



# The VHPA Newsletter

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ®

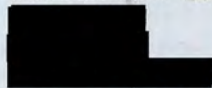
November/December 1999 Vol. 17, No. 6



Don Joyce photo

A CH-47 Chinook stirs up a thick cloud of dust while a GI prepares to attach a load of ammunition that will be slingloaded under the aircraft to a combat operation in the field.

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## From the President

The weekend prior to Veterans Day, I returned from Branson, MO, and my first VHPA chapter reunion.

Fearless Gary Wineteer, our Mid America Chapter president for life (or until he gets it right), coordinated our chapter reunion to coincide with the largest veterans celebration in the United States.

Branson has a weeklong celebration for veterans that includes a parade, The Moving Wall, free live shows and a long list of activities. The community makes this a very special time for veterans.

We were welcomed by all, with VIP treatment. If you are not doing anything around Veterans Day next year, plan to celebrate with the Mid America Chapter in Branson.

We have our own LZ staked out, and next year we have plans for races, go cart, of course; several sizzling rounds of golf, miniature though it may be; and, of course, evenings filled with food, drink and watching each other trying to dance, sometimes with each other.

### Chapter formation made easy

For those of you who have the chance to participate in a local chapter reunion/get-together, you don't want to miss it. If you don't have a chapter in your area, and would like to start one, we can help.

Charles Holley has just put the finishing touches on a "New Chapter Packet" on what it takes to be a VHPA chapter.

We have sample documents with all the information about what you need to do. We have had VHPA chapters for some time now and we finally have an SOP.

For those chapters now formed, Holley will be contacting you to see if you have all your forms in place and, if you do, we are now prepared to send you your chapter flag, the VHPA banner, and \$500 for recruiting new members.

### Reunion DC 2000 update

Dave Rittman, senior member at large, and I visited the DC reunion committee during its Nov. 12 reunion planning session.

There was a large turnout of committee members, with

Jim "Goldie" Goldthorpe as chair.

We spent the morning being updated on the various functions planned for the reunion. This was topped off with a sampling of the menu planned for the closing banquet. The food was great!

If what we sampled was an indication of what the hotel chefs can do, we are all in for a pleasant gastronomical experience.

The team Goldie has put together has the reunion planning well in hand. Goldie just got another volunteer — who happens to be a three-star general.

For those of you in the DC area, make sure you put your hat in the ring. This is going to be the biggest reunion ever and I am sure Goldie and his troops can use your help.

### Project 2000 update

There has been concern voiced that if we kick off Project 2000 (send letters to 10,000 potential members we have identified by social security number) this year, we could run into problems.

The problem arises if we find 10 or 20 percent of the 10,000. Of that number, how many will want to participate in what appears to be a record-breaking DC reunion?

If we find 2,000 and one-fourth want to go to DC, the numbers would be staggering.

Our sights are still set to make this a go in February. I will keep you updated. P.S.: A good reason to get your registration in ASAP.

If we aren't fast enough in helping you find your old stick buddy, you might try one of the many websites designed to find people.

Two sites worth trying are [www.switchboard.com](http://www.switchboard.com) and [www.bigfoot.com](http://www.bigfoot.com).

Another way is to use the search engine at [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com). Contact a long lost buddy today.

### One last item

The Smith family has some great news. Many of you have met my two sons, Chris and Brian, at reunions as they grew up.

Our war stories and heroics deeds must have rubbed off on at least one of them.

Cadet Christopher Smith, West Point Class of 2000, has been accepted into the Army's Aviation Branch.

**See FROM THE PRESIDENT, Page 3**

## Classified ads

**POSITION WANTED:** Experienced helicopter pilot looking for a position in the areas of EMS, natural resources or public service. Experience: Regular Army, Indiana National Guard. Class 68-27. Call Bill Resor at [REDACTED]

**CALORAD:** All natural wellness product. Would you like to lose inches/weight while you sleep? Build lean muscle mass? No diet or exercise necessary. Too good to be true? An 86% long-term success rate speaks for itself. Available retail or wholesale in an excellent business opportunity. Call VHPA member Paul Uster (L200) at (800) 484-6682, Extension/PIN 8936, or [REDACTED]. Or visit [www.evicom.com](http://www.evicom.com) Use code word: paul

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FOUNDER	Larry Clark

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2000 Reunion	James Goldthorpe
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Contributing writer	Ken Fritz

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## From the President

Continued from Page 2

Another potential rotorhead.

Brian, not up to the slow-and-low flight, went another path. He is now a sophomore at Harvard and loves Air Force ROTC. He was top cadet his freshman year.

Proud parents? You bet!

### Happy holidays

It is time to say good night and wish you and your family the best for this holiday season.

May the New Year bring you and your family happiness and peace. May it bring our troops throughout the world a silent night and peace in 2000.

— **Bob Smith, President**  
"Mavericks Rule"

## VHPA chapters

### Arizona Chapter

Albert Rodriguez, President

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### Southern California Chapter

Carl Cortez, President

VHPA points of contact for chapters are Vice President Charles Holley and Jodi Allison at Headquarters. Their e-mail addresses are:

- Holley — [redacted]
- Allison — [hq@vhpa.org](mailto:hq@vhpa.org)

### New Chapter Kits available

If you're forming or considering forming a VHPA chapter, go to [www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org) to download a "New Chapter Kit." You should find everything you need.



# Pilot Profile tells Skycrane stories

This summer I started sending out copies of the Skycrane Pilot Profile booklet that contains individual sheets submitted by more than 40 CH-54 pilots.

My goal is to add more pilot profiles and more Skycrane stories, then distribute the booklet again at our CH-54 mini-reunion in Washington, DC. Here is an example of some of the priceless stories we are collecting:

*In July 1969, I had been in country for about 30 days when I was signed off as a unit IP in the 478th Heavy Helicopter Company.*

*Mel Strickland had about two weeks in country and we were assigned for a mission with the 101st. Everything was going well until we ran out of Crane loads and they asked us if we could haul some Chinook loads.*

*Being full-fledged Crane pilots, we said, "Sure, make them doubles."*

*We moved over our next load and they slammed a double web into our hook before we could say anything. Having hauled some using web, we decided to take the load, as we were up and moving before the CE told us what had happened.*

*Everything was okay until we started our approach into FSB Pistol. We were a little hot on the approach and I told Mel he needed to slow up and get his power in.*

*When he started to pull more power, we started to bounce, not severely, but quite noticeably. We reduced power and things smoothed out, but the pad was coming at us fast.*

*As power was pulled to terminate the approach, we went into vertical bounce severe enough to lock our shoulder harnesses.*

*Mel tried to turn the AFCS servo off on the collective, but we were bouncing so bad he couldn't hold it off and things just got worse. People on the ground dove for cover under anything high enough to get under.*

*We made a complete lap around the entire firebase and I couldn't turn the AFCS servo off. My arms were flying around every time I reached for it.*

*As we came back over the log pad, I told the FE to get rid of the load. There was a slight delay and then the aircraft became rock steady at about a 50-foot hover.*

*The electrical release didn't work, as the hook was jammed so he had sheared the hook off. Our two Chinook loads of culvert were spread over a large portion of the FSB and our hook was on the pad.*

*We couldn't land because the culvert material was all over the place, so we left for fuel.*



## VHPA Products

### MAIL FORM TO:

VHPA  
5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610  
(800) 505-VHPA  
HQ@vhpa.org

### FAX CREDIT CARD ORDERS: (916) 966-8743

New VHPA bumper stickers	\$1/each	_____
Back VHPA Newsletters (Limited availability)	\$10/year (\$5 P&H each set)	_____
1994 VHPA Directory	\$10/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1995 VHPA Directory	\$10/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1997 VHPA Directory	\$10/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
Vol. I Historical Reference Directory — 352 pages	\$10/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
Vol. II Historical Reference Directory — 832 pages	\$15/each (\$5 P&H each set)	_____
1996 VHPA Calendar	\$5/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1997 VHPA Calendar	\$5/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1998 VHPA Calendar	\$5/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1999 VHPA Calendar (Direct from VHPA)	\$8/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1995-98 VHPA Calendar set (Limited availability)	\$17.50 (\$6 P&H set)	_____
VHPA History Book, Vol. I Turner Publishing limited edition. Only a few left.	\$39/each (\$6 P&H each)	_____

### GRAND TOTAL

### TO ORDER

Send check/money order or e-mail charge to your VISA or MasterCard credit card.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ VISA

☐ MasterCard

Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Continued from Page 4

*As we neared the beach, I heard Mike Crowley heading by Pistol, so I asked him if he could stop on his way back and pick up our hook. He said he would.*

*As we were refueling, Crowley called and said he didn't see any Chinook. I had to explain to him — not a Chinook, but our HOOK.*

*Maj. Roy Leggett was the maintenance officer at the time. I'm sure he appreciated Mel and me being there at that time and place!*

*I didn't live that down until I had a Jeep roll down Mount Evans.*

Art Darling

We can all laugh with Art today, but that was a close call. It could easily have been just another tragic Vietnam story.

If anyone knows where Mel Strickland is today, please let me know.

Max Torrence

ORWAC 69-44  
273rd HHC 1970  
295th HHC 1971-74  
273rd HHC 1977-79

## Pilot recalls friend after Veterans Day

It wasn't exactly on Veterans Day, but five days later, on Nov. 16.

I was orienting to my new job and entered a home with my orientation nurse for the home health company I'm going to work for. While getting out my equipment, I noticed a familiar face in a picture on the wall.

"Isn't that Ricky Lindsey?" I asked.

"Yes," the lady replied. "Did you know him?"

"Yes Ma'am," I said. "He graduated Thompson High School the year before me."

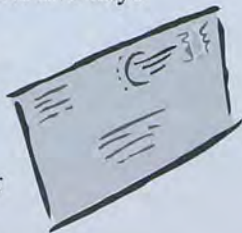
I had never met Rick's family and had just a casual acquaintance with him during school. Some classes and phys ed. But he was quiet and personable . . . easy to talk to.

I remember how saddened I was when we heard he had been killed in RVN while I was stationed at Fort Bragg in November 1969. But I was focused on my own impending trip there and did not dwell on it too much.

Rick became the only person from my high school to die in Vietnam.

I sat with Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey for far longer than I should have. The orientation nurse understood.

Mrs. Lindsey told me how Rick had been drafted and was thinking about trying to avoid it by going to the



## Term is 'hold' baggage

I think it's "hold" baggage as when (World War II) you got back by some faster method, but your baggage came home in the "hold" of a cargo ship, the hold being the "lower interior part of a ship (or airplane) in which cargo is stored."

As far as I know, "hold baggage" is still the term in use, but I have been out of the loop for a bunch of years.

G.T. Garcia

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This letter refers to the use of the term "whole baggage" in a letter published on Page 5 of the September/October issue of *The VHPA Newsletter*.

National Guard — and had even thought about going out of the country as so many others had done.

In the end, Rick could not turn his back on his responsibility and he went to serve.

He was killed attempting to pull a wounded comrade to safety. It happened on Nov. 14, 1969, and the Lindseys were notified on Nov. 16 . . . 30 years to the day of my home care visit.

The Army had given them Rick's medals in a display box that hangs on the wall. Mr. Lindsey, his body weak and mind failing, told me he didn't know what the medals were or what they were for. I took a few more minutes and explained to him what they were.

It was sad to think that after the Lindseys pass on, there will be no one to care for Rick's medals or to remember his sacrifice.

As in the case of so many elderly, Mr. Lindsey could not remember events of the morning, but his long-term memory was indelibly sharp. How tragic the loss of his son would be the sharpest, most lingering memory.

When finding out who my father was, Mr. Lindsey recanted to me stories of having played baseball with him and, as it turned out, relayed to me my father was one of his closest friends from childhood.

At that moment, I was very regretful I had not been closer to his son.

Each year, on the day before Veterans Day, the ROTC group from my old high school has a breakfast for all the veterans in the community. I have attended nearly every year, particularly when my son was part of that group.

For many years, I have asked the cadets if they knew the name of the only alumnus to die in Vietnam.

None do, even the ones who have heard it before. To them, it's just a name without a face or any other tangible bearing relative to their social circle of friends and rock stars. You know, really important people!

I'll try again next year, but maybe it's just important I remember.

Kenneth W. Bunn

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# Requiem display more than report

A chapter in American history involving the Vietnam War was written nearly 30 years ago.

It was a chapter that told a story in which you and I were all personally involved, and was captured in large part on film and presented to the American people as never before.

Every day, countless millions of Americans were exposed to the war as these graphic images were thrust into their homes "live and in color" on the evening news.

Pictures covered the front pages of newspapers across the nation and magazines featured disturbing images of the war on their covers and filled the interior pages with the black-and-white and, for the first time, extensive color photos.

We, as a nation, did not have exclusive rights to this coverage of the war and this type of exposure to war was duplicated again and again around the globe.

These photos were not obtained without peril to the photographers who took them. In fact, 135 photojournalists from many different countries paid the ultimate price while doing their job between 1945 and 1975 in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

You may have come in contact with some of them while you were in country. You may have even taken some of these photographers on some of your missions. Maybe on their very last mission.

In the early '90s, two men by the name of Tim Page and Horst Faas started to collect the work of many of the 135 photojournalists who died.

Their first chore was to determine exactly who had died. This proved to be an extremely daunting task considering the photographers who had died were from so many different countries and no central reporting point to account for missing, dead and injured photojournalists ever existed.

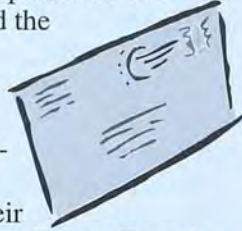
From their research and extensive work came the book "Requiem" "By the Photographers Who Died in Vietnam and Indochina."

This book was not meant to be a definitive work on the war, but a tribute to those who died and an acknowledgement of the fine work these individuals produced. They were true artists and masters of their craft.

To their colleagues, they loomed larger than life. They were to their profession the type of individual those up-and-coming photographers were striving to become.

In retrospect, and especially with the wisdom of time, we look at the pictures of those photographers and how young they were and think how young we really were, oh, how very young we all were.

In the introduction to the "Requiem," David Halberstam wrote:



## VHPA does a good job with Directory, newsletter

Just a short note to say what a great job the VHPA staff has done in developing the Membership Directory and newsletter for 1999-2000.

I have been a life member for several years now and I am amazed at the job the staff has done in putting together such a worthwhile organization for the benefit of its members. I know it takes a lot of time and energy to do what you do.

Keep up the good work!

Charles A. Uhlich  
Dolphin 14  
174 AHC

**EDITOR'S NOTE: The Membership Directory and the newsletter are put together by volunteers who are members of the VHPA.**

**Aside from the cost of printing, supplies and mailing, work on the directory and newsletter is free.**

"We have spent much of the past 20-25 years learning to forget or at least learning to soften those chapters in our lives. Saigon is mercifully distant, a place that belonged to the younger men and women we once were, the young, eager, scared journalist clad in Catina fatigues, scrambling to get to Tan San Nhut to get aboard the Hueys going into battle, terrified we might get there too late to get aboard, terrified we might get there in time to get aboard."

He then went on to write a statement about journalists this book honors, but ended up speaking to each of us in a very personal way:

"We are all older now, sedate men and women in our 50s and 60s, living in civilized settings, leading ordinary, rather mundane lives. Yet for most of us, the memory is always there, just beneath the surface; when we open a book like 'Requiem' and read it now in our handsome apartments in the Western cities in which we live, the past still lurks. And as we read, we are first flooded by these images of the past, and then we are surrounded by a terrible stillness, a special silence produced by the most relentless of all forces, the power of memory."

When Horst Faas and Tim Page assembled this book, they also created two set of prints totaling nearly 300 photographs. These enlarged prints are certainly worthy of a gallery exhibit and that's just what has happened.

One set currently is touring the country and is expected to grace the Vietnam Art Center in Chicago later next year. The second set of prints just finished a six-week exhibit at the Kentucky History Center in Frankfort.

During the exhibit at the center, some 12,000 people came to visit the "Requiem." The mood was always somber and it was always quiet; actually it was more like visiting a shrine or memorial.

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## Continued from Page 6

But more importantly than playing the numbers game of counting the people who came to the exhibit, was the makeup of those visitors who attended. Most of the visitors were of high school age, some were younger.

In fact, history classes that normally cover that period in history in the springtime of the year came to the center between Oct. 1 and Nov. 14 to take advantage of the display. Some of those schools traveled a considerable distance to attend.

Throughout the six-week stay, many Vietnam vets from a variety of MOS and service backgrounds made themselves available when the school groups were attending the exhibit. They were there to speak to the groups in a classroom setting prior to going into the display and then made themselves available to answer the many questions the students had while inside.

Gentlemen, I can say with all certainty the one thing I took away from the experience of working with these young people is the view of the war and those of us who served our country has drastically changed over these past 30 years. Those teen-agers now have a fascination with the war you might never have imagined would happen in our lifetime.

Additionally, their profound respect for our generation and our service to our country is something I hope each and every one of you can personally experience.

They understand that each and every one of us that served could have ended up there on The Wall, and every one of us was willing to end up there. Maybe not for the entire tour, maybe not every minute of every day, but at many points of reckoning along the way.

So, where am I going with this? What's the point? Well, actually it's simple.

In early 1998, a man by the name of Richard Lennon spearheaded a campaign to bring one of the sets of prints to Kentucky for display to the public.

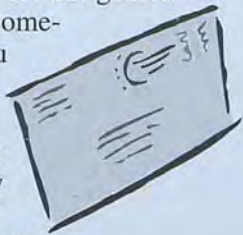
When finished, the prints and the entire display would be donated to the people of Vietnam from the people of Kentucky. This donation goes to Vietnam with no strings attached, no hidden agenda, and no other purpose than to honor all journalists who paid the ultimate price for their service.

It would be fair to say this project consumed Richard's life. Heck, any project of this magnitude would probably do exactly the same thing to any one of us.

Now comes the culmination of his work and the work of the committee assembled for this project.

In early 2000, the set of prints will be shipped from Kentucky to Vietnam via Hong Kong. United Parcel Service has donated the transportation services to take the nearly 3,000-pound shipment to Hong Kong and turn it over to the Vietnamese for the final leg to Hanoi.

The exhibit will be set up in Hanoi and plans are to open in early March. A group of individuals from Kentucky,



which may include the governor, will join Horst Faas and Tim Page to attend the dedication and opening of the exhibit in Hanoi.

In the past I have looked at advertisements for travel to Vietnam with a bit of wonderment and curiosity. I mentally toyed with the idea of "going back" someday, but never really made it a goal.

Now, here I am on the eve of such an adventure and to top it off, the journey starts in Hanoi. All I can say is not in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would visit Hanoi.

I go back not to open old wounds, but to see that part of the world in a different light. We all knew it was a beautiful country, but since we were not there on a tourist visa, those thoughts usually didn't last too long.

This time I have the opportunity to take my wife and I'm excited she is joining me in this adventure. We have shared so much in our life together during these past 29 years and to share this experience is truly wonderful.

On the other hand, there are certain foods and spices/seasoning I avoided on my last "visit" and I intend to avoid them this time. I'm certain after a brief introduction my wife will get from her sense of smell, she will do exactly the same.

I hope to have more to share with you at a later time. If there are any of you who have ventured back I would appreciate hearing from you on some of the dos and don'ts, some things to see, and some to avoid.

Please contact me via e-mail at: [REDACTED]

Bob Hamilton

## Couple had great time at Nashville reunion

First, let me thank Mike Streeper for hunting me down and getting me to join VHPA. My wife and I had a great time in Nashville.

With all the swagger about, I had to explain to her who we scout pilots could possibly look up to. Here is the story:

*I was an FNG sitting in the club, quaffing Black Label from a rusty can, asking a grizzled veteran (read baby-*

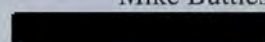
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## Pilot's friend seeks information on death

The purpose in writing this e-mail to you is to find out if you might be able to put me in touch with other pilots who were in Vietnam about the time a very close and dear friend of mine was killed in a helicopter mid-air collision.

His name is WO Jerry H. Johnson, 174th Aviation Company, Vietnam, Feb. 16, 1947-June 13, 1968.

Mike Buttles





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faced, blond 20 years old) with a bushy mustache, the same question.

I mean, after all, we knew we were the guys with the brass ones flying low and slow. He then relayed the following tale.

I cannot vouch for this incident, but I don't see how it can't have happened.

It seemed that prior to my arrival, the unit had been flying cover for a ground unit out of Dong Tam. They must have had a predawn battle plan they wouldn't deviate from, because they ignored the scout warnings of an ambush ahead. They apparently walked into a horseshoe ambush, and were taking many casualties.

They called in Dustoff from somewhere around Saigon. This is the telling radio discourse:

From the air: "This is Dustoff, over."

From the ground: "Roger, Dustoff, we have wounded, over."

From the air: "Roger, we are one mile, pop smoke."

From the ground: "Negative, if we pop smoke, we'll draw fire."

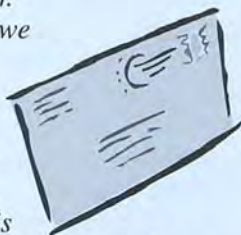
From the air: "You wait till I set this freakin' helicopter down next to you. You'll know what drawing fire really is."

From the ground: "Roger, smoke's out."

Well, I knew who his hero was.

In the next year, I would come to understand.

CW2 Paul Patry  
C/7/1 Comanche 18  
Vinh Long 69-70



## Veterans Day memorable as usual in nation's capital

Hi, everyone.

Veterans Day in Washington, DC, is always memorable. This year was no exception. The Family Contacts Committee (Jim Schueckler, Jack Taber and I) did the name rubbings that were requested of us.

Certain moments, you never forget. I remember the lady Jack mentioned in an earlier post, a woman in a jean jacket with smudged makeup and teary eyes, asking him if he could do one more that was up a little high for her.

I saw her the next day, too. I wish I had asked her who he was. I touched 27 names that were on a list I took out there, which I had organized before leaving home by panel and line number. And I laid down a "Happy 50th Birthday" memorial to my brother, David.

There were lots of school kids, lots of parents, lots of teen-agers — and lots of veterans. The ceremonies consisted of the Armed Forces Color Guard presenting the colors, remarks by Philip Martineau, president and CEO of Levi Strauss, and Paul Delrossi, chairman and CEO of General

## IBDA seeking pilots

Request your assistance in contacting all the former L-19/O1 pilots you may know of out there.

The International Bird Dog Association (IBDA), is sponsoring the once in a lifetime 50th anniversary of the L-19/O1 next summer.

We want to contact as many L-19/O1 pilots from the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corp as possible for this event.

Have them contact me at DSN: 367-6067. Comm. (404) 464-6067. Thanks in advance.

Alan R. "Al" O'Hollaren

Flight Safety Technician

FORSCOM, DCSOPS Aviation Division

Cinema Theaters, who came to the financial rescue of the Women's Memorial.

Diane Carlson Evans, founder of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Project, was slated to speak, but had lost her voice. John McDermott performed the moving song, "The Wall," and the keynote address was by Heather French, Miss America 2000. She explained her work on behalf of disabled vets, stemming from her dad being one.

I watched the ceremonies proudly seated with my brother David's Cobra "high bird" pilot, John Powell, two of his co-workers at AmVets, and Lisa Vad, daughter of Joe Vad D 1/4 Cav KIA 11/6/69. It was the first Veterans Day Lisa had spent at the Memorial.

I wish I could have seen the television coverage, as I understand we were picked up by the camera — including my flight jacket with my braid hanging down in back.

This was my fourth year to be at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Veterans Day.

It's quite a mixed bag because of David's birthday being on Veterans Day. But in that beautiful pattern the universe has, which we are privileged to glimpse once in a while, there is absolutely no other possible day in the calendar year that he could have been born, in my opinion, that would better exemplify what his short life has meant to my long(er) one.

An opportunity to embrace living veterans. I am now exactly twice as old as my big brother David was when he shipped off to Vietnam in June 1969.

So I go out to Washington, DC, to visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, and be among the living whom The Wall brings together. I really feel at home there now, wearing my green flight jacket that was given to me by the Vietnam helicopter pilots and crew members who took me in back in 1997, the successor to the same style flight jacket David was wearing the last time I saw him in June 1969. (That one was "military issue — returned to supply.")

Thank goodness people I end up talking with usually feel comfortable enough to ask me about my long search for his friends, and how it has turned out. I still have very little to say about David, and I usually gab more about how

Continued on Page 9



## Continued from Page 8

I came to be where I'm at, honored to be able to sit for a few days a year among a band of brothers that means so much to me.

I have a hard time verbalizing the nature of the strong connections I feel with those who have allowed me to travel back partway to 1969 with them, because it's not all about 1969, or 1970; some of it's about today and that's what ties into Veterans Day — a day we honor LIVING veterans.

I keep thinking of Mark Herring's words on VHFCN about Veterans Day being for the living. To be able to know someone who was in the same place at the same time as my brother, and more than that, to know that they are enjoying some degree of happiness and success in life, brings me the most profound feeling of contentment I've ever had. It satisfies my deep need to know something that was a part of his world, emerged, survived and flourished.

I know a certain amount of remembrance of the fallen is always part of Veterans Day, but Memorial Day is a better focus for that.

I think David would have gotten a big kick out of all the people visiting The Wall on "his birthday" — as I do. But I feel the guys who are there standing in front of the thing are the ones who really need to be celebrated, because each of them COULD have ended up there, and every one was willing to end up there. Maybe not for the whole tour, maybe not every minute of every day — but at many points of reckoning along the way.

My other brothers had some fun in the 1st Cav hospitality suite, with a poor old guy, a Korea War vet who could not quite figure out my jacket with the warrant officer bars, C troop and Cav patches, Purple Heart patch, etc.

He told one of them he didn't think we had any female warrants.

Brian Piggott leaned over and told the guy, "She wasn't a SHE when he was THERE. Her name was John." And made a "snip-snip" motion with his fingers. You should have seen the guy's face. They had him going for a while and from then on he called me "John."

I also attended the 1st Cav Ia Drang Dinner, hosted by Lt. Gen. Hal Moore, that brings the likes of Capt. George Forrest, First Lt. Larry Gwin, Joe Galloway, Second Lt. Bob Jeanette, Spec. 4 Jack Smith, and all the rest of those brave guys who were involved in the famous battles back in 1965, all together in one room. Talk again about heroes. A lot of Cav Pride in that place.

Sometimes the most meaningful moments pass by quietly.

I was explaining how I had polished one of David's pins for hours, not knowing it was supposed to be dark in color. These are symbols you guys know about, but we family don't often have a clue.

I told Charlie Rains, VHCMA director, about another item that was in his belongings I couldn't interpret: Two



pieces of orange felt with black ribbons down the middle. If he understood me correctly, Charlie told me they were "leader tabs," indicating that David was at some point a leader in his class — in something. Wow. I never knew — I'm proud of ya, bro. Charlie, thank you for helping me know David a little better. This is how it works, guys.

It was sure great seeing everyone again. Eric Walsh brought along two fellow Canadians, Les Brown and Davin McLaughlin. Everyone helped make a still-living vet's daughter, Heidi Baker, feel welcome. Bill Williamson and Sue, Buddy Walker and family, Chris White, Ken Boling, Frank Reilly and Mary, Mel and Susan Canon and boys Lance and Jordan, Mike Sloniker, Hank Llewellyn, my brother's C.O. Bob Tredway, Don Armstrong, I know I'm leaving out several folks and lots of stuff. The time was all too short.

I appreciate all the VHFCN traffic and messages of remembrance on Veterans Day. You are my heroes. I love you guys and welcome home.

Julie Kink  
Sister of WO1 David Kink  
C Troop 1/9th Cav  
KIA Aug. 3, 1969

## Ceremony to memorialize soldiers killed by sappers

On Feb. 10, there will be a ceremony at the Army Transportation Museum, Fort Eustis, VA, to memorialize 22 soldiers of the 140th Transportation Detachment (Cargo Helicopter Field Maintenance) who were killed when Viet Cong sappers blew up their barracks in Qui Nhon Vietnam on the night of Feb. 10, 1965.

Their barracks was the Viet Cong hotel, a four-story hotel leased by the U.S. government in the port city of Qui Nhon. This tragedy, in which nearly half of the unit was killed or injured, was one of the worst losses of American lives experienced in a single incident in the war for the Army and the Transportation Corps.

The soldiers killed in this incident include:

Spec. 5 James Blair Alexander Jr.  
Pfc. Paul Eugene Bays  
Pfc. Robert Joseph Betz  
Spec. 5 David Nelson Clayton  
Pfc. Delmer Lee Ferris  
Pfc. Dallas Lawson  
Spec. 5 Robert Sherman Mosier  
Spec. 5 Harry Emilus Rowley  
Spec. 4 Robert Lee Simon, Jr.  
S.Sgt. Francis J. Valkos  
Spec. 4 Lavon Stephen Wilson

Spec. 5 Everett Lee Anderson  
Spec. 4 Tommy Joe Belcher  
Spec. 4 Horace Cleveland Collins  
Spec. 5 Clarence Leroy Coleman  
Spec. 5 Glenn Howell Kelley  
Pfc. Larry Byron McClanahan  
Pfc. Walter L. Rickhard  
Spec. 5 Ernest M. Schultz, III  
Spec. 4 Harry Lee Summers  
Pfc. Melvin Lester Walters  
Pfc. Floyd Wynn

The 140th Transportation Detachment provided aircraft field maintenance support for, and was deployed to Vietnam with, the 8th Transportation Company (Light Helicopter) (H-21) in December 1961. These units, along with the 57th Transportation Company (Light Helicopter) and the 98th Transportation Detachment, were the first U.S.

Continued on Page 10



## Continued from Page 9

Army helicopter units to arrive in Vietnam.

The names of the 22 soldiers have been engraved on the Memorialization Wall located in the entry lobby of the U.S. Army Transportation Museum.

The memorialization was sponsored through a donation from Northrop Gruman Technical Services Inc.

Don Joyce

## Vietnam Center requests proposals for papers

The Vietnam Center at Texas Tech University requests proposals for papers to be presented at a conference on the Overseas Vietnamese Experience at the International Cultural Center of Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, March 31-April 1.

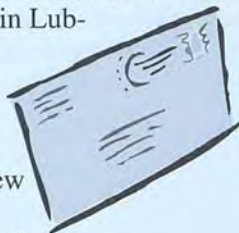
Topics for papers can include any topic related to the overseas Vietnamese experience.

Papers representing all points of view are welcome.

It is the Vietnam Center's established policy to encourage active participation by graduate students; proposals by them will receive favorable consideration.

We encourage papers relating to all aspects of the overseas Vietnamese experience; however, we particularly seek papers examining the following themes:

1. Building a new life: Issues in the challenges posed in adjustment and acculturation of overseas Vietnamese.
2. Community building and the politics of Vietnamese communities in host countries.
3. Second-generation overseas Vietnamese: Their role in the community and issues relating to them.



4. Relations between overseas Vietnamese and their home country.

Individuals interested in presenting papers are encouraged to submit a one-page outline proposal to Dr. James R. Reckner, director of the Vietnam Center.

Submissions can be electronically to Dr. Reckner at [redacted] or [vietnam.center@ttu.edu](mailto:vietnam.center@ttu.edu), or via mail to:

**James R. Reckner**  
The Vietnam Center  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, TX 79409-1045

Telephone: (806) 742-3742

Fax: (806) 742-8664

<http://www.ttu.edu/~vietnam>

James R. Reckner  
The Vietnam Center  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, TX 79409-1045

## Book being prepared on helicopter markings

I'm gathering material for a book on U.S. military helicopter markings (commonly mis-called "nose art"). Contact with anybody who has photos or slides they'd be willing to loan would be appreciated.

All loaned material gets copied in-house and returned within 48 hours of receipt.

Lennart Lundh  
Historical Research  
16236 S. Haven Ave.  
Orland Hills, IL 60477-5949

## Helicopter pilot dies subduing gunman

A Vietnam helicopter pilot — shot during a rampage at an Anaheim, CA, hospital — died after helping overpower the gunman.

While Ronald Robertson struggled with the armed man, hundreds of patients and hospital employees ducked for cover and ran for the exits, police reported.

Robertson, environmental services director at the West Anaheim Medical Center, died Sept. 14 in the hospital emergency room. He was 50.

Two other hospital employees also were shot to death by the gunman, police said.

Robertson was shot in the chest

*"The potential was there for a lot more carnage," one police sergeant told the Orange County Register.*

when he confronted the gunman, Dung D. Trinh, who was carrying a .38-caliber revolver, another pistol and 50 rounds of ammunition.

Although wounded, Robertson grabbed Trinh, slowing him so others could subdue the gunman.

During the struggle, Robertson was shot two more times.

Before being confronted by Robertson, the gunman shot nursing

assistant Marlene Mustaffa and pharmacist Vince Rosetti in the head.

Officers said Robertson's heroic actions may have saved many lives.

"The potential was there for a lot more carnage," one police sergeant told the *Orange County Register*.

Police said Trinh went to the hospital hours after his mother died of a heart attack, looking for employees who had cared for her several months earlier when she had hip surgery.

Robertson, who lived in Santa Monica, CA, served as a helicopter pilot with the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam. During his tour, he was shot down twice.



# Complete, then mail/fax to VHPA Headquarters

## Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Membership Directory Survey.

Please mail or fax your completed survey to VHPA Headquarters, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621 or fax to (916) 966-8743. For results to be tabulated, a copy of the original form is required. Please DO NOT e-mail a response or provide answers verbally by telephone. Surveys received by March 1, 2000, will be included in the tabulated results.

1. Did you receive a copy of the 1999 VHPA Membership Directory?

Yes. . . . . ☐ 1 No. . . . . ☐ 2

2. Did you receive a copy of the 1998 VHPA Membership Directory?

Yes. . . . . ☐ 1 No. . . . . ☐ 2

3. How soon after you received your 1999 Directory did you use the CD?

I Do Not Have Access to Computer. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 1	I Have the CD, but Have Not	
CD Broken During Shipping. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 2	Installed It. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 7
Within 2 Days After Receiving It. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 3	Installation/Viewing Too	
Within 2 Weeks After Receiving It. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 4	Complicated, Didn't Use CD. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 8
Within 2 Months After Receiving It. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 5		
I Just Installed It Because of This			
Survey. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 6		

4. If you did not use the CD, select from the following reasons:

I Don't Have a Computer. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 1	Computers I Have Access to Do Not	
I am Not Interested In Installing CD. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 2	Have CD Player. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 4
Computers I Have Access to Not		Other. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 5
Microsoft Windows Compatible. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 3		

5. The CD contains various types of information. How important is each item to you? Please rate each.

	<u>Very Important</u> 1	<u>Just OK</u> 2	<u>Of No Value</u> 3
1. Combat Unit Index. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Army Flight Class Index. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Person Search. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Call Sign Database. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. History of 1972 Easter Offensive. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Old VHPA Newsletters. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Print and Data Export. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. For cost reasons, the Combat Unit and Flight Class indexes are available on CD this year.

These indexes were published in the 1998 Directory. (Check all that apply.)

Indexes On CD Work Fine for Me. . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	Don't Use Flight Class Index. . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
I Miss Indexes Printed In Directory. . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	I Miss Quick Lookup When Don't	
Don't Use Combat Unit Index. . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	Have Access to CD. . . . .	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

7. The CD was distributed to provide new value to members without increasing Directory printing expenses. Check the box that best expresses your opinion.

Like Idea of Using CD and Printed		Feel Left Out Because I Can't Use CD. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 2
Directory. . . . .	<input type="radio"/> 1		



# Complete, then mail/fax to VHPA Headquarters

8. Please check all that apply to you:

	<u>Yes</u> 1	<u>No</u> 2
1. I Have Access to Computer With CD Drive. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I Have E-Mail At Home. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I Have E-Mail At Work. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I Have Internet Access. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I Have Visited VHPA Website. . . . .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Experience shows it is not cost effective to publish printed versions of VHPA's historical and flight class information except for articles in the newsletter and Membership directory. (Check all that apply.)

<i>It is Important the VHPA Seek Cost Effective Ways to Print This Information. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
<i>I am Only Interested In the Newsletter, Reunion and a Basic Directory. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
<i>VHPA Should Get Out of History Business. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
<i>VHPA Can Expand Services If Dues Remain Same. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
<i>I Would Favor 10 Percent Dues Increase to Make More Information Available. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

10. What is your opinion of photos used in the Membership Directory? (Check all that apply.)

<i>Internal Photo Selections Good. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<i>Prefer More Photos of Equipment. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
<i>Cover Photo Selections Good. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<i>Prefer More Photos of Landmarks. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
<i>Prefer More Photos of People. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<i>Photos of Damaged Aircraft Are</i>		
<i>Prefer More Photos of Helicopters. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<i>Appropriate. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7

11. What is your opinion of the Year 2000 Membership Directory? (Check all that apply.)

<i>Directory Should Follow Same Approach As 1999 Directory, Without Dues Increase. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
<i>No-Frills "Telephone Book"-Style Directory is Adequate. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
<i>Instead of CD, Additional Information Should Be Put On Website. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
<i>VHPA Should Retain CD and Put Additional Information On Website. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
<i>Individual Call Signs Should Be Printed In Directory. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
<i>VHPA Membership Numbers Should Be Printed In Directory. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
<i>E-Mail Addresses Should Be Printed In Directory. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	7
<i>I Favor Small Dues Increase to Support More Historical Activities. . . . .</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	8

12. How many years have you been a member of the VHPA?

13. Which of the following categories contains your annual household income?

<i>\$14,999 or Less. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	1	<i>\$55,000 - \$64,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	6
<i>\$15,000 - \$24,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	2	<i>\$65,000 - \$74,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	7
<i>\$25,000 - \$34,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	3	<i>\$75,000 - \$84,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	8
<i>\$35,000 - \$44,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	4	<i>\$85,000 - \$94,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	9
<i>\$45,000 - \$54,999. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	5	<i>\$95,000 or More. . . . .</i>	<input type="radio"/>	10



## Taps

### Joel A. Barbalock

Joel A. Barbalock of Gulf Shores, AL, died Aug. 19 after a three-year battle with multiple myeloma. He was 54.

Joel was in flight class 68-1 and transitioned into Cobras after flight school.

He spent 18 months in-country flying with D/1/10 Cav, 4th Infantry Division.

While in-country, he received a direct commission to first lieutenant.

Upon his return from Vietnam, Joel was stationed at Fort Hood, TX.

After completing his military service, Joel owned a bicycle shop, which he operated until his retirement in 1993.

He was an avid golfer and looked forward to his retirement. He lived on a golf course and enjoyed playing golf 5-6 times a week.

He is survived by his wife, Dottie, of the family home in Gulf Shores.

Tom Andrews

### Steve Canaday

Steve Canaday, an Army pilot who served in Vietnam, has died.

Steve was a good pilot and loved flying. He was a great guitar player (played guitar for the Ozark Mountain Daredevils), car enthusiast, and camera buff.

The only thing I ever held against Steve was the fact his 759 had "FWO" (fixed wing only) stamped all over. He flew U-21s in Vietnam and almost all fixed-wing aircraft in the Army inventory that was located in Europe.

We tried to get him to qualify in the OH-58, but he said helicopters were too hard to fly and that he didn't feel he could catch on.

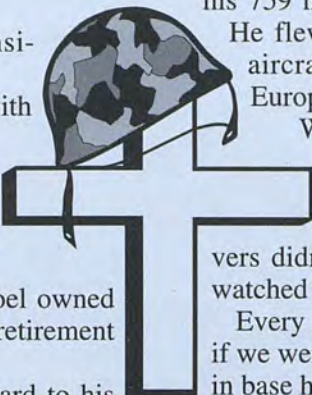
The real reason was the fixed-wing drivers didn't go to the field due to landing areas, and he watched us trek off in our helicopters for war games.

Every now and then he would show up at some airfield if we were close by and complain about the heat being off in base housing.

All of us who knew Steve will miss him. Most people assume that if you were in the Army and flew, you just had to be a helicopter pilot.

Gary Wayne Winsett

See TAPS, Page 14



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(add \$3.00 shipping & handling for pendants and lapel pins)

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\*additional items include Swiss Army Knife with VHP

Emblem, VHP Shirts, and VHPA Logo Mouse Pads.

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## Taps

Continued from Page 13

### Arvine Coleman

Arvine Coleman of Pomona, CA, died Dec. 1.

In Vietnam, he served with the 134th Assault Helicopter Company in 1969-70, and had developed and maintained the webpage for the unit.

Arvine was in the unit when I was one of the platoon leaders and I knew him then to be a competent pilot, and excellent person. He never changed through the years: Always the good, caring person for others.

He later served with the 61st Assault Helicopter Company in Vietnam. He graduated with class 68-23.

Coleman attended the reunion in Nashville this summer thinking he had hurt himself working on his motor home, but after leaving discovered he had a malignancy. Following treatment, another malignancy developed.

James G. DeWitt  
7/17 Air Cav  
134 AHC  
Demon 26



### Clarence A. Cruse

CW4 Clarence A. Cruse of Indian Mound, TN, died about a month ago.

In Vietnam, he served with the 117th Assault Helicopter Company in 1963-64.

Cruse's last assignment was with the 5th Transportation Battalion at Fort Campbell, KY. After retirement, he worked civilian maintenance.

He was a Chinook pilot. I flew with him many times. He is missed.

Ted Jenkins  
5th Transportation Battalion, 1972-76

### Robert K. Edgley II

Robert K. Edgley II of Bloomfield, KY, died at his home on Oct. 26 after a lengthy heart illness. He was 55.

Bob flew with A/229, 1st Cav and with the 281st Assault Helicopter Company in 1967, 1968 and 1969.

He then flew with Air America in RVN.

John Korsbeck

### Jack L. Finn

Retired CWO Jack L. Finn died Oct. 20 at a Temple, TX, hospital.

He retired from the Army in 1980 after 24 years of service and two tours in Vietnam.

He graduated from flight school in class 66-13, and served with the 155th Assault Helicopter Company in 1966-67, and the 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company in 1969-70.

### David A. Herbert

David A. Herbert, 55, of Manasquan, NJ, died Nov. 2 at Brick Hospital.

Herbert was a decorated Vietnam helicopter pilot who was honored last year for rescuing a girl from drowning.

During his tour in Vietnam, he flew with A/229th and the 1st Signal Brigade in 1969-70.

While in Vietnam, Herbert received the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, the Bronze Star Medal and the Army Commendation Medal.

Herbert was a helicopter pilot for the Monmouth County Shade Tree Commission.

He was a 1962 graduate of Freehold High School, and attended Utah University.

### James F. Hudkins

James F. Hudkins, who we all knew as "Hud," of Baxter, TN, died at home on May 6 after a long and courageous battle with illness.

Jim retired from the Army after 32 years of service.

Some of his many military assignments included three tours of duty in Vietnam, two tours of duty in Germany, and one tour of duty in Ankara, Turkey. Some of the units he served in were the 82nd Airborne Division, 5th and 7th Special Forces, and the 1st Aviation Brigade.

He was a fixed- and rotary-wing pilot, instructor and instrument examiner.

Some of his military honors were the Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal and the Air Medal for Valor.

I first met Jim at Fort Wolters, then served with him in the 119th Assault Helicopter Company at Pleiku.

Not only was he a great pilot, but he was one who always set the example and unselfishly gave of himself to all.

The Army got a good man when it recruited Jim and many owe their lives to his heroic deeds. He will be missed.

He is survived by his wife, Martha Jean of Baxter; a daughter, Lori Tincher; and a son, Bryan Hudkins.

Jack Hawkins  
Alligator 422  
119th Assault Helicopter Company

### Anthony G. Kusilka

Retired Army Chief Warrant Officer Anthony G. Kusilka died Sept. 29 in his Fayetteville, NC, home.

See TAPS, Page 15



## Taps

Continued from Page 14

He was 70.

Kusilka was an Army aviator who retired after 30 years of military service.

He was a member of the 10th Special Forces group and was a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Kusilka is survived by his wife, Jerri F. Kusilka of Fayetteville; a daughter, Robin of Fayetteville; and three sons, Harry, Carry and Lane, all Fayetteville.

### James Thomas Moran

James Thomas Moran, 49, of Port Orange, FL, died Oct. 18.

At the time of his death, he was director of flight operations at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach.

Moran was born in Glen Cove, NY.

During his tour as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, he



served with C/3/17 Cav. He graduated from flight school in class 69-35.

Moran was a graduate of the Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University extension campus at Fort Rucker, AL.

Survivors include his wife Susan, and two sons, Patrick and Nicholas, both of Port Orange.

### Harold Cameron Rittenhouse

Harold Cameron "Crow" Rittenhouse of Reedville, VA, died Aug. 2 after a two-year battle with cancer. He was 52.

He graduated from flight school with class 69-31. In Vietnam, he served with F/8 Cav in 1970-71.

He had been looking forward to the "Blueghost" reunion in Washington, DC, this year, and had planned to be a part of it.

He is survived by his wife and an 11-year-old child.

### William J. Zimmerman

Col. William J. Zimmerman died in the crash of a UH-1 on Nov. 23 at Islip MacArthur Airport on Long Island, NY.

Bill was awarded the Purple Heart Medal and the Dis-

See TAPS, Page 16

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## Taps

reunion in Washington, DC.

Jim Baker

### Continued from Page 15

tinguished Flying Cross during his tour with the 119th Assault Helicopter Company in Vietnam.

He and I have been flying together for 25 years and he was a very dear friend.

CW4 James G. Freeman

B CO, 3/142 AVN NYARNG

### James M. Brown Jr. Robert L. George

The deaths of James M. Brown Jr., 52, and Robert L. "Bob" George, 50, are being reported together. They shared a great deal in life and, in the end, death.

Bob was a warrant officer from East Stroudsburg, PA, and graduated in class 68-523. Jim was a captain who resided in Satellite Beach, FL.

Both flew gunships with the 281st Assault Helicopter Company in 1969-70. Jim was the gunship ("Wolfpack") platoon leader.

On Thanksgiving Day 1969, Jim and Bob were on a two-ship mission in the Central Highlands of western II Corps. The ship in which Jim was flying went down due to small arms fire. The crew escaped injury, but was immediately attacked by enemy ground troops.

Bob was the aircraft commander of the trail ship and laid down suppressive fire until he was out of rockets and ammunition. He then continued circling to burn fuel and dump his weapons.

As Jim and the crew on the ground were about to be overrun, Bob landed and rescued them. He got out with eight people on his UH-1C. His ship received 21 holes during the action, but no one was hit.

Bob later received the Silver Star for his actions, and he and Jim remained lifelong friends.

Jim and Bob both left the Army after Vietnam, but they kept in contact over the years.

In June 1997, Jim was diagnosed with cancer. Six months later, in December, Bob also was diagnosed with cancer.

They fought a different battle together this time and supported each other through long phone conversations.

Jim Brown died on Feb. 1; two weeks later on Feb. 17, Bob George died. Both men were buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Several years ago, Duane "Tubby" Brudvig, the doorgunner of the crew rescued along with Jim Brown that day, wrote the following poem about Bob George and the incident. The poem was presented to Bob at a mini-

### He Saved Us

*He loved to fly  
The answer came fast  
And he was very good  
The answer was there  
He would always try  
From this hell we would be cast  
To do the best he could  
Back up in the air*

*When things got tough  
He had landed to save  
And it looked bad  
His buddies in trouble  
He would play it rough  
He kept us from the grave  
And give it all he had  
By bursting the enemy's bubble*

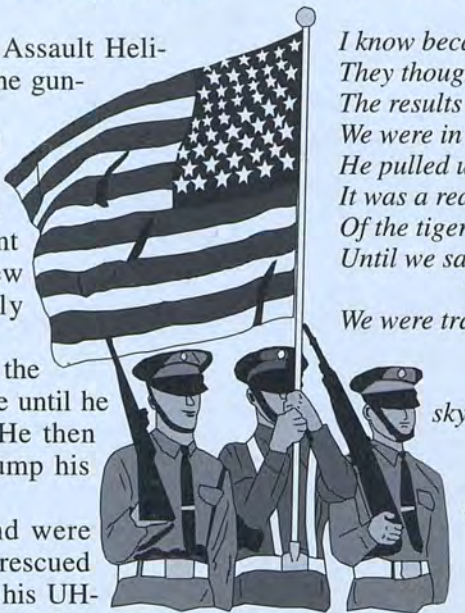
*I know because I saw  
They thought they had us  
The results of his bravery  
We were in their death grip  
He pulled us from the jaw  
It was a real circus  
Of the tiger of war's slavery  
Until we saw Bob's ship*

*We were trapped on the ground  
We all jumped aboard  
After they knocked us out of the  
sky  
To escape the attacks  
Our perimeter they began to surround  
And we left the horde  
And soon we were going to die  
Dead in their tracks*

*It didn't look good  
Up, up, and away from harm  
There wasn't a way out  
Bob took his ship and men  
We fought the best we could  
It felt so good and warm*

*With time running short  
We all made it back  
We were in great need  
To families and wives*

*To God we gave our report  
Because of a pilot from Wolfpack  
With the utmost of speed  
We were all spared our lives*





Greetings:

# New Members Corner



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

VHPA Headquarters



## Would you like friendly websites in directory?

The Directory Committee is collecting information on "friendly websites" and "friendly associations" to be published in the 2000 VHPA Directory.

The term "friendly" means members of the VHPA might be interested in this organization and the organization is aligned with the VHPA's historical, social, and non-political direction.

Please contact Mike Law at [law@vhpa.org](mailto:law@vhpa.org) for more details. Clearly our highest priority is to identify all of the Vietnam helicopter-related associations, websites, e-mail addresses, newsletters, and reunions. Examples are: the 7/17th Cav website at [members.tripod.com/aircavalry17/](http://members.tripod.com/aircavalry17/);

*Our next priority is to identify associations, museums and websites for the major commands helicopter units supported.*

the fantastic website for all Marine Corps helicopter units at [www.popasmoke.com/](http://www.popasmoke.com/), the 2/20th ARA website at [www.gwi.net/~blue-max](http://www.gwi.net/~blue-max), and the Air America website at [www.air-america.org/](http://www.air-america.org/).

Basically, we want to know if you have a unit association formed, if the association has an e-mail address and/or mailing address, a website, a newsletter, a reunion.

Our next priority is to identify associations, museums and websites for the major commands helicopter units supported. Examples of large units are the Americal Division or the 9th Infantry Division's Mobile Riverine Force.

The Starlight Association (everyone who fought in or supported Operation Starlight in August 1965) is an example of a focused group of interest to the VHPA.

The goal is to replace the current Significant Contributors Section (printed on Page 157 in the 1999 Directory) with this roster of "friendly associations, websites, reunions."

**Mike Law**  
Directory editor

## VHPA business directory

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**Richard (Rick) Yood, CAS**  
(Gladiator 21)

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# History to focus on northern I Corps

For the VHPA 2000 Membership Directory, we will be tying together some past history and compiling some new.

The focus of the 2000 directory's history will be northern I Corps from Da Nang north from 1964 to prior to the Spring Offensive of 1972 that was covered in the 1999 directory.

Your history will be in two versions: The usual 25 written pages of text in the directory and another CD ROM.

The 1999 CD ROM only used 10 percent of its capacity, so we will be adding more pictures and this time, digitized audio tapes made at the moment the history occurred.

This will truly be a representation of all I Corps helicopter units, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and the Coast Guard exchange pilots with the Air Force, Air America and the VNAF.

I want to start in 1964 when the Marines became active in the area with the CH-34s that were chronicled in a past VHPA history, the arrival of the UH-1A gunships from the UTT platoon that was attached to the 52nd Aviation Battalion, the influx of the Air Rescue and Recovery Service of the Air Force with focus on the Coast Guard exchange crews in the ARRS squadrons.

We can chronicle the Navy's SH-2

whose pilot was awarded the Medal of Honor.

I am getting audio tapes digitized for the CD ROM and we can include the audio tape of the HH-53 that was shot down by a MiG 17 firing an Atoll missile in 1970.

The Navy unit, HC-7, the Big Mothers who flew CH-3s off cruisers in the Gulf of Tonkin need to be recognized.

I can get the unit's history from the Naval Institute's "Proceedings" magazine which carried a two-part history of that search and rescue Navy squadron.

I Corps offers a wealth of history with buildup of Marine Corps units in 1965, the arrival of Army aviation units in 1966-68, the loss of the Special Forces Camp at Khe Sahn with aerial evacuation coming from USMC CH-34s, the arrival of the 1st Cavalry Division during Tet 1968, the 1st Cav units that assisted at Lang Vei, Operation Pegasus into Khe Sahn, the murderous combat assaults into the A Shau, the loss of the first CH-54 to ground fire, the buildup and arrival of the 101st Aviation Group, for starters.

With this directory, we can update the 1994 Lam Son 719 history with pictures and digitized audio tapes, and put it on the CD ROM, also.

I have four audio tapes of HH-53s

making rescues that can be included.

We have the opportunity to include the U.S. Air Force's 21st Special Operations Squadron, a unit that flew exclusively in Laos and the southern part of North Vietnam, coming into South Vietnam to refuel.

This is an opportunity for many units to reel in their history and get it into one living document.

What is needed from the membership to make this a success?

Stories about the formation of units that went into I Corps, from the early units, the Marines, the 1st Cavalry's movement to I Corps from Bong Son, the action at Hue that netted a Medal of Honor, the first trips into the A Shau by the 1/9 Cav, for a start.

I have documentation that shows the 227th AHC and the 229th AHC flew CCN missions in 1968, for example.

The best of all worlds is for the data to be sent via e-mail.

Send it any way you want to me, if you want your unit represented in the history that will be in the 2000 VHPA Membership Directory.

I will be contacting many members via e-mail and regular mail in this effort.

**Mike Sloniker**  
VHPA historian

## Advertising rates

Display advertising rates for the VHPA Newsletter are:

- Full page, \$500.
- One-half page, \$250.
- One-quarter page, \$125.
- Business card size, \$45.

Classified advertising is \$1 per line or \$7 per inch, whichever is highest.

Advertising revenue is used to help produce the Newsletter and limit the publication's dependence on membership dues.

## VHPA brief

### Ohio River chapter to meet

The Ohio River LZ Chapter will meet Feb. 25-27 in Louisville, KY.

Those interested in attending should register. Information, contact Bob Hamilton at [captbob757@aol.com](mailto:captbob757@aol.com).

### Newsletter deadlines for 2000

The following are deadlines for submitting items to *The VHPA Newsletter*:

- January/February 2000 — Jan. 4
- March/April 2000 — March 3
- May/June 2000 — May 2
- July/August 2000 — July 4
- September/October 2000 — Sept. 5
- November/December — Nov. 3



# Reunion has plenty for early birds

**JOHN POWELL**  
REUNION COMMITTEE

The VHPA 2000 Reunion, "A Capital Gathering," is well into the final planning stages for what appears to be the largest and, we hope, best one ever.

The first members to arrive in D.C. will get here on June 27 and the last to leave will not be gone until July 7.

June 27-29 there will be no formal events, but we will maintain an information/hospitality area for the early, early birds, as well as offer local tour events.

The first planned event, is the early bird social on June 30, with "Mrs. Foggybottom" as the entertainment.

Mrs. Foggybottom is a local comedy/political satire group that should give everyone a good laugh.

July 1 starts with the golf tournament and area tours, followed by an evening buffet with a DJ as the

Rooms were available at press time in the Grand Hyatt and the J.W. Marriott hotels.

For reservations, call:

**Grand Hyatt**  
**(800) 228-1234**  
**J.W. Marriott**  
**(800) 228-9290**

evening's entertainment.

On Sunday, July 2, we will have a wreath-laying ceremony at The Wall, followed by a barbecue picnic that includes chicken, turkey and ribs catered by Red Hot and Blue.

That evening we will be entertained by "The Fabulous Hubcaps," an oldies show group.

Monday, July 3 features the 5K run, the business session and the wives' function, with our annual ban-

quet and entertainment by "Tiffany" following that night.

During the day on Tuesday, July 4, there are no formal events, but everybody will need to go the Mall early for the fireworks display and concert. This is something no one will want to miss.

As a final note, as soon as schedules are available for the Kennedy Center, Ford's Theater, etc., I will let everyone know, in case tickets need to be purchased.

If you have not made hotel reservations, do it now! This will be the best time ever!

Don't miss our reunion!

It will be more fun than ducking mortar rounds in a revetment, I promise.



## United Airlines the official reunion carrier

United Airlines has been named the official airline of the VHPA reunion in Washington, DC, providing VHPA members with special discounts of up to 10 percent off its lowest fares.

You may book your flights through a travel agent or by calling United Airlines directly at **(800) 521-4041**. Refer to Meeting ID No. 582IJ for the discount.

You will receive a 5 percent discount off the lowest applicable dis-

count fare at the time of booking, including first class, or a 10 percent discount off midweek coach fares purchased seven days in advance.

An additional 5 percent discount will apply if tickets are purchased at least 60 days in advance of travel, giving a 10 percent discount to those who plan ahead.

This special offer applies to travel

on domestic segments of all United Airlines, United Express, and Shuttle by United flights.

Mileage plus members receive full credit for all miles flown to the VHPA Reunion.

The airline recommends making your reservations as early as possible to ensure

seats are available at the lowest possible price.



The latest reports on Year 2000 Reunion hotel rooms, events, transportation, and more are available on the VHPA website at:  
*[www.vhpa.org](http://www.vhpa.org)*



# VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

17th Annual Reunion Washington, DC June 30-July 5, 2000

## REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to: VHPA, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621

FAX signed credit card registration to: (916) 966-8743

Name:	Member No.:	Arrival date:	Departure date:
Wife/Guest name:		No. of children*:	Ages of children:
Names of additional guests:		How many reunions have you attended?	
Address:		Check here if notifying VHPA of an address change [ ]	
City:	State:	ZIP:	Phone: ( )

### REGISTRATION FEES

	No. of people	Price	Total
Registration before 4/30/2000*		@ \$ 35.00	
Registration after 5/1/2000*		@ \$ 45.00	
Total from sidebars	XXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXX	
Early Bird Reception (June 30)		@ \$15.00	
Buffet (July 1)		@ \$ 25.00	
Outdoor Barbecue (July 2)		@ \$ 25.00	
Ladies Function		@ \$ 30.00	
Banquet/Dance (July 3)		@ \$ 40.00	
Drink tickets			
Raffle ticket		@ \$ 50.00	
Dues (if not dues current)	1 year	@ \$ 30.00	
You can make 3 payments over 6-month Installment period if you wish	Life installment No. 1	@ \$150.00	
Complete Life Membership		@ \$450.00	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>			

INDICATE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE			
<b>Golf Tournament:</b> (July 1 — 7 a.m.) <b>Cost: \$85. Limit: 144 players.</b>			
<b>5k Run:</b> (July 3) <b>Cost: \$5</b>			
<b>T-shirts:</b>			
Qty.	Size	Price	Amount
	S	@ \$15.00	
	M	@ \$15.00	
	L	@ \$15.00	
	XL	@ \$16.00	
	XXL	@ \$17.00	
	XXXL	@ \$18.00	
<b>Sidebar total</b>			

Please check the hotel where you will be staying:

- |                                      |                                      |                                     |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Renaissance | <input type="checkbox"/> Grand Hyatt | <input type="checkbox"/> J.W. Hyatt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marriott    | <input type="checkbox"/> Metro       | <input type="checkbox"/> Other:     |

\* Each adult 18 and older must pay the registration fee.

- ☐ Enclosed is my check or money order payable to "VHPA Reunion 2000"
- ☐ Please charge my MasterCard or VISA card (circle one)

Banquet menu		Amount
Beef & salmon combo		
Vegetable paella		
<b>Drink tickets</b>		
Domestic beer	\$2.25@	
Imported beer	\$2.75@	
Wine/house cocktails	\$3.25@	
Call brands	\$3.75@	
Premium brands	\$4.95@	
<b>Sidebar total</b>		

Credit card No.:	Expiration date:
Signature:	

### REUNION NAME TAG INFORMATION

Name you want on name tag:	Chapter:	
Name of wife/guest:	Flight school class:	
(Number or year for Army; branch and year for other services.)		
1st combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
2nd combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
3rd combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
Hometown or current residence:		

**Refund policy:** No refund will be given for any dinner, event, registration fee, or other activity unless the member cancels the reservation by faxing, e-mailing or calling VHPA Headquarters no later than June 23, 2000. Requests by U.S. Mail must arrive at VHPA Headquarters no later than June 23, 2000. There will be a \$10 cancellation fee charged for each refund request, regardless of the number of items (dinners, events, registration fee, etc.) included in the request. Each refund request will be assigned a REFUND REQUEST CONFIRMATION NUMBER on the day the request is received by VHPA Headquarters. Reasons for requests received after June 23, 2000, such as hospital admission, medical emergencies, death in the family, etc., will be considered on an individual basis.



# Fort Wolters IP attends reunion

JOHN GROW

Southern Airways instructor pilot Ted Thomas and his wife Norma were guests of his Class 66-15 students at the Nashville Reunion.

In June 1966, Ted invited his students and their wives to dinner in Mineral Wells, Texas, to congratulate them on their graduation from Fort Wolters.

More than 33 years later, Ted, Norma and his students and their wives, Jim and Meredith Hodges, Larry and Gloria Hodges, Boyd and Barbara Mitchell, and John and Gretchen Grow were able to celebrate at the Banquet in Nashville.

Missing was L. Paul Refsell and his wife, who were unable to attend

due to previous commitments.

Ted was a Navy fixed-wing pilot in World War II and was given a helicopter transition prior to the Korean War. During the Korean War, he flew helicopters.

He later was one of the first instructor pilots at the Tiger Course at Fort Sill, OK.

When the Tiger Course was moved to Fort Wolters, he went along as was a Southern Airways IP for the next 14 years, until health problems grounded him.

He and Norma now live in San Antonio, Texas.

John and Gretchen have been exchanging letters and Christmas cards for the past few years and thought it would be a good idea to try

to get the old crew back together again. Most had not seen each other for many years and Ted and Norma thought it would be a wonderful idea.

Jim and John are now trying to get a list of the Southern IPs and the Class 66-15 and 66-16 students to try for a mass get together in 2001 at the VHPA Reunion in Denver.

If you were in Class 66-15 or 66-16, please contact Jim Hodges,

[REDACTED] and let them

know your IP's name.

They will try to locate them and invite them to the 2001 Reunion.

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(DAVE GRIEGER, L-66)

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## Errata

### VHPA 2000 Calendar

Please note a correction in the photo captions for the VHPA 2000 Calendar. During the final printing process, the captions inadvertently were switched between months. For instance, the caption for February, "Almost Touchdown," appears in the month of December, and the caption for December, "Good To Go," appears in February. The correct captions should be listed as follows:

January	SABRE 10	U.S. Army OH-6A, Sabre 10 of a CAV hunter-killer team. Note the smoke grenade box in the back with the gunner/observer and the ship's nickname, MAX WELL, on the pylon below the main rotor, October 1971. Photo by Ron Timberlake.
February	ALMOST TOUCHDOWN	U.S. Navy UH-1B Seawolf gunship on short, short final over the deck of the <i>USS Huntingdon County</i> , June 1968. Note the crew member looking aft to clear the tail as the pilot sets her down on the deck. Note also the machine gun on the deck has been covered to keep it clean from the dirt and dust blown up by the helo. A gunner is sitting just behind the gun on the left in the photo by Norman E. Schrader.
March	SKIING ON THE CLOUDS	UH-1H CAV slicks haul the Blues, late 1971. Photo by Ron Timberlake.
April	NOW WHERE TO?	U.S. Army CH-21C s/h 562050 slings another CH-21 aft fuselage section at Vung Tau, January 1963. Note the tail wind as indicated by the windsock at lower left in the photo by Don Joyce.
May	WOOLEY	U.S. Army CH-54A s/h 414204, Flying Crane from 1st CAV Div at An Khe, October 1965. Note the "people pod" that the Crane carried in beneath the fuselage. Photo by Don Joyce.
June	I EAT THIS UP!	U.S. Army OH-6A Cayuse scout ship from F/9th Cav hovers at FSB Mace, October 1971. Note the smiles on both the pilot and on the gunner/observer. Photo by Ron Timberlake.
July	HOOKING UP	<i>Caption is correct as printed.</i>
August	KING BEE 460	VNAF H-34 "King Bee," s/h 136460, preparing for a SOG-type mission west of Dak To, July 1967. Photo by Don Joyce.
September	AH-23	U.S. Army OH-23 in a sandbag revetment at Dak To. Note the antennae on the tail boom and the machine guns just above the skid cross tubes, October 1967. Photo by Don Joyce.
October	NOSE BLEED	U.S. Army UH-1 s/h 17130 cruising high in cool air above small arms fire, May 1967. Note stallion on left pilot door. Photo by Don Joyce.
November	SOG	USAF UH-1E team in camouflage refuels at Dak To prior to SOG mission, August 1967. Photo by Don Joyce.
December	GOOD TO GO	U.S. Navy UH-1B Seawolf 305, HAL-3 ready for take off from <i>USS Huntingdon County</i> in the Delta region of RVN, November 1968. Photo by Norman E. Schrader.
Bonus	LOADED FOR BEAR	U.S. Army UH-1C at Playboy airstrip, SW of Pleiku, January 1967. Photo by Don Joyce.

Both Turner Publishing Company and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association apologize for this error in what is otherwise a beautiful VHPA calendar.

Randy Baumgardner  
Turner Publishing Company

Ken Fritz  
Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



# Brothers meet during Vietnam tours

**RICHARD SCHULER**

On June 10, 1968, I made it across the big pond from Miami to that other tropical paradise we all came to know as "The Nam."

My brother, Spec. 4 Greg Schuler, followed shortly thereafter.

I was assigned to the 7/17th Air Cav as a gunship pilot. Greg was assigned to the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company as a crew chief.

I joined the 7/17th in Phan Thiet, then moved up to Pleiku.

As an FNG, I flew co-pilot in those rompin' stompin' C Troop Charley models until our Cobras arrived in July/August.

Some of our favorite playgrounds were places named Dak To, Dak Pek and Dak Siang.

I remember WO1 Bob Mitchell, I think he's a general now, flying up into the "hills" in my front seat.

On one occasion, I thought we were developing a tremendous 1:1 vibration after we received fire from some little guy in a spider hole. Later, I realized it was just Bob jumping up and down in the front seat as he unloaded all 350 chunker rounds on the area.

I praised my crew chief, Alvis Richards, for a week. He had a gift for keeping all the weapons in superb firing condition.

At that time, I was flying a brand-new Cobra with tail number 15652.

I had the only Cobra in RVN with an orange flower in the nose cone. My cousin Laurie from California bought some for her van and sent me one of the extras.

Later in 1968, my little brother Greg joined the 162nd Assault Helicopter Company in Dong Tam. He was a crew chief in the slick platoon.

When I flew down to visit him, his

commanding officer found out Greg had a brother who was in country, also.

Greg was angry at me when his CO moved him from flight crew, to flight operations. But, he was a little more forgiving when he was made Spec. 5 and some of his buddies were starting to get hurt in accidents and hostile fire situations.

Greg stayed in the flight ops profession when he got out. He was hired by National Airlines, then by Pan American when it bought out National.

Between flights, Greg and I stayed in touch with cassette recordings. The receiver of the tape would then forward it on to "Big Cal" and "Little Jane" (mom and dad) back in Miami.

We described the pool at Camp Enari, the mountains, tigers, rock apes, "yards," birds and deer hunting  
**See TAPES, Page 25**

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Theodore C. Jarvi, Attorney at Law  
retired JAG Colonel — USAFR  
Vietnam-era veteran  
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Tel 480-838-6566; Fax 480-838-8810

Federal law prohibits the payment of fees by a veteran to an attorney prior to the veteran receiving a final, negative decision from the Board of Veterans Appeals, so I am unable to take such cases unless my fee is paid by someone other than the veteran.



# Tapes describe sights of Vietnam

**Continued from Page 24**

(with an M60?). Greg described the (China) beach at Vung Tau which rivaled any we visited in Australia or had back home at South Beach.

He told them about the Delta, Saigon, rocket attacks, long-legged girls with straight, black hair and blue eyes, the smell of JP4, pulling the drums out from under the four-holers, the odor of waste burning and his R&R to Thailand.

One of the funniest tapes we made was when we tried to party with (Lt. Tom's) Groovie Louie. The more we (Greg, Groovie and I) drank, the smarter and more handsome old Groovie got. He learned some really neat tricks too. Such as sit, fall down and play dead. What a good dog.

We were all a little confused at times while in the Nam.

Greg was shaking his head back and forth and staring at me from the backseat of a Huey one day. I think Capt. Mike was getting her cranked up while calling out the checklist for a Caribou (magnetos?).

Greg flew up to Pleiku for Christmas in 1968. It was a time of extreme mixed emotions.

We were really depressed when a Christmas card we sent in country to Lt. Steve Babuljak, came back with "DECEASED" stamped all across the front of it. Steve lived on the same block back home and was a good friend of ours.

However, Christmas Eve was a hoot.

Our Cav Troop flew over to the 4th Infantry Division's Officers Club for the division's Christmas party.



**WO1 Richard Schuler and brother Spec. 4 Greg Schuler stand in front of WO Schuler's Cobra, which has a distinctive orange flower on the nose.**

Although Greg was a Spec. 5 by then, he wasn't allowed in . . . the first time.

Capt. Doug (Ohio State) loaned Greg a fatigue jacket so we could get him inside.

We pulled our chairs right up to the stage with Capt. Dave (Cash Register) while the band was playing "I Want To Go Home."

Our troop was singing so loud, I don't think "incoming" would have been heard over us.

Too bad the colonel from the 4th requested we go have fun somewhere else. Their guys missed us so much, they literally cried after we left.

The next day, their colonel was yelling stuff like "tear gas" and "court-martial," while our major was just trying to wish him a Merry

Christmas.

In 1968, Greg met my hooch maid Duc when he flew up to visit. He thought she looked remarkably like Anthony Quinn. I thought she looked more like John Wayne or maybe even like John Everhart (whatever happened to him?).

Anyway, when I flew down to Dong Tam in early 1969, I was introduced to a good-looking young Vietnamese girl.

Greg called her "Bunny" or "Sandy" or "Honey" something. She actually looked like she came from Southern California.

According to Mr. Bill, a Loach driver affectionately known as "Pig Pen," she was pretty good to my little brother.

Greg really hated the weather in Vietnam. It was either hot and dry, or hot and wet.

One time, I heard him make a wish: "I wish I could have been assigned somewhere cooler. I never want to be this hot again."

Well, Greg should have been more careful what he wished for. As soon as he finished his 30-day leave back in the world, he was assigned to Korea. Poor kid. It was cooler! I bet he didn't warm up for a year.

Greg and I shared a lot of good times in Vietnam. I always smile when I think about him.

My little brother Greg died on Christmas Day in 1992 after being struck by a car while walking across Hollywood Boulevard in South Florida.

I really miss him.

Big brother, Skeet

**Send your articles, letters, briefs  
to *The VHPA Newsletter* by e-mail.  
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# Chapter holds reunion in Branson

The Mid America Chapter of the VHPA held its annual mini-reunion at Branson, MO, Nov. 5-11.

A VHPA booth was established in the 76 Mall Inn Complex, next to the veterans registry booth. More than 25,000 veterans were registered during the week.

Two new pilots were found and four applications went home with people who knew of pilots. Former Vietnam POW

John Yuill stopped by for VHPA information for a friend he served with.

Some of the Mid America members attended the premier showing of Tom Hank's "Return With Honor" and the VIP reception following the movie, accompanied by former Viet-



**Bill Medsker after completing a ground-handling demonstration, including tail rotor failures and test firing XM-URWET rocket system.**

nam POW Col "Smitty" Harris.

That evening the group attended the Veterans Task Force private VIP reception. Bill Medsker represented the VHPA well at a private dinner for retired Lt. Gen. Don Parker, former commandant of Fort Rucker.

Bill also participated in the annual

parade with his AH-1 Luey. Everyone knew what his machine represented. When the reviewing stand announced the AH-1 Luey was flown by Bill Medsker, representing the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, the adults who weren't standing, stood up and cheered.

Following the AH-1 Luey was Bill's cousin, Terry Davis (helicopter crew chief), with the

Davis "Far" Department's 1929 Chevy "Far" Truck.

The mini-reunion was considered a great success. As expected, the number of attendees was up and next year will be bigger and better. Watch for updates in the newsletter for the 2000 Mid America mini in Branson.

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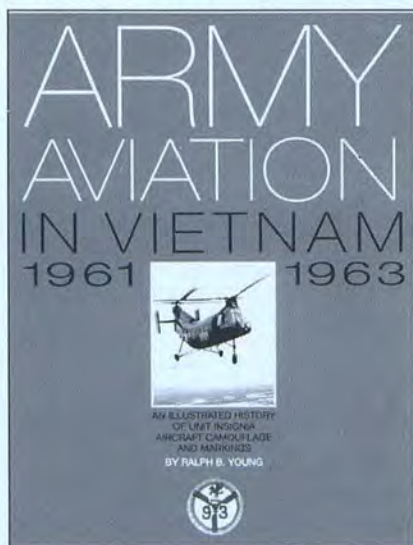
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