My name is Kevin Brown, and I came here to be with you today from the State of

Connecticut. To a lot of guys I am know as Pooh Bear. I know that sounds funny to a lot

of you, but to those men of the 6922nd Security Wing in the Republic of the Philippines, it

is who I am. Tony was one of those guys. We were all in the United States Air Force

Security Service, during the Viet Nam era, thrown together in a time of confusion and

non-support, in a war that divided our country. We all worked, ate, slept and raised hell

together, because we were all scared as hell together. We called each other Kuya, from

the Filipino word for brother. We had no idea what tomorrow would bring. With all

this, it seemed to draw us all closer to each other, for the support and caring, that our

families some 6,000 miles from us, could not offer. There were others besides me. There

was Mike Gilson, aka Lulu. He was Tony’s roommate and in fact, it was Tony that gave

Mike his nickname. Then there was Bob Buhr, aka Hippo. These two were very close as

they both hailed from Wisconsin. They stayed in touch and got together many times

throughout the years. There were a lot of others with us too, but there was only one

“Sweet Tony”. The man we are all gathered here today to give our praise and respects

to. The man we all miss so very much.

Some forty years ago, he was a young man of serious work ethic and strong self belief.

He was a young man of character, that would never shirk from defending his brothers,

nor turn his back when any one of us had our backs to the wall. Tony had a certain way

about him that exuded a smooth self assured, and most of all, confident style in his social

and professional life. This attitude is what eventually gave him the handle, “Sweet

Tony”. Now, as his time has drawn neigh, I find that not much has changed with the

man that I called friend such a long time ago. He was and still is the strong but gentle

confident man, that I knew back in the late 1960’s. He found the love of his life, and had

a son, who no doubt will carry on that legacy.

Back in the early summer of 2005, I finally got to revisit with my old friend after some

thirty five years, at the 6922nd reunion in San Antonio, Texas. To me, it was a glorious

time. It was only my second reunion, while a lot of the other‘s had been getting

together for many years. Finally getting Tony there was a joy to many, as he meant

so very much to so many. I will never forget that first sighting. Seeing him, with that

graying beard, not unlike my own, but with a lot less baggage on his mid section, that

certainly spelled the difference between the two of us. It was a grand time, with many

stories of past and present accomplishments, all accompanied with our drink of choice.

Certainly there were the reminiscences of our time together at Clark Air Base. The

gatherings lasted well into the night, and morning, but not without a great sense of

satisfaction, and a lot of tears and laughter Out of all this, I found one thing. Nothing

had changed, Sweet Tony was still Sweet Tony.

I tell you all this, because I want you to know who he was back then, and that he was still

that man today. It is important to his family that they understand the man they know and

love, was the same man we knew and loved. There is not a greater tribute to a person,

then for us to know that his life’s values never waivered or changed, during his time on

this earth. This can be said of Tony Leffin.

In closing, I want to thank Sue and Matt for giving me the honor of standing here before

you today. I want to thank the Lord above for letting me live long enough to be here. I

want to thank him for the privilege of knowing this kind and just man. Most of all, I

want to thank Tony for being there in my time of need. For you see, I do have an ulterior

motive for coming all this way to attend his memorial. When my time came to leave the

Philippines, to return to the states for discharge, it was this man Sweet Tony Leffin, that

made my leaving an easier and more conscionable event. The particulars of this will

always be between Tony, myself and our maker, but it was his friendship and

brotherhood that has helped to guide me throughout my life. I will never forget him for

what he did. I will never forget him for who he was. I will always give to others in their

time of need, in any way I can, because of what he did for me. I will always remember

him and proudly call him my Kuya. He is and always will be my brother.