

## ERIE 2016 AFTER ACTIONS REPORT

All,

It was a day of firsts for sure! First the trailer showed up more than a half-hour late so we were a little late getting it prepped for opening. Visitors started to come in the door before we were ready as you might expect so we were really rushing. Secondly, there were only 3 of us working so that made matters worse. Once we were ready, it was a steady and heavy stream of visitors (and so many, many kids) from about 9:30am until closing at 4:00pm and even then when we were packing up we still had visitors trying to come in. Dale stated we had \$175 in donations and had \$275 in merchandise.

I have to give a big thank you to Bill B and Rick who spent time getting the new swamp cooler installed last week. This is something we have needed for a long time and it was really a life-saver for us who worked all day. While the outside temperature was approaching 90 degrees we were quite comfortable in the trailer even with it packed with visitors and the door remaining open the whole day. What an improvement! We only had the fan running unto about 11:00am and then turned the water pump on and it ran until we shut it off about 5:00pm. I'm not sure but I estimate it used about 12 to 14 gal. of water minus what Bill drained out when we shut it down?

It was a very successful and rewarding day for all of us. If you have never volunteered for our HWM you have no idea what you are missing out on. It really helps to make up for all the bad memories we have when we returned home from over there. Finally we are getting the thanks and appreciation that we deserved back then! Some visitors would leave the HWM with tears in their eyes after having talked to the docents. I really wish everyone would volunteer at least once just to meet visitors who are curious and want to know more about what we experienced.

There is one discouraging aspect of the Saturday event and one in which we will need to have a serious discussion about at our meeting this Saturday.

One docent had a medical issue the night before so he couldn't be there for the morning shift and a second docent also had a medical issue so he along with his wife could not be there for the afternoon shift. That left Dale and I working all day with Rick working in the morning and Bill B in the afternoon. Three docents are just not enough as we worked without a break the entire day and for guys of our tender years it was tough! We have to expect and plan for the possibility guys of our age to have medical issues and to be prepared for it at future events.

This means we will need to discuss a cancellation policy based on the size of the event, the number of volunteers and the time line. Perhaps if we only have four people volunteer (or fewer) then we need to set a 24-48 hour prior to the start cancellation deadline. With no more than four volunteers we need to have alternates volunteer to stand by in the event of medical problems or no-shows.

This has not happened before that I know of and I only hope it is not the start of a trend for our HWM? I know that we all have plans and lots of things going on in the summer but if we are to continue soliciting and accepting participation in these events then we need to have better turn-out of volunteers.

Terry L. Olson, VHPA

Operations Officer

Vietnam Helicopter War Museum