



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marines

## The Battalion Runner

2021 – Number 2 – August 2021



Danny Schuster, 21 Moseley St., Billerica, MA 01821 Tel: 978-302-4126  
Email: [ditson35@verizon.net](mailto:ditson35@verizon.net) or [twoninencoic@aol.com](mailto:twoninencoic@aol.com)

[www.2ndbattalion9thmarines.org](http://www.2ndbattalion9thmarines.org)

# 28<sup>TH</sup> REUNION UPDATES

08-12 NOVEMBER 2021

MARRIOTT RESIDENCE INN ROSSLYN  
1651 NORTH OAK STREET  
ARLINGTON, VA 22209

**NOTE:** Prior reunion hotel room reservation information has been retained in this Battalion Runner and can be found at the end of this reunion discussion. The negotiations for both our 2/9 Jam Session on 09 November and our Birthday Dinner on 10 November have taken a long time to finalize thanks to the virus. We finally have contracts in place. Details are below. Danny

## Reunion Agenda

**Tuesday, 09 November:**

**1400-1700 hours:** An afternoon delight!!! The 2/9 Jam Session with the Gallatin Canyon Band. To be held at the Le Meridien Hotel, 1121 19th Street North, Arlington, VA,. As noted in our last Battalion Runner, Ben Hernandez is performing with, and the band will be performing at no charge, in honor of his Dad – Dan Hernandez – a 2/9 Vietnam Vet who is well known to many of us. There will be light food (i.e. wings, etc.), provided and a cash bar. There will be **NO CHARGE** for anything but the cash bar. The 2/9 Network is paying for this. **Please see my note below following this complete agenda about attendance.**



**The GALLATIN CANYON BAND**

## **Wednesday, 10 November:**

**1000 hours:** U. S. Marine Corps Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Memorial). I have not received confirmation from HQMC but expect if the virus doesn't interfere with plans, the traditional ceremony will be held. This includes the President's Own Marine Corps Band, the Commandant's Own Marine Corps Drum and Bugle Corps, 8<sup>th</sup> & I passing in review, Commandant's speech, guest speaker, and the Laying of the Wreath at the Iwo Jima Memorial. The memorial is about a 10-15 walk from our reunion hotel. This is an impressive event and remembers all those who have gone before us.

**1800 hours:** Our 2/9 Network U.S. Marine Corps Birthday dinner will be held this year at the Sheraton Pentagon City Hotel, 900 S. Orme Street, Arlington, VA. There will be a cocktail hour with a cash bar, a full dinner (chicken), guest speaker(s), Marine Corps Birthday cake cutting ceremony with youngest and oldest Marines, reunion raffle and 50/50 results, and more. Again, there will be NO CHARGE for anything except the cash bar. The 2/9 Network is covering the dinner. As with my note with the jam session, **please see below following this complete agenda about attendance.**

**2300 hours (approximate):** After completion of our Birthday Dinner we all return to the Residence Inn before leaving for our annual visit to the Vietnam Wall to see our brothers. We will be holding a special ceremony in honor of our lost brother, Keith Fay, during this trip. Keith was one of our 2/9 Vietnam Vets who put together the effort to create the 2/9 Memorial Plaque currently on permanent display on the grounds of the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA. Note we will be returning to the Residence Inn after completion of our Birthday Dinner prior to leaving for The Wall. We will meet and leave immediately after all are back at the Residence Inn.

Transportation will be provided for all of the above. As anyone who has rented a car or van since the virus hit knows, prices are sky high for rental vehicles. Debbie Crist is checking this out and we're hoping we can have our normal number of vans available for transportation. One way or another we'll get people to and from places they need to go on the official agenda.

## **ATTENDANCE AT THE JAM SESSION AND/OR BIRTHDAY DINNER**

**This is critical! We are paying for both these get-togethers but need to have at LEAST an educated guess how many will be attending so our hosts know how much food needs to be prepared. If you are going to the reunion, or are a local D.C. area resident who wishes to attend one or both of these events, please email me at [twoninencoic@aol.com](mailto:twoninencoic@aol.com) and tell me how many people will be attending with you. I want to stress that you do NOT have to be officially attending the entire reunion if you are local. Come on out to one or both of them and let me know.**

## Miscellaneous:

1. Our hospitality room will once again be on the first floor of the Residence Inn, with free snacks, soft drinks, water, and beer provided.
2. If anyone is willing to provide items for our 2/9 Reunion Raffle it would be greatly appreciated. 50/50 raffle tickets will also be available. With the Network paying for everything this year the raffle and 50/50 raffle are two fund raisers we have to support reunion costs. Raffle and 50/50 tickets will be for sale in the hospitality room at the Residence Inn and at the entrance to our Birthday Dinner. A cash donation jar will also be available in the hospitality room.
3. Many of us knew and remember a great 2/9 Marine who passed away a few years ago. Ray Nieto was a special person and attended all reunions. He is interred in Arlington National Cemetery. Ray's wife and Debbie Crist's mother, Mary, passed last year. She will be interred with Ray in a ceremony at Arlington National on Monday, 08 November, at 1500 hours. Details for anyone who may wish to attend will be provided at the reunion.
4. There is no official agenda item for Veteran's Day on Thursday, 11 November. There will be a Veteran's Day Ceremony at The Wall as there is every year and folks may want to consider a trip to the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Triangle, VA, on that day. The 2/9 Memorial Plaque in Semper Fidelis Memorial Park on the grounds of the museum is an impressive remembrance of all lost brothers from 2/9, and Red Hill's Memorial Plaque is also on the grounds next to the War Dog Memorial statue very near the chapel.
5. We will have 2/9 covers and shirts for sale at the reunion. Exactly what is still undecided but my partner in crime for reunions, Henry Ostaszewski, is hard at work on this.

## ROOM RESERVATIONS AND PRICE

Room rates at the Residence Inn this year are \$135/night plus tax (around 13-14%). Parking for those who drive is \$11.00 per night. Normal parking is \$22 but we have a half priced deal in our contract with the hotel. The hotel has constructed a special web page for us to book your room. The link is provided below. You can also call to make your reservation (Dial 1-800-331-3131), or copy and paste the link below into your browser. Tell them you are booking a room under the "2/9 Reunion Room Block". You must reserve your room no later than end of the day 08 October 2021. After that date rooms revert back to the hotel and are only available on a space available basis and you may have to pay the "going rate", around \$250/night. At the moment we have 50 rooms set aside for us. If you call and rooms are NOT available under our group rate please notify me ASAP so I can contact them to expand the number of rooms. Officially the reunion runs from 08-12 November but our special rate is available from 07-13 November if you wish to come early and/or leave late. You can cancel your reservation at no charge up to 48 hours before your scheduled arrival and also must guarantee your reservation with a credit card. **MAKE SURE YOU GET A CONFIRMATION NUMBER!**

One last reunion note. This reunion is for everyone. We don't care if you are a WWII, Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan veteran or a peacetime member. We are all 2/9, and that's all that matters. If you are one of those Vietnam Veterans who has always said I'd really like to go to a reunion but end up putting it off until "next year" I'd ask that you consider

something. I'm really getting tired and saddened of hearing from family members that John, Harry, Pete, or Ed "always wanted to go to a reunion but kept putting it off. He passed away last year." If you can do it please consider our reunion. We want this to be the biggest and best ever! I don't think you'd regret attending. As was the case last year there is always the possibility of the virus affecting our reunion. With this new variant who knows what is going to happen by November. Please keep your eye out for any notification I may need to send if we are adversely impacted.

Reservation Link:

<https://www.marriott.com/events/start.mi?id=1615915205783&key=GRP>

## FROM THE MAILBOX

**28 July 2021: What follows is a pretty extensive list of what will be happening in September with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division Association Reunion. If not interested just move down a couple of pages to our own items regarding 2/9. I received the following note from Don Bumgarner, VP of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division Association, regarding their upcoming reunion in Fort Worth, TX.**

I'm Don Bumgarner, the New Vice-President of the Association, and former C/1/3 Marine in Vietnam Feb 1967 to Mar 1968. I was with the 60mm Mortars section of Weapons Platoon.

The Third Marine Division Association has scheduled, its Reunion this year, from September 13th (Monday) to September 19th (Sunday), 2021, in Fort Worth, Texas at the Radisson Hotel Fort Worth North as the host hotel. The Hotel is located at 2540 Meachum Blvd, Fort Worth, TX 76106. Phone: (817) 625-9911 or (817)769-40239. Please call and reference the Third Marine Division Association. Our Rates, \$119.00/night plus tax . Rates are offered 3 days before and 3 days after reunion dates, based on availability. The rate includes breakfast for up to 2 guests per room (possible Buffet), for everyday you reserve a room. Rooms are single/double occupancy. (Rooms have 1-King, or 2-Double Beds). ALL Rooms are NON-SMOKING, and there are some Handicapped rooms, (which are based on availability). They DO allow Dogs (\$50.00 one time charge for your Dog(s) and Service Animals with papers are free). The cut-off date for Our Rates is August 25, 2021. (Cancellation Policy-reserved with credit card, you must cancel at least 48 hrs prior to arrival, if you cancel within 48 hours, the credit card will be charged for one night plus tax).

**PARKING**, for those that drive there, the hotel offers free parking for all guests. The hotel only offers a shuttle service within 5 miles. For those that fly into Dallas/Fort Worth Airport the hotel recommends that you take the TEX-RAIL from terminal "B", to Mercantile Station (approx. cost \$2.50). Then call the hotel, and they will send the shuttle for you, to bring you to the hotel(1 1/2 miles away).

For any retired LE type Marines, there are Safes in only the Business type suites. None in the regular King and Double rooms.

Wheelchair Rental, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day or week. Please call (888) 441-7575 or visit [www.scootaround.com](http://www.scootaround.com) for details and reservations.

The Mini-Reunions (for 1/3 and different Units) are planned for Thursday September 16th, at 1030 hrs. (room information to be provided at reunion). (These smaller reunions, are GREAT, and gives

the guys more time to visit with those they served with. Also to do the annual business meeting for our 1/3 Association. Since I have been promoted to the Vice-President of the 3rd Marine Division Association, a NEW President for 1/3 Association will need to be elected. Probably other positions will need to be filled too).

The events offered at the Reunion:

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

#### **TEXAS RANGERS vs HOUSTON ASTROS BASEBALL GAME**

Time: 1730 hrs board bus, and 2300 hrs back at hotel.

Cost: \$69.00/ per person, includes bus, escort, and game ticket. (any eats on you).

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Wednesday, September 15th, 2021

#### **BELL HELICOPTER & FT WORTH AVIATION MUSEUM**

We'll enjoy a private tour of the Bell Helicopter Flight Research Center in Ft Worth. Many of you will remember these aircraft (Huey's) from your time in Vietnam. Now is the time to see them again, along with other aircraft in the Bell fleet. After our tour Bell, we head to the Fort Worth Aviation Museum, the most touchable Warbirds in Texas. We will enjoy a box lunch at their picnic area and see the many aircraft on site. The Museum tells the story of the aviation heritage and accomplishments since 1911. Its collection of 24 warbirds date from 1943 to the present and features a US Navy Blue Angel F/A-18 Hornet in the outdoor display. The museum's indoor displays include the B-36 Peacemaker and Forward Air Controllers Museum, a T-38 cockpit simulator and other computer flight simulators. Friendly guides assist all visitors with personalized tours and a gift shop is also available.

**BELL IS A DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE CONTRACTOR SO YOU MUST FILL OUT THE BELL HELICOPTER REGISTRATION FORM FOR CLEARANCE. (Form available at Third Marine Division Association web site at Registration Forms).**

Time: 0830 hrs board bus, and 1400 hrs back at hotel.

Cost: \$49/Person includes bus, escort, admission and lunch.

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Wednesday, September 15th, 2021

#### **WELCOME DINNER- "Build a Burger" & Grilled Chicken**

Time: 1800 to 2030 hrs Cost: \$24/Person

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Thursday, September 16th, 2021

#### **FT WORTH STOCKYARDS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT ACTIVITIES & BILLY BOB'S TEXAS BAR-B-Q DINNER**

Fort Worth is where the West begins, and nothing embodies Western heritage better than the Fort Worth Stockyards National Historical District. From the original brick walkways to the wooden corrals, every inch of the Stockyards tell the true history of Texas' famous livestock industry. Among the attractions there is the world's only twice daily Longhorn cattle drive, held everyday at 11:30am & 4:00pm. Some of the other notable attractions are the Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame, which honors the men and women, committees and associations, and the livestock that champions the western lifestyle and supports the sport of Rodeo. You may choose to go to the John Wayne Museum, called the John Wayne Exhibit for \$21. Starting with his early childhood and career, each room highlights an aspect of the Duke's legacy. All patrons will have exclusive access to never-before-seen family photos and correspondences which have been thoughtfully curated by the Wayne family in order to give guests a historic view of the icon, whose values translate both on the silver screen and off. Another option while at the Stockyards, we

are invited by RFD-TV (Cowboy Channel) into their studio to watch a live TV show at 5:00pm. We'll all meet at the World's Largest Honky-tonk-Billy Bob's Texas, at 6:15pm for a true Texas BBQ dinner in our own private room. After dinner you can partake in (or just watch) the free line dancing lessons! Guaranteed lots of fun and laughs.

Time: 1400 hrs board, and 2100 hrs back at hotel.

Cost: \$51/per person, includes bus, escort, and dinner.

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Friday, September 17th, 2021

#### **BUREAU OF PRINTING AND ENGRAVING- (1 OF ONLY 2 IN THE U.S.)**

The Bureau of Printing and Engraving public Tour and Visiting Center located in Fort Worth, Texas is a great place to learn about U.S. currency. Visitors can see where billions of dollars are printed from an enclosed walkway, which is suspended above the production floor! Over half of the nation's currency order is produced in Fort Worth. Available before and after the free self-guided tour, the experience includes an informative theater film, and visitors have the opportunity to walk two floors of interactive exhibits and displays showcasing currency history and the intricate art of currency manufacturing. Also located in the visitor center is the Money-factory Gift Shop where the public can purchase souvenir items including uncut sheets and other specialty currency products. Wheelchairs, restrooms, and vending machines are available.

Time: 0900 hrs board bus, and 1200 hrs back at hotel.

Cost: \$39/ per person, includes bus and escort.

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Friday, September 17th, 2021

#### **ICE CREAM SOCIAL (At Hotel)**

Time: Between 1300 -1430 hrs.

Cost: \$9/per person.

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Friday, September 17th, 2021

#### **CITY TOUR AND EVENING AT SUNDANCE SQUARE**

Enjoy an overview tour of Fort Worth- the nation's 13th largest city and home to some serious Texas heritage! The heart of downtown Fort Worth is Sundance Square, a 35-block shopping and entertainment district where charming, beautifully restored buildings stand along side glittering skyscrapers. Here, you'll find locals, downtown residents, and visitors among a multitude of restaurants, shops, galleries, and performance venues. You'll have time to enjoyable the shopping and fantastic dining options in the area.

Time: 1600 hrs board bus, and 2100 hrs back at hotel.

Cost: \$39/ per person, includes bus and escort. Dinner on your own!

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Saturday, September 18th, 2021

#### **COWGIRL MUSEUM**

The National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame is the only museum in the world dedicated to honoring women of the West, and from around the world who have displayed extraordinary courage and pioneer spirit in their trailblazing efforts. It includes interactive exhibit galleries that feature artifacts of the

permanent collection, a traveling exhibit gallery, two theaters, gift shops research library and archives, and a NEW second floor. Currently, the museum's archives house more than 4000 artifacts and information about more than 750 remarkable women. Nestled in the heart of Fort Worth's Cultural District, the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame took its place among other museum giants: the Kimbell Art Museum, the Modern Art Museum, the Amon Carter Museum, the Museum of Science and History, and the Will Rogers Memorial Center. Lunch to follow.

Time: 9:30am board bus, and 1:00pm back at hotel.

Cosy: \$29/ per person, includes bus, escort, and lunch-you order and pay

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Saturday, September 18th, 2021

ANNUAL BANQUET/ PROGRAM (Cash Bar Reception at 1800 hrs)

Time: 1900 hrs to 2200 hrs

Cost: Choice of Beef Tenderloin (\$59), Grilled Chicken (\$49), or Pecan Encrusted Salmon (\$49).

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Sunday, September 19th, 2021

Protestant Church Service? Catholic Mass

Tine: 0700 to 0739hrs

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Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.  
Please plan to be at bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to departure.  
All trips require a minimum of thirty five (35) people, unless otherwise noted.

NOTE: There is a limit of one hydraulically lifted scooters wheelchair per handicap accessible bus. If you use a scooter but can climb the steps to board the bus, either you and/or a person traveling with you must be able to put the scooter in the bus's luggage compartment. Due to liability issues, drivers and tour guides cannot assist with scooters.

**05 August 2021: Received the following email from James Pilcher, nephew of 2/9 Marine Pvt. George Pilcher, who was KIA in Vietnam.**

Hi. My name is James Pilcher. Sbout 14 years ago I had made a post under one of the forums on yout 2/9 Network website trying to find info on my uncle Private George William Pilcher. He died in Vietnam September 21, 1967 or 68. I was wondering if someone could put out a post or anything. Maybe I can find some information as to the location of where he was killed, engagements, operations he might've been in, etc. If you could please help me out I'd very much appreciate it. He was in Hotel Company. If you could help me out I'd very much appreciate it because I've lost all info that someone tried to scrounge up. Thank you. James

James can be reached via email at [pilcher43@gmail.com](mailto:pilcher43@gmail.com)

**08 August 2021: I received the following email from Paige Vest, daughter of Sergeant Jaime Vest, from Detroit, MI.**

Hello,

I found your site while researching the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines. My dad was a Sergeant who served in Vietnam, in 1966-1967, If I have my dates right.

He's been gone almost 13 years, but I long to know more about his time in the Corps--he had difficulty talking about it. Is there any way to get in touch with anyone he might have served with? I don't know if that's something you can do for family, but I would appreciate any help you can provide.



His name was Jaime Vest and he was from Detroit, Michigan.

Thank you for your time,

Paige Vest

Paige can be reached via email at [paigevest@gmail.com](mailto:paigevest@gmail.com)

**17 June 2021: Received the following email from Debbie Wing regarding her fiancé, Michael Edward Thomas, who was KIA on 09 July 1968 while serving with Fox Company.**

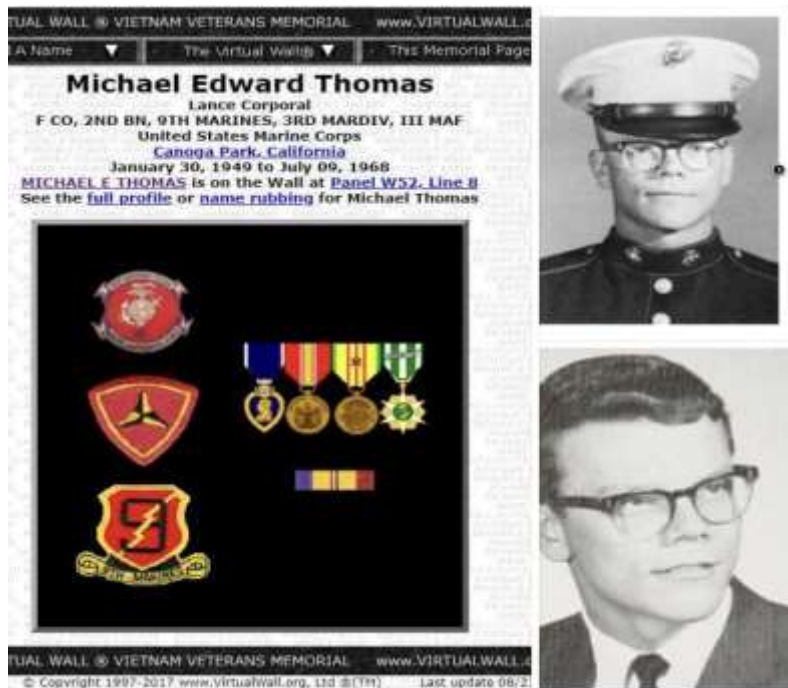
Hi,

My name is Debbie Wing and my fiancé Michael Edward Thomas was killed on July 9, 1968, in Quang Tri province. He was with Fox Company, 2/9 and joined on the buddy system with his friend Craig Keiser. Both Mike and Craig were from Canoga Park, CA. I am longing to post a request to any Marines that served with Mike that I would be grateful to correspond with them if they would be willing. Is there a newsletter that you send to 2/9 vets in which I might post my request and contact email?

Here is his service picture and also his high school graduation picture.

Thank you

Debbie Wing



Thank you for any guidance you could give me.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wing

Huntington Beach, CA

[squibbr@yahoo.com](mailto:squibbr@yahoo.com)

## Other Network Notes

If you have a short story to tell send it to me! I'll review it and unless it is really out of bounds I'll include it in a future newsletter. I have no doubt our members love reading about other members who have a story to tell.

I'm still not happy with our internet service provider for the 2/9 Network website. The good news is I finally got two emails from them apologizing for extensive delays in responding to my requests submitted through their help center. I've been dealing with the same person for years and these emails came from two other folks there. I hope I can communicate with them and maybe get some help with updates/changes to the site. I'd really like to get the new registration page and contact us pages returned with some security involved. A new forum has been on my mind for quite some time but that may be out of the question. Security was also the problem there. We'll see how things go.

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any information, questions, change of address/email addresses, lost brothers, etc. I will do my best to fully respond to anything I receive. You can email me any time at [twoninencoic@aol.com](mailto:twoninencoic@aol.com).

## DONATIONS

**Normally I do not like to provide a list of people who donated to the Network because I'm always worried I might forget someone and offend them. However, this time I'm going to do that since I think those men deserve recognition. Here are the donators from this year. Apologies in advance if I missed anyone.**

Callum	Tom
Carpenter	Bill
Clifford	John
Dean	Kenton
Fenerty	Tom
Frostrom	John
Gorman	Ed
Henderson	John
Hernandez	Dan
Herring Sr.	Miles
Illingworth	Tim
Jamison	Jay
Mannino	Joe
Murphy	Dennis
Neener	Bob
Osborn	Rick
Ramsey	Robert
Siegfried	Cliff
Siegler	Glenn
Smallwood	William
Taylor	Ronald
Thomas	Walter
Townsend	Martin
Voge	Dennis
Whelan	Scott
Wood	Walter
Wright	Robbie

**Thank you everyone. If anyone can spare a little it will really help keep us financially viable and able to continue doing what we've been able to do for several years now. If you want to send a donation please make a check out to "Danny Schuster", and mail it to me at 21 Moseley Street, Billerica, MA 01821. Thanks for anything you can do.**

**A final personal note. It is something I just have to say. I understand there may be some who disagree with this and that is your right. As I composed this newsletter my mind was occupied by the events transpiring in Kabul, Afghanistan. My heart goes out to our Afghanistan vets who lost brother Marines, those who suffered terrible wounds there, those Afghans who supported us there, and the unfortunate young women and girls who now face the barbaric tactics of the Taliban. No matter your political leanings politicians on both sides of the isle have screwed us, and them, again. To me, it is not about whether or not we should still be there or not. That is certainly a matter of discussion. It is, rather, what I consider the cowardly and abrupt abandonment of an entire nation, billions of dollars of weaponry, and little regard for our men and women who have fought and died there trying to give the Afghan people a chance at a peaceful existence. I have little doubt that many of my fellow Vietnam Veterans are looking at this in sorrow and anger and as Saigon in 1975 all over again. Danny**

**As always, if you have questions or issues please do not hesitate to contact me.**

**SEMPER FIDELIS**

**DANNY SCHUSTER**

**2/9 NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR AND REUNION COORDINATOR**

978-667-4762, [twoninencoic@aol.com](mailto:twoninencoic@aol.com)