to about 600 active members with a directory of over 2200 ADA Vietnam Veterans and supporters.

NDQSA is an IRS 501(c)(19) non-profit veterans organization and is incorporated in the State of Indiana. We welcome and encourage all ADA Veterans who served in Vietnam to join NDQSA and to share the fellowship, mutual support, and continued service to our Nation on behalf of all military veterans and active duty personnel.

