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# Credibilis

*Psychological Operations Veterans Association*

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FALL 2005

## President's Message

### The Future OF POVA

It's been almost 20 months since POVA was at its lowest. The treasury was almost bare and only 2 people were signed up for the Reunion and no one was attempting to collect past dues. Chad Spawr stepped in and repeated his service as President and asked me to work on getting dues money. Tony Newcomb came up with a terrific reunion plan and we started coming back. In the last 13 months as your President, I have conducted a frank analysis of how we are structured for the future.

Reviewing rosters since 1998, I realized that we had signed up as members about 8% of the people we found, and kept 5% in 2005. Obviously, we have found that there are few Psyoppers who served in Vietnam who don't know of POVA. Through the search engine on military.com, we have located veterans of Grenada, Panama, Desert Storm, Haiti and Bosnia but have not enticed anyone to join us.

Taking a hard look at ourselves, I find that by 2010 our leadership group and members will be mostly 70 years old. If we retrench and just have reunions without any newsletter or web site, we can hang on for four more years.

So we have three avenues open to us to survive:

1. Re-contact former members and collect dues from about 20 people who are now delinquent.
2. Send all post-VN troops a flyer that indicates that POVA is just not a bunch of Vietnam vets.

**RECRUIT ACTIVE DUTY PERSONNEL & PSYOP CIVILIANS.**

THE CARDS AT FORT BRAGG NOW REALIZE THAT IF POVA HUNGERS AND THE POST VN VETS

THE CADRE AT FORT BRAGG NOW REALIZE, THAT IF POVA FOLDS AND THE POST-VN VETS WANT TO HAVE REUNIONS, THE ARMY HAS A LOT OF WORK TO DO TO REPLICATE OUR  
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efforts. I think that's why they pushed for a Regimental Association and why they may allow us and POA to place notices on 4th POG bulletin boards. If that happens we have a chance to convert honorary members into paying members.

What do we have to do to attract new members of Psyoppers serving from 1976-Present? One thing is not to make our reunion exhibits solely about Vietnam. Once we get our collection moved, I'm asking Tom Brandt to put together new exhibits of post-VN material for a 2008 reunion. We can have reunion activities for children, to encourage these later era Psyoppers. We can start having mini-reunions in places where we have a concentration of members & potential members. This could be a lunch with or without a speaker, a visit to a memorial, a getaway weekend, essentially anything that gets us together.

Besides membership and memorial projects, discussions have heated up on implementing the motion we passed at our last Reunion to move the collection under Tom's supervision to another location. Tom and representatives of Texas Tech University have been talking about housing the exhibits in Lubbock after the Branson Reunion. TTU has been talking to folks at the JFK Museum at Fort Bragg about duplicating items for their use and dividing the artifacts. POVA will be getting copies at no cost of those items we may wish to display in the future.

Most recently, I sent this email to the new head of 4th POG, Col. Ken Turner, summarizing discussions between us:

*Dear Sir:*

*I hope you are enjoying your new command and this summer.*

*I hope you are enjoying your new community with the members.*

*We thought we might document our recent interactions. They fall into two categories:*

- 1) our request to have membership information for POVA and POA distributed and 2) efforts to memorialize our KIAs.*

*If I recall, Colonel Summe was advised ...that the Membership notice should not come from the Veterans organizations, POA & POVA. I believe we sent Major Schafer a copy of the draft to make sure it complies with statues and regulations. I've attached this draft for your convenience. Please let us know if this draft can be used on your bulletin boards.*

*We have had some correspondence about memorials to KIAs. Here is where we think we are:*

- 1. We agree that a new plaque from 4th POG should contain names of our KIAs from Korea to the present.*

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- 2. We'd like to have a memorial plaque similar to the one in Washington DC dedicated to those who also died as a result of wartime trauma. We have seven PSYOP soldiers in that category. Here's the wording on the plaque near the "Wall":*

*"In Memory of the Men and Women who served in the Vietnam War  
And Later Died as a Result of Their Service.  
We honor and remember their sacrifice"*

- 3. We think all "Gold" & "Silver" families and our board should be invited to attend the ceremony. If invited, I will attend.*

- 4. We favor a proposed memorial for (name withheld until official notification). We endorse all our KIAs for such honors. Several years ago I understand a proposal was made to memorialize all KIAs with a street or building name. We support this too. However, we do not want to choose who would be next to be honored.*

*For the record, our two officers at Bragg are our Chaplain and Doug Elwell. Our Chaplain Karen Meeker is in Kuwait and we have asked Major Timothy Walls to be our acting Chaplain. I know the Chaplain & Doug understand the points raised above and can be contacted to discuss these points....*

*We are also planning to visit a memorial at this reunion and may honor our KIAs with our Rose Ceremony there rather than at the banquet. At our last reunion, Colonel Boyd carried a Rose for one of the Iraq-Afghanistan KIAs and Col Summe for Chad Buehring. They were accompanied in the walk to the vase by all the troops from Ft. Bragg who were at the banquet.*

*Thank you so much for serving our Nation so well!!  
Best regards (sig) Joe Rosenberg*

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I wish I could take credit for all the good things happening to FOVA in the past 20 months. Most of it is due to the ground breaking efforts of our former Presidents. I just try to stay out of the way. Keep the faith and stay safe.

*Joe Rosenberg*

### **VA Prescription Fraud Alert**

It has been reported that veterans are receiving calls from a company identifying itself as the "Patient Care Group." This company is claiming that the veteran's prescriptions are now being dispensed through them and if they wanted to continue to receive their meds, they would need to provide a credit card number. Veterans are to be advised that the VA has not changed the process of receiving and dispensing prescriptions. Veterans are also advised to never give out their personal information including social security numbers and credit card numbers to any organization without first verifying their legitimacy. If you feel you may be a victim of this scam visit [www.consumer.gov/idtheft/law\\_resources.htm](http://www.consumer.gov/idtheft/law_resources.htm) to contact the appropriate law enforcement agency.

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## **REUNION 2006 in Branson, Mo**

**Poker, Partee, Music in the Ozarks**

**Thursday Sept 17- Sunday Sept 20**

**Y'all come to the Welk Resort!!**

*While many wondered why Mr. Welk was such a successful entertainer he was salting away his money and as his legacy his family has built a number of resorts, which radiate his warmth and sincerity. I don't know if they have champagne lady but they do have an impressive layout.*

*Me, every time I think of Welk I smile because of the routine I heard 45 years ago by Lenny Bruce where some hipster was seeking work with Mr. ah one & ah two-suffice it to say Mr. Welk had the last laugh.*

*I wonder if they play "Lady of Spain" in the lobby & elevators?*

*Find out for yourself and enjoy*

**3 nights, 2 shows, 2 dinners (includes banquet), 3 full  
breakfasts for as low as**

**breakfasts for as low as**

**\$139 per person (Quad Room)-\$354(Single Room)**

**Members Registration \$35 Tentative**

Please refer to our website [www.usapova.com/reunion.htm](http://www.usapova.com/reunion.htm) for the schedule as of September 10, 2005

**Rates:**

Single= \$354per person

Double= \$237per person, total \$474

Triple = \$198 per person, total \$594

Quad= \$179 per person. Total \$716

Additional nights 9/12, 9/13, 9/20,9/2--\$70 per night + tax (11.475)== \$78.03

A \$100 deposit is payable to the Hotel by August 14, 2006 and we are asking for \$35(tentative) for registration from each member by then:

We will start accepting deposits 3/1/2006

## **INFORMATION ON PTSD CLAIMS**

**Tony Newcomb, POVA Veterans Service Officer**

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Quite of bit of recent activity and inquiries have been reaching me concerning PTSD. The vast majority of it has been wrong, or, a total misunderstanding of the requirements for filing a claim for PTSD. Below you will find the Diagnostic Criteria for PTSD from the official Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, known as DSM-IV.

To begin with, if you don't have a good advocate, (VSO) that has experience with PTSD claims you need to find one. Many VSO's take the easy way, or simply pass on "urban legend" information, such as "*oh, unless you were infantry, recon or SF you won't get it because the regional claims people don't believe anyone outside of direct combat types could suffer from PTSD.*" This, frankly, is a crock, and if you hear a VSO repeat that, walk away and find another one.

You must have at least one "stressor" (see the criteria below) and be able to prove reasonably that it happened. You cannot get a rating for PTSD simply because your whole 12 months in Vietnam was "scary", or "stressful". (Frankly, except for a few isolated incidents, my 30 months in Vietnam was the best time of my life!!)

Newer veterans, coming in from Afganistan and Iraq are receiving de-briefings and counseling from their branches of service, and this will be of great help to them if they truly do have difficulties after returning in filing a claim. Vietnam vets didn't have that advantage, so there are few references in any of our military medical records to reflect the symptoms of PTSD.

The VA is reviewing now more than 72,000 awards for PTSD based on possible improper ratings. And they are getting tougher on the requirements to approve a claim.

For further information, go to: <http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/facts/general/fsoverview.html>

**DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA for POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)**

**DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA for POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)**  
(extracted from the: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV))

**A. Exposure to a traumatic event in which both of the following were present:**

1. Experienced, witnessed, or was confronted by event(s) involving actual or threatened death or serious injury of self or others
2. Response involved intense fear, helplessness, or horror (in children, may be expressed by disorganized or agitated behavior)

The disorder may be especially severe or longer lasting when the stressor is of human design (e.g. torture, rape) (DSM-III-R notes that: some stressors frequently cause the disorder (e.g. torture) and others produce it only occasionally (e.g. natural disaster or car accidents)).

**B. Traumatic event is persistently re-experienced in one or more of the following ways:**

1. Recurrent, intrusive, distressing recollections of the event.....
2. Acting or feeling as if the event were recurring, including "sense of reliving" the experience, illusions, hallucinations, and flashbacks – including while awakened or intoxicated.
3. Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.
4. Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.

**C. Persistent avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma, or numbing of general responsiveness, as indicated by at least three of the following:**

1. Efforts to avoid thoughts, feelings, or conversations associated with the trauma
2. Efforts to avoid activities, places, or people that arouse recollections of the trauma
3. Inability to recall an important aspect of the trauma
4. Markedly diminished interest or participation in significant activities.
5. Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others.
6. Restricted range of affect (e.g. unable to have loving feelings ).....

**D. Persistent symptoms of increases arousal (not present before the trauma), as indicated from two or more of the following:**

1. Difficulty falling or staying asleep
2. Irritability or outbursts of anger
3. Difficulty concentrating
4. Hyper-vigilance
5. Exaggerated startle response
6. Self medication

**E. Duration of the disturbance (symptoms in B, C, and D) of at least one month**

**F. The disturbance causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning.**

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## 4th POG Changes Command

reported by Sgt. Joe Healy

U.S. Army Special Operations Public Affairs Office

**FORT BRAGG, N.C. (USASOC News Service, July 17, 2005) —**

Col. Kenneth A. Turner assumed command of the 4th Psychological Operations Group (Airborne) from Col. Jack N. Summe during a change of command ceremony July 19.

Approximately 400 Soldiers, family members and civilians sat in 90 degree temperatures to watch. His most

said Summe, as he relinquished command. "It's been an honor and a privilege to command this group."

Summe commanded the 4th POG (A) since July, 2003. During his time, the unit deployed throughout the world.

"His two years in command have been some of the best and most productive in the group and the psychological operations community," said Maj.

members and civilians sat in 90 degree temperatures to watch. His most recent assignment was director of plans and programs to the Joint PSYOP Support Element, U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, FL.

Turner previously served as commander of the 3rd PSYOP Battalion, 4th POG (A) from 1999 to 2002. He holds masters' degrees in International Relations from Troy State University; Military Arts and Sciences from the Command and General Staff College and Strategic Studies from the Army War College.

The ceremony was emotional for Summe as he recalled his commanding PSYOP Soldiers.

"I have spent eight of my 28 years of military service here with 4th POG,"

PSYOP Soldiers deliver information to governments and civilian populations to influence their emotions, motives and behavior in support of military operations, according to <http://news.soc.mil>

in the group and the psychological operations community," said Maj. Gen. Herbert L. Altshuler, commander, U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command. "At any given time the 4th PSYOP Group has had over 250 soldiers deployed around the world."

Altshuler said on Summe's watch, the unit has produced over 1.5 million leaflets, 22,000 hours of radio and nearly 1,400 hours of television broadcast in four different languages, helping new democracies across the globe.

The 4th POG, the only active-duty Army psychological operations unit, constitutes 25 percent of all U.S. Army psychological units. The remaining units, the 2nd and 7th Psychological Operations Group, are in the Army reserve.



**Treasurer's Report Balance as of 9/30/05 \$ 2212.18 Treasurer: John Cheney**

## **ABSOLUTELY, POSITIVELY, NEXT TO LAST CHANCE !!!**

**To: Prospective members and our paying members who have not yet submitted 2005 and/or 2006 dues.**

**The last issue in 2005 will be the last Credibilis you will get unless**

- 1.you are a member of a "Gold Star" family**
- 2.you are on active duty and sent us your email address**
- 3.you are a civilian working for a PSYOP component and are in a combat zone for over 30 days**
- 4.you are current with your dues!**

**Members to be placed on our e-mail list you must send us \$15 per year**

**If you want to be placed on our snail-mail list you must send us \$15 per year for 4 issues or you can stay on our cyber list if you pay us dues of \$30 a year starting in 2005 & give us an email address. Our dues were raised at the last Reunion from \$20 a year to \$30 a year effective 1/1/05 for 2005 and 2006 payable for a two-year period. Since 2005 is ¾ done—New Members get the rest of 2005 and all of 2006 for \$40.**

**Please send your money to: John Cheney,  
PO Box 3242, Grapevine, TX 76099**

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**FROM THE FORT BRAGG LIAISON.....**

The funds donated for the joint POA and POVA purpose of helping the wounded PSYOP soldiers and assisting the families of PSYOP soldiers killed in action have risen to \$1350.00. Over one thousand dollars has been raised through the efforts of one individual, Mr. Henry Bast of New Rochelle, NY. His work on the soldiers' behalf is to be much lauded. For those wishing to donate, please make your checks out to POVA and send to me at the address below.

One of the wounded, SPC Matthew Drake, now has a web site. It is <http://www.matthewsindependenceday.com/>.

The World Wide PSYOP Conference has been postponed until March, 2006.

The John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School is in the process of deciding in what form the "Rites of Passage Ceremony" for the PSYOP/CA students will continue. Future speakers will likely have more current PSYOP/CA involvement with world events. The volunteer speakers from POVA have done an excellent job and I will keep the list of names handy for possible future use.

PSYOP soldiers are helping with the efforts along the Gulf Coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Doug Elwell  
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<b>Tom Brandt</b>	<i>Historian/Memorabilia/ Design Artist</i>	(630) 837-7955 <a href="mailto:vietnamimages@yahoo.com">vietnamimages@yahoo.com</a>
<b>Karen Meeker</b>	<i>Chaplain</i>	<a href="mailto:karen.meeker@us.army.mil">karen.meeker@us.army.mil</a>
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<b>Doug Elwell</b>	<i>Liaison Officer with PSYOPS at Ft. Bragg</i>	(910) 488-1383 <a href="mailto:elwellds@earthlink.net">elwellds@earthlink.net</a>
<b>Natalie Athonvarangkul Richie</b>	<i>Special Assistant to President</i>	(706) 769-4717 <a href="mailto:armadillo30@hotmail.com">armadillo30@hotmail.com</a>
Ed Rouse's PSYOPS Webpage <a href="http://www.psywarrior.com">HTTP://www.psywarrior.com</a>		
POVA's WEBSITE <a href="http://www.usapova.com">HTTP://www.usapova.com</a>		

**John Cheney**  
**PO Box 3242**  
**Grapevine, TX 76099**

**FIRST CLASS**

**POSTMASTER: ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**