



# THE **VHPPA** NEWSLETTER

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association

September 1991 Vol. 9 No. 3



Marine 1st Lt. David Cummings rides atop an AH-1G Cobra's rocket pod during a medical evacuation in South Vietnam in 1969. Story, Page 6.

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# President's Roll Call

Since I have been president for only a couple of months, I haven't much to report on the past, but I can share my views on the future.

One of my goals this year is to place a priority on membership promotion.

Jack Glennon and I had the fortunate time in Reno to discuss the direction VHPA may go to achieve maximum results. At minimal cost—if any—to VHPA, you should start seeing our name in many publications.

We are planning to attend many other organizations' functions to put our name before the public, as well as solicit membership, but the most effective will come from our members themselves.

The survey I received from the New Orleans reunion in 1990 clearly indicated the vast majority of our current members heard of VHPA from other members. Time is not on our side, guys. Contact that potential member you know about.

Just as good companies and other organizations grow successfully, the VHPA can be more productive with membership input.

I'm asking, please, if you have a thought you would like to share, please do so.

Think about to whom it needs to be directed: To a council member or a committee chairman. Write it down and send it.

None of us are professionals in our volunteer capacity with VHPA, but we can be more productive using many thoughts and positive input from the VHPA membership. My contention is that more than 4,000 minds are better than 13. Help us operate your organization by at least becoming active with input.

Another example is our newsletter. Share with your newsletter editor things you feel the membership would like to read and would enjoy knowing.

In closing, I want to thank the members and guests attending the Reno banquet for the very warm new president's welcome I received. That was an example of what makes it worthwhile being your president.

I feel that you have an excellent management team for the VHPA 1991-92 year. All council members and committee chairmen are very enthusiastic to achieve the VHPA main goal of finding and reuniting ole helicopter pilots we knew long ago.

Sincerely,

Gary Slaughter  
President

The VHPA is now accepting bid proposals for the VHPA management contract. Bid requirements may be obtained through VHPA Vice President Mike Law.

## VHPA OFFICERS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND STAFF 1991-92

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### THE VHPA NEWSLETTER (ISSN 0896-3037)

Jack Swickard, Editor

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# Vietnam: The Helicopter War

Philip Chinnery said the idea for his book "Vietnam: The Helicopter War" came to him while he was attending the 1985 Reunion of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association in Washington, D.C.

The 200-page book, billed as "the full story of the helo war from 1961 to 1975," was published this summer by the Naval Institute Press.

Chinnery, a member of the VHPA who resides in Berkshire, England, is the author of two other books on military helicopter operations.

In his introduction to "Vietnam: The Helicopter War," Chinnery writes that he attended the 1985 Reunion to interview some of the VHPA members "to gather stories for my last book, 'Life on the Line'." The book tells the stories of 32 pilots, both fixed-wing and rotary-wing, and, when it went to press, a full quarter of the stories were credited to VHPA members."

Chinnery continues: "I realized then that the helicopter pilots have a story to tell, and it was dedicated to their side of the war."

From the arrival of the first Army CH-21 "Flying Bananas" to the departure of the last Marine CH-53 from the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, Chinnery's book gives an account of U.S. military helicopter use in Vietnam.

Each type of helicopter used between 1961 and 1975 by the U.S. Army, Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy is described and their tactics and armaments explained.

Organized chronologically, each chapter covers a year of the war, telling of the various helicopters flown, the battles in which they participated, and the men who flew them.

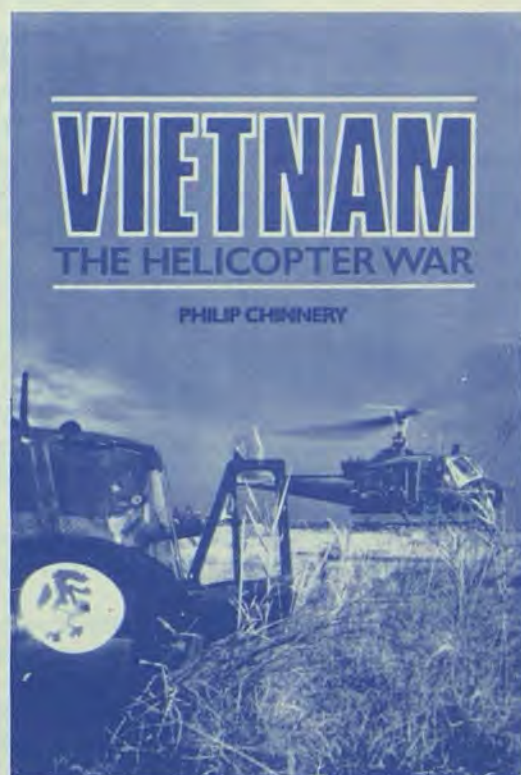
Included are the stories of Frederick Ferguson, who won the Medal of Honor flying into the heart of enemy-occupied Hue to rescue the crew of a downed Huey; the "Super Jolly Green Giant" crews who rescued trapped U.S. advisers from Quang Tri at the height of the 1972 Easter invasion; and the Air America and Marine pilots who evacuated their fellow Americans from the rooftops of Saigon as the enemy closed in on the city.

Chinnery, in his introduction, concludes: "Most pilots and aircrew received no reward or recognition for their efforts; the Medal of Honor is not awarded lightly. However, all of them have a story to tell, and this book is written on their behalf.

"To those who treated them with derision when they returned home from the war and to those who want to know more about their war, I say read the stories behind the newsreels and speak with respect to the man who tells you that he flew helicopters in Vietnam."

A collection of 240 photographs, 70 in full color, enhances the text of "Vietnam: The Helicopter War."

Publication date was July of this year. List price is \$36.95. "Vietnam: The Helicopter War" is available from: Customer Service, Naval Institute Press, 2026 Generals Highway, Annapolis, MD 21401 (800) 233-8764.



## VHPA logo and name use

Recently, the VHPA obtained a legally registered trademark for the VHPA logo and the name Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

The Executive Council has a legal responsibility to protect the usage of these.

Effective July 8, 1991, the usage of the name or log must be approved by the Executive Council in writing and be signed by the secretary/treasurer and the president of VHPA.

A request to use the VHPA name or logo must be in writing, to include a full description of such usage, for what purpose and on what products the usage will be printed.

There is no exception to this requirement for any member or non-member of VHPA.

Products previously manufactured with use of the name or logo shall be under a grandfather clause, but any new manufacture will need to be approved.

VHPA has a current policy requiring 10 percent of gross income by a vendor, to be donated to VHPA for the use of its name or logo. This policy will remain in effect.

Should there be any question as to the above requirement, please contact Dan Ferguson, VHPA secretary/treasurer.

Gary Slaughter  
President

## Volunteers sought

**WILL YOU PLEASE HELP?** Ph.D. student needs 250 volunteers to participate in research study on coping styles of currently non-hospitalized Vietnam veterans.

Participants will be asked to complete less than one hour of paper-and-pencil questionnaires.

If you are willing to help, please phone (800) 222-1246 and leave your name and address on the answering machine. Confidentiality guaranteed.

Names, addresses, and information will not be used or given to anyone. You will be mailed the questionnaires and a postage-paid return envelope.

If you have questions, phone Karen Willing at [REDACTED] after 6:30 p.m. central time.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Karen Willing, a doctoral candidate in the counseling psychology program at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, is researching "how risk-taking or sensation-seeking behavior impacts people in their sense of control over life and their adjustment to traumatic experiences." She said she learned of VHPA from a billboard in the Kansas City area advertising the Reno Reunion.



# Aviator's luck holds, wins seat with coin toss

When Lt. Bill McAdams completed a year of flying helicopters for the 4th Infantry Division in August 1967, he returned home without a scratch.

During his 12-month combat tour in South Vietnam, McAdams landed all of the OH-23 and UH-1C helicopters he flew under full power.

McAdams' luck was still running strong July 16 when he won a seat on the Aztec (N.M.) School Board—with the toss of a coin.

The school board—charged under New Mexico law with filling a vacancy in its own ranks—found itself deadlocked 2-2 over a choice to fill its vacant fifth position.

When two votes by the four-member board failed to produce a winner, Board member Rod Hancock said, "Maybe we should just flip a coin."

After consulting with the school district's attorney, Superintendent Ron Helland told the board: "He sees nothing illegal with using that to break your tie."

The coin was tossed, coming up tails, and McAdams was declared the fifth school board member.

The next day, McAdams told The Daily Times of Farmington, N.M., that when he was notified of his appointment by the school board president, he was not aware he won by a coin toss.

"If that's the only system they can come up with, that's probably the only way you can do it if you have two people whose philosophy is so close the board members are split," he said.

"The fact will not deter me from doing the best job I can."

McAdams ran for a position on the Aztec School Board six years ago, but was defeated.

He said he had decided against running for the board in February's school election because he would be busy with tax work.

McAdams is an accountant and income tax specialist with a Farmington accounting firm. He also is co-owner of a miniature golf course between Aztec and Farmington in northwestern New Mexico.

After completing his Vietnam tour, McAdams served as an instructor at the U.S. Primary Helicopter School at Fort Wolters from September 1967 through May 1968, when he left active duty.

In August 1969, he joined the Texas National Guard as a rotary wing aviator. He transferred to the New Mexico National Guard in February 1971, rising to the rank of colonel in June 1987.

McAdams currently serves in the Army Reserve.

He earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with 21 oak leaf clusters during his tour of duty in South Vietnam.

He and his wife Phyllis have two teen-age children.



*Lt. Bill McAdams at Pleiku, South Vietnam, in 1966. McAdams flew OH-23 and UH-1C helicopters during his combat tour with the 4th Infantry Division.*

## Historical Committee wants photos, videos

**WANTED:** Did you take photographs or videotapes during the 1991 Reunion in Reno?

If so, the VHPA Historical Committee needs information of all sorts to document our organization's history.

Copies of photos or videos would be greatly appreciated.

If you have stories about anything that happened—whether it is funny, serious, amusing or of interest—that will help write the history of the VHPA and detail the Reno reunion, please send it to the Historical Committee.

For instance, did anyone hit a big jackpot? Our grandkids may never believe it.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'd like to thank everyone who contributed material and information to the Historical Committee during the reunion.

What we received was great, but we still want more.

If you had a mini-reunion, are interested in the history of your unit (or any unit) or are in contact with guys who were in your unit in RVN, I'd like to recruit you to help in writing the history of units in Vietnam.

Everything we receive is of value.

I received copies of DFC orders which tell the story of one day in the life of a unit—that's what we're looking for.

If you send copies of DFC orders, etc., please include your version of the story.

People told me of keeping "diaries" during their tours. If you have

*Continued on the next page*



one you can give us a copy of, it would be greatly appreciated.

It's a monumental task, but one which needs to be done.

We are the history and before too long we must put what we remember on paper for our grandchildren to read.

I can only ask myself one thing when working on this: Do I want future generations to remember what we did from our point of view or from the point of view of a writer who wasn't even born at the time?

Please, the next time you have a few minutes, look through your "memories" and send whatever you can.

If you feel you can't write well enough to convey a thought, pull out the cassette tape recorder and tell us your story.

We have Shanghaied people to help on the committee who are professional writers and editors. They can turn your recorded thoughts into written words.

If you send anything, copies will be better than originals. I protect everything I receive and will return it as soon as possible if you tell me.

Thank you,

Bill Greenhalgh

## Crash injures pilot

A former Vietnam helicopter pilot was injured when his chopper crashed into a Houston, Texas, apartment building after apparently experiencing engine trouble.

The Houston Post reported pilot Donald McDavid, 57, was taken to Hermann Hospital after the May 7 accident.

Also injured in the accident were two other people aboard the aircraft and an apartment tenant.

Witnesses told police the Bell Jet Ranger helicopter appeared to be attempting to land at a nearby football field when it struck the apartment, the newspaper said.

McDavid, who reportedly was pinned for some time between the wreckage of his aircraft and an apartment wall, was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam in 1967 and 1968.

## VHPA'er recruits in desert

While in Saudi Arabia, I ran into some potential VHPA'ers and was able to get them to sign up.

By accident, I met Jim Leech, Class 68-13, ex-Rattler from the 71st Assault Helicopter Company, Chu Lai, 1968-69. Jim and I met 100 nautical miles out in the desert.

After flying out there in two Chinooks to retrieve congressmen and reporters, we noticed the Americal patches and began swapping stories of "the real one" and the various guys we both know from VHPA.

We also delivered a 22-pound box of cookies that had been sent to the troops by my son's Cub Scout den.

It reminded me of the resupply missions we flew 22 years ago, except for the ages of the desert soldiers—I flew a Huey with a "kid" warrant officer 1 whose dad flew in Vietnam!

Enclosed (at right), is a photo of Jim and me from that day.

As the USARCENT (FWD) aviation safety officer, I hosted the USASC accident investigation teams while they were in country for 30 days at a time.

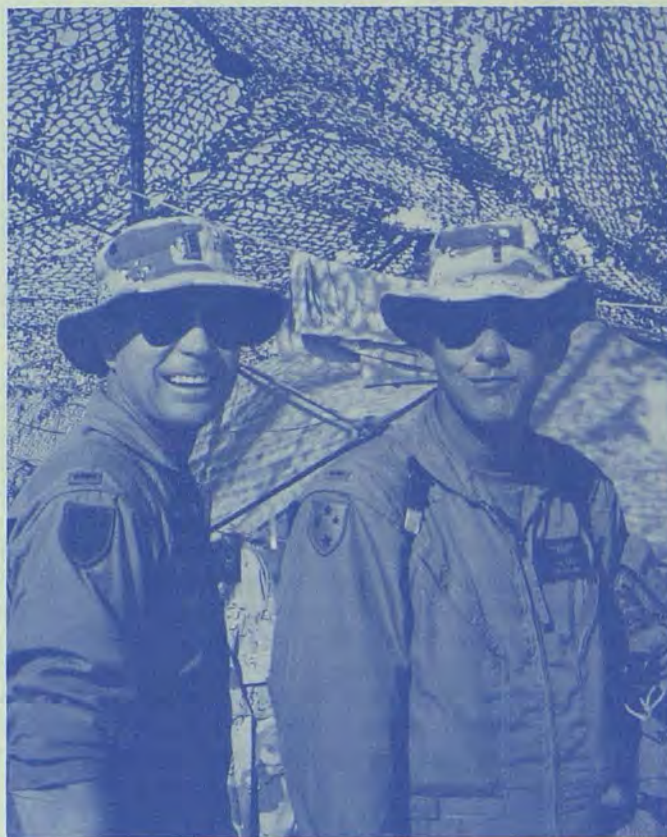
One of the team commanders was Larry Warrick, 176th Assault Helicopter Company, Chu Lai, 1970-71, about four months after I left the Minutemen!

I gave Larry a VHPA application.

I also ran into a 68-31 classmate, David Beishline, who, with Al Bazzare, was in XVIII ABN Corps flight standards at Dhahran.

Both of these guys got VHPA applications, too. If the VHPA guys over there hadn't been so scattered out and so busy, it would have made a strange reunion, with no women, no beer, very little ice, no swimming pool, etc.

Ken Fritz  
Orangevale, CA



CW4 Ken H. Fritz (left) and CW2 Jim Leech stand in the shade of a camouflage net in the Saudi Arabian desert on Dec. 13, 1990, during Operation Desert Shield.



# Pilot rides on Cobra's rocket pod during medevac

By Lt. Col. Gregory Johnson, USMC

On a dreary day in December 1969, a young Marine serving at a mountain outpost—Hill 845—in South Vietnam, tripped an enemy booby trap.

He was in danger of dying, unless he could obtain immediate medical treatment.

At LZ Baldy, 1st Lt. David Cummings, HML-367 helicopter pilot, and his aircraft commander, Capt. Roger Henry, were standing by their AH-1G Cobra gunship on routine alert. A call came to escort emergency medevac helicopters.

They launched with two CH-46 Sea Knights and headed 40 miles southwest of Da Nang into the Que Son Mountains of Quang Nam Province.

Foul weather had developed in the medevac pickup area, making it virtually impossible for the Sea Knights to make the pickup.

Despite persistent but unsuccessful maneuvering, the CH-46s terminated their approach, retiring to the edge of the weather mass, hoping for a break which would allow a quick dash in for extraction.

After consultation with the medevac mission commander, permission was granted for the AH-1G to scout the LZ to facilitate a more expeditious pickup.

During ingress, however, the weather worsened, prompting Capt. Henry—in the front seat of the Cobra—to assume the controls. Visibility was zero.

Exercising superb airman-ship and excellent crew coordination, the two Marine pilots flew into the weather and worked their Cobra up the mountainside in severe turbulence generated from the gnarled mountain slopes.

Scraping tree tops and sporting airspeeds that often dipped below 30 knots, the flyers anxiously waited for a call from the outpost, giving their position above the ill-defined landing zone.

Henry and Lt. Cummings finally found their mark. The ingress had taken three hours and five separate attempts.

Sporadic radio reports confirmed their suspicion the wounded Marine's condition was worsening.

Guiding the Cobra down through tall trees, Henry landed on the edge of a bomb crater. While the Cobra remained in its precarious teeter-totter position, Cummings climbed out of the aircraft to investigate.

Determining that no further time should be wasted, he directed placement of the wounded man into the rear seat of the Cobra. After strapping the semi-conscious Marine into the seat, Cummings closed and secured the canopy.

As ground personnel looked on, Cummings climbed onto the inboard starboard (right) stubwing rocket pod.

Straddling the pod and facing aft, he banged a fist on the wing to get Henry's attention, and then gave him a "thumbs up."

Henry nodded and took off.

As the Cobra departed the LZ, radios came alive as their operators broadcast descriptions of the incredible scene they were

witnessing.

From his perch on the rocket pod, Cummings flashed a "V" for victory to those remaining in the landing zone as the Cobra vanished into the overcast.

Leveling off in a gray cloud mass at 4,000 feet, Henry accelerated the Cobra to 100 knots to maintain more fluid surface aerodynamics.

Once stabilized, he glanced over his shoulder to check on Cummings. The lieutenant gave him a sheepish grin.

Slashing rain and extreme cold, plus the deafening shrill and the shuffle vibration of engine and rotors, exacted punishment on the

lieutenant. The airstream grabbed Cummings' helmet, flexing it forward, causing the chin strap to choke him.

But nothing could shake Cummings from his perch.

After what seemed an eternity, the Cobra gunship descended through the clouds, breaking into relatively clear sky conditions at 1,200 feet over Spider Lake, and raced for the medical facility.

Suffering from fatigue, Henry was having trouble discerning the landing site when he sensed a series of thumps coming from the starboard stubwing. Glancing to his right, he saw Cummings pointing to the landing site below.

After landing, the wounded Marine was whisked into a medical tent for stabilization and pre-transfer emergency preparation.

A short time later, a CH-46 Sea Knight arrived and flew the Marine to Marble Mountain for emergency surgery.

Sprinting along through the sky to the more sophisticated "in-country" medical facility were Cummings and Henry—wary, but concerned about the safety of the wounded Marine.

(He eventually recovered, was discharged, married and is now living in Texas.)

For their actions, Henry and Cummings each were awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

The two pilots also were invited by the commanding general of the 1st Marine Division to dine as his special guests in the "Eagle's Nest."

One incident in a man's life does not necessarily constitute a characterization. While some people might describe the rescue of the Marine as cavalier, some of Cummings' friends would be quick to disagree.

Cummings was a bold, yet calculating individual. Commendations citing other action show an aggressive, no-nonsense approach to combat.

During his career, he earned four Distinguished Flying Crosses, four single-mission Air Medals, the Bronze Star Medal with combat "V," a Purple Heart, and an impressive array of other awards.

A true measure of Cummings' values, however, lies in the fact that he was more proud of his part in the young Marine's medevac



Marine 1st Lt. David Cummings sits in the rear seat of an AH-1G Cobra gunship during his second tour in South Vietnam.

Continued on Page 10



# INCOMING MAIL

## "Pale Horse" driver gives background

I was reading the VHPA Newsletter of June 1989 and saw on Page 9 the request for all "Pale Horse Drivers." I was a Pale Horse Driver and I can provide you some background.

First of all, I do not know who sent the earlier material to you, but I suspect it may have been CWO Dave Isaacs.

Anyway, the Pale Horse aircraft (I do not recall the tail number) was first flown by CW2 Charlie Alexander, nicknamed "Sober Chuck," of C Troop, 7/17th Cavalry. I believe he was from the Detroit area and he left active service shortly after his tour.

However, he was one of those pilots with extensive Vietnam experience extending for two or three additional tours in succession. I believe he departed Vietnam in late spring or summer of 1971.

Charlie flew the aircraft in Operation Lam Son 719 in February and March 1971. The profiles you see on the side of the aircraft are kills from Laos.

"Sober Chuck" was the one who then had the Pale Horse painted on the upper pylon.

I flew the aircraft numerous times, but I did not claim it as my own. "Pale Horse" was our 20mm ship and was always a good one. My aircraft (68-15144) was the "Heavy Hog" of our troop.

When "Sober Chuck" departed, a new snake pilot by the name of Dave Isaacs inherited it. I suspect he is the one who sent the material to you. The last I knew, he was still on active duty; about 13 years ago, I ran into him and he was stationed at Corpus Christi. I haven't seen or heard from him since.

Our unit, C Troop, 7/17th Cavalry, was stationed at Lane.

Our troop moved constantly in 1971; from February to April 1971, we supported Lam Son 719 out of Khe Sanh. From April to June, we supported the 173rd Airborne out of LZ English. In June, we moved to Kontum for one month, and we worked An Khe during the summer.

After the 173rd stood down in August 1971, we supported the Vietnamese and South Koreans in the An Loa and Phu Cat areas. And, from November 1971 through January 1972, we worked out of Camp Holloway, Pleiku.

Our unit was constantly on the move, but Lane continued in 1971 to be the home base of C Troop.

Well, I hope this fills some holes for you. If you have any questions, write to me at the

following address:

LTC David S. Ferrell



## 145th meets at Rucker

My summer VHPA newsletter just arrived. What an apropos time for Gary Slaughter to plug all the good stuff to see and do at Rucker.

This past weekend (June 6-9), I made the pilgrimage back to Mother Rucker also. This was my first time back since leaving there and the Army 24 years ago last month (May). The extra push that got me to return was to attend the reunion of the 145th Aviation Battalion. (First in Vietnam).

I can't say enough about our few days there. Many of us stayed at the Ozark Holiday Inn. The accommodations were great. The two-story motel setup with courtyard and pool was ideal for meeting with old friends and making new ones.

The newly opened Army Aviation Museum is truly a gem. It was done up right. It's the largest display of its kind in the world. I got to show my new wife all the old relics that I had flown.

And then there was the Huey simulator building. My wife and I expected only a guided tour, but we both were treated to stick time in the box. A first for her, and one she soon won't forget.

Next came our visit to the WOC Hall of Fame. I wasn't aware that this building filled with WOC memorabilia even existed, let alone that I'd ever again see CRUD E. WOC's tombstone. Class 64-2W buried him at Fort Wolters in 1964.

Gary's article pointed out that donations are desperately needed to keep the Hall of Fame afloat. It is truly worth saving, and maybe something can be done officially and in a more organized fashion through VHPA.

Incidentally, the 145th Aviation Battalion was redesignated a regiment some years back and Fort Rucker trainees all wear her colors.

In closing, a sincere thanks to Jim Bodkin and Maj. Gen. Kenyon for putting together a great reunion.

Also, I'd like to encourage all the 118th (Aviation Company and Assault Helicopter Company) people who could not make it to this one, to try real hard to get to the next one. It should be in 1993.

Ralph Orlando, 64-2W  
118th Aviation Company  
(Bandits gunship platoon 1965)  
145th Aviation Battalion

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** James L. Bodkin is national director/coordinator of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion (Vietnam) Association. His address is [REDACTED]

## Response overwhelming

In regards to my letter printed in your summer 1991 issue of the VHPA Newsletter, the volume of mail and phone calls I have received concerning my inquiry about the Greyhounds and Playboys has been overwhelming—much more so than I am able to answer on an individual basis.

Hopefully, this collective "Thank you" will not leave anyone feeling I do not appreciate their individual response.

I did receive most of the information I needed, but not all, unfortunately. I understand; it took me months to find all that I needed about Co. F, LRP, 51st Inf. (ABN), and years to write my book.

We held a grand reunion in Austin, Texas, on June 13-16 and after listening to all the war stories and lies (?), it is apparent everyone's memory has gaps.

The book went to the publisher almost three weeks ago (in early June) and it may be months before I find out what will become of it. I will let you know the exact title and release date.

The operation in question was actually Aug. 18, 1968—not Aug. 8—but that was probably an error in my writing.

I hope I have done justice to your people, even if I could not include all names.

I also appreciate the comments and praise given by so many of the correspondents about LRPs; it is nice to have recognition after all of these years, but pat yourselves on the back also.

In 44 patrols, many of them hot extractions, I never had a chopper back off. Flying an aluminum aircraft always struck me as being in something of a "tight" also. And you guys say we had guts!

There were some replacements who came in later we were not happy with, for reasons explained in the book, but we were quite happy with most of your people and the service rendered. I only wish I had had the opportunity to meet and know them better back then.

If any of you are ever in my neighborhood, flash your membership card and, as soon as I can get off duty, the first few beers are on me.

*Continued on the next page*



Again, I thank everyone who called or wrote. The mail is still coming in. As the man said, "Y'all done good."

Sincerely,

Gary D. Ford

## Parade for Vietnam vets too

The National Victory Day Parade in Washington, D.C., on June 8, 1991, wasn't just for Desert Storm. It was our parade, too.

I don't mean just our aircrews that participated in the fly-by down Capitol Mall, we were also there for Vietnam veterans.

Six pilots and three crewchiefs from the 199th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), Florida National Guard, formed a contingent of UH-1 helicopters included in the 27-ship formation representing rotary wing aviation from all branches of service that Saturday morning.

We were the only all-Vietnam veteran crews in that flight. (See picture at right).

The 199th was called to active duty Feb. 1, 1991, to fill Fort Bragg's Medevac needs while the 57th Medical Detachment (The original Dustoff) served in the Persian Gulf.

About 20 percent of our 120-man unit are veterans serving their second call to duty. This number has dropped from 75 percent 10 years ago due to flight physicals, career conflicts and the never changing military BS. Some of us are just hardheaded.

When the parade call came—someone very high on the food chain was rumored to have said, "You forgot to include Medevac in the fly-by plans."—our commander, Maj. Homer Vanture Jr., declared that only Southeast Asia veterans would go to the festivities.

Our only wish was that all of you could have been there to share the experience with us.

Flying between two Blackhawks and two Chinooks beat us to pieces. But, flying 100 feet over the Capitol Dome, the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial was incredible.

Later, at the mall, the feelings of satisfaction, acceptance, and of truly being home were overwhelming.

The looks of awe and pride in all the young eyes we met were especially gratifying. The silences that followed the revelation that, yes, we were activated Guardsman, and no, we didn't go to Saudi Arabia, was broken by sincere thanks, hugs, apologies, and "Welcome Homes" from all who learned we were veterans of the other war.

It was a heady time for nine middle-aged,

slightly worn aviators. The parade was for all of you, too.

That night, CNN telecast a report on the parade. There we were, Chalk 7 and 8, holding our own. The only narration audible was: "Next are two UH-1 Medevac helicopters that also served in Southeast Asia."

It made me very proud to have been part of it.

Military aviation is a young man's game, with all the new equipment and new rules. But I'll tell you here and now, those kids can't fly formation worth a damn.

CW4 John Popin  
OIC

## "Thanks" for the reunion

I just got home from my first VHPA reunion and felt the need to say, "Thanks."

I reacquainted myself with two guys I flew with for a year, three who flew gun cover for us for nearly the whole year, and four who were in our unit before or after us.

I understand from talking to many oldtimers that that is very unusual, so I am triply blessed by the 1991 Reunion.

Dan Higgins



SSG Dan Lux, SFC Jim Wellmon, CW3 Don Darden, CW3 Charlie Mount, CW4 John Popin, CW3 Chuck Dick, CW4 Doug Pope, CW4 Jack Klotz, SSG B.J. Atkins 199th MED CO (AA)

Photo courtesy of John Popin

## Newsletter seeks material

The Newsletter is continually seeking letters, articles, photographs and graphics from VHPA members.

If you have a story to tell, are seeking a fellow helicopter pilot, planning a reunion, know of something unusual that has happened to a VHPA member, have a photograph from Vietnam or a reunion, or have an idea for a feature article, the Newsletter editor wants to hear from you.

Also wanted are VHPA members interested in reviewing books and writing feature articles for the Newsletter.

Material and inquiries should be sent to:

VHPA Newsletter

Jack Swickard  
Newsletter Editor



## Raulston reference touching

I read Past President Greg Ross' "President's Roll Call" in the summer 1991 VHPA Newsletter.

I was very touched by his reference to Bobbie Raulston. Bobbie was my grandfather's nephew and we were, no doubt, related in some fashion.

Bobbie lived in Ozark and I have lived in Enterprise, off and on, for 15 years. Unfortunately, we only met once and never did have a chance to tell war stories, play "where were you when" and "who do we know."

The follow-on "Incoming Mail" article "Procrastinating?" by Larry Logsdon really hit home.

I have started tracking down old friends from the RVN and other assignments that followed. It is really good to hear their voices and find out what they have been doing since the last assignment together.

I have been a member of VHPA for many years; however, I have not been able to attend any of the reunions due to overseas assignments, TDY, and a multitude of other reasons.

I regret that I was not able to attend the reunion in Reno because I am transitioning into the civilian world after 25-plus years in the green suit.

I am planning to attend the 1992 reunion in Atlanta, regardless. (I still like to drink beer and tell war stories.)

I am sure that my free time as a civilian will be limited; however, I would like to help out with the newsletter or membership services. I am well-versed in using automated data processing systems and would like to make a contribution beyond paying dues.

James K. Mabrey  
Black Maria 10  
[REDACTED]

## Friends of brother sought

Hil I saw the notice about your July 4-7 reunion in Reno and I wondered if any of you knew my brother, Bill.

He was a warrant officer flying in the Chu Lai area around 1968-69. He was from Illinois and I think trained at Fort Rucker.

Bill died 10 years ago, and I would really like to correspond with anyone who knew him, especially in Vietnam.

Jean Owen  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## Aviator writing manuscript

I need your help in writing an accurate manuscript concerning the fall of Kham Duc Special Forces Camp.

I am a retired Army aviator (fixed-wing only) graduating in Fort Rucker class WORFWAC 64-2W. In 1967-68 and 1970, I served in I Corps as an aviator in O-1 Bird Dog reconnaissance aircraft.

During my first tour with the 220th Aviation Company, I was based for nine months at Chu Lai and Quang Ngai and flew many missions to and around Kham Duc. The camp fell on May 12, 1968, when I was stateside.

My second tour was at Chu Lai, where I flew many missions with the 21st Aviation Company over Kham Duc, which at that time was abandoned.

I write short history articles on the Civil War and the Vietnam War for a magazine publication. I recently wrote an article for "Vietnam Combat" on the May 10, 1968, fall of Ngoc Tavak, Kham Duc's forward operating base. My editor asked me to combine the Ngoc Tavak account with the fall of Kham Duc for a book project.

I have been to Maxwell Air Force Base and the Air Force Archives.

Eighty percent of Kham Duc reports are still classified due primarily to the late decision to reinforce the camp with an Americal battalion and battery, followed by an emergency evacuation for which too many were killed and nearly 30 U.S. troops became MIAs.

Fort Bragg's Special Forces Library/Museum has no information on the camp.

I will be going to Washington for a visit to the Army and Marine Corps archives.

Scores of Army helicopter reconnaissance, gunship, slick and "boxcar" crews of the 16th Aviation Group (Americal Division) supported the defense and evacuation of Kham Duc, many serving with valor.

I need to contact some of these veterans. Please publish the following:

Any veteran with eyewitness knowledge of the fall of Kham Duc Special Forces Camp is encouraged to contact historian, Hardy Z. Bogue, [REDACTED] SC 29209.

Sincerely,

Hardy Z. Bogue

## Historian seeks information

Enclosed (top right) is a copy of a pocket patch worn during the Vietnam War by some unit that utilized an 11th Aviation Group design and the drawing of a helicopter with "DUSTOFF"



indicated.

I would be most grateful if someone could provide some background on this patch and the unit that utilized it! In my role as the DUSTOFF Association historian, I cannot trace this patch to a specific time and place.

Another request would be for an application for such as an "associate" membership so that I could receive your newsletters. I have an interest in recording the efforts of non-medical aviation units in the evacuation of the wounded.

Archives such as those of the Pacific Stars and Stripes contain numerous examples of rescue and medical evacuation by individuals from varied aviation groups. Eventually, I will have it indexed by unit and pilots' names, and will forward you a list.

In addition to my duties with DUSTOFF, I am the historian for the 31st Infantry and work with the various 196th Light Infantry Brigade (Americal) battalions.

Should any of your members require information on any events that took place in the 196th area of operations (Quang Tin Province), I would be glad to offer them any assistance. I have access to numerous ground action reports and lists of both infantry and aviation unit casualties for all dates.

If someone wants to find someone who was on the ground during a specific action, the resources of the 196th LIB "Locate-A-Brother" are available.

Joe "Doc" Kralich  
[REDACTED]



rescue mission than any other recognition he received while serving in Vietnam.

In August 1988, Lt. Col. David Cummings, enroute to Albany, Ga., to attend a special military course, stopped in Atlanta for the night.

After a brief, customary workout, he returned to his room. He later suffered an apparent heart attack and died. He was 42 years old.

There were the normal expressions of loss, especially noted when one so young dies. But none who attended his lifeless body and few who were present at his funeral fully realized the magnitude of the gift and legacy he left behind.

For those who knew Dave, he was more than a one-line statistic in a death notice. Dave was a Marine. He was a special piece of our past; a large measure of our tradition and, maybe more importantly, a sizeable chunk of our soul.

The Woburn, Mass., native enlisted in the Marine Corps in September 1966. Upon completing recruit training, he attended Officer Candidate School and the Basic School at Quantico, Va.

2nd Lt. David Cummings then served for several months as a platoon leader with the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, in Vietnam. Seriously wounded in a firefight with Viet Cong forces, he was medically evacuated to the United States.

After recuperation, he was selected for flight training and earned his "Wings of Gold." He returned to Vietnam in September 1969.

In our lives, we are changed by the people we see, the people we serve, and the people with whom we have shared. We will sorely miss the physical presence of this courageous Marine who knew the meaning of going that extra mile to save a comrade.

But Dave's soul will endure in us all as we continue to strive to emulate his approach to duty, honor and country.

For having known Dave Cummings, I am certain we have significantly changed for the better. Semper Fi, Dave.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Lt. Col. Gregory Johnson, assigned to the Pentagon, is executive assistant to the deputy for expeditionary forces.

Jason Drake, the artist who painted the cover picture, is a former Marine Corps helicopter pilot currently residing in El Toro, Calif. He is an aeronautical engineer.

## Lt. Thomas L. Kleis dies in line of duty

Police Lt. Thomas L. Kleis of Greenwood, Ind., died early May 28 when he lost control of his patrol car during a high-speed chase and crashed.

Kleis, a member of the Beech Grove Police Department and a former Vietnam helicopter pilot, was pursuing two teen-agers suspected of auto theft when his car went out of control, The Indianapolis Star reported.

The Indianapolis newspaper also reported that Kleis, 43, was the first Beech Grove policeman to die in the line of duty since 1972. Beech Grove is a community within the greater Indianapolis metropolitan area.

A 17-year veteran of the police department, Kleis recently had been promoted to night shift lieutenant.

He was honored as the department's outstanding officer in 1974 and 1981.

Kleis graduated from Army flight school in class 68-21. He served two tours of duty in South Vietnam, one with the 195th Assault Helicopter Company in 1969-70.

The newspaper reported that during his combat tours, Kleis flew 925 missions, and was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with one oak leaf cluster and the Air Medal with 36 oak leaf clusters.

Police representing departments from South Bend in northern Indiana to Evansville in the south, along with members of Company B2, 238th Aviation Brigade of the Indiana National Guard, attended Kleis' funeral on May 31. Kleis was a chief warrant officer in the National Guard company at the time of his death.

Kleis is survived by his wife, Martha; stepchildren, Jeremy and Lisa Jobe; parents, Louis and Marcia Kleis; brothers, John and Gary Kleis; and grandmother, Millie Wood.

## Ex-wingman removes leg

By Greg Ross

As the song goes: "That Larry Brown, he's a clown!"

It seems that Lew "Rocket" Roachat, scout pilot for E, 1/9th, and former wingmate of Larry Brown's, was dancing with Larry's wife a little more than Larry wanted him to. So Larry decided to slow Lew down a little bit.

For those of us who have attended VHPA reunions, it is well-known that anything goes, so not a head turned when Larry asked Lew to dance with him.

Heads did turn, though, when Lew accepted. Seeing two grown men dancing together is bad enough, but as the two former Cav pilots moved around the floor, those of us who were watching were dumbfounded to observe Larry

apparently playing with Lew's leg.

As it turned out, Larry actually was unstrapping Lew's prosthesis, which he then removed, placed in the "right shoulder, leg" position, and walked off the dance floor.

It was all done in good fun, though.

Larry and Lew had not seen each other since 1971, when Lew took a .51-caliber and six .30-caliber rounds in his left leg and subsequently crashed in the middle of the Iron Triangle.

Like others before him, Lew was skeptical about attending the VHPA reunion, not knowing what to expect.

But after four years of prodding by Larry and other VHPA members, Lew attended the Reno Reunion and now will do his "damndest never to miss another one."



Larry Brown (with leg) and Lew Roachat  
Photo courtesy of Stephanie Ross



# REUNION

## Reno Reunion Wrap-Up

WOW!!! I don't know about you guys, but I had a blast in Reno. The weather was great, the food delicious, the company couldn't have been better, and the casino tables were generous (??).

Speaking of the tables, I understand that a couple of our ladies made quite a haul, and that at the other end of the table were their gentlemen supplying the financing...Oh well, it all works out in the end. Just a recommendation, but if you desire to continue your gambling endeavors, rather than spend all that time and expense getting to this wonderful town, just send me the cash you wish to play with and I will invest it for you and send you ALL the winnings...

The comments I heard from the "Gathering" watering hole staff was one of sheer surprise...they had never seen so much "STUFF" floating around and heard so many "... and there I was..." stories in their life...BUT they did say you all were such gentlemen...must not have been our guys.

Some particulars: There were 642 pilots, a total of 1,102 folks, crowding around at the pool, and we all had a great time.

Some of the highlights...The rodeo that was held in Virginia City...What a blast. There were truly some real cowboys in our midst. Russ Janus organized the event and, as the pictures show, the poor little "doggies" never had a chance. Of course, there were some good-looking "animals"

and I thought the distraction might have been too much for our group. But no sweat! Only a couple of casualties, but who needs air or a thumb, anyway.

During the bus festivities and rodeo, Ron Raible and his golf pros were swatting at the little white (?) ball(s) and had, as expected, a wonderful time.

The pool party on the fifth floor was very well attended, with more than 700 people talking, drinking and generally getting to re-know each other again. The bars were busy, the waitresses had a great time and didn't stop talking about how neat our guys/gals were (and made a bunch of tips)...they thanked you.

Saturday was a day where everyone had a chance to see the sights, make some cash at the tables and prepare for the afternoon's activities. The Official VHPA Nap went over as a huge success and it enabled the members to get ready for the business meeting and for the ladies to see "Secrets of a Showgirl." Over at the business meeting, the changes to the



constitution were adopted, Ken Fritz was elected as the junior member at large and Mike Law, the workhorse of the registration counter, was elected as the vice president...Congratulations to you both.

The banquet had its difficulties with seating and we apologize to those who did not initially get to sit with their party. I hope the food was to everyone's liking, the show entertaining and the band great. I certainly had a great time. Remember to send for your "Memory Book," you should already have received the proofs and, if anyone has some great pictures to include, send them to me and I'll see about getting them included.

My personal thanks go out to a bunch of people who made your eighth reunion such a success, several in particular: Jim Cunningham, Rob Woodside, Al Larsen and, of course, the ladies of PAI...Melinda and Natalie...Thanks to all...

I again would like to thank each of you for your continuing support to our fine organization, your attendance at the reunion and hope that you start your budgeting for the ninth reunion in Atlanta...and Kenny Bunn.

T.L. Percy Sr.  
1991 Reunion Chairman



For information on the 1992 reunion, see page 12.



# Reunion 1992

The 1991 Reunion is over and I want to thank Tom Pearcy for another great one.

I really appreciated the red, white, and blue millstone he presented me at the banquet. It fits!

I also want to thank Roger Sweitzer, my old flight school buddy, for telling me what I was doing wrong at the blackjack table. After his instruction, I was able to lose my money twice as fast!

Now I am pleased to bring you up to date on the 1992 Reunion, to be held July 2-4 in Atlanta, Ga.

As we all know, Atlanta is a city steeped in history and is considered one of the most exciting cities in the United States.

Atlanta combines Old South charm with an international flavor. From Antebellum homes to one of the top five zoos in the country, Atlanta has more attractions than you can see at one reunion.

The host hotel will be the Atlanta Hilton and Towers on Courtland Street downtown.

Hilton has been the host hotel at many of our most successful reunions, and the Atlanta Hilton is very excited about hosting the 1992 Reunion. The Atlanta Hilton has guaranteed us that we will be the largest group, if not the only group, in the hotel during our reunion.

Normal room rates at the Atlanta Hilton are \$140 per night for a single and \$165 per night for a double.

However, VHPA members attending the reunion will pay \$70 per night for these rooms.

Members also will get a big break on drink prices. Instead of paying the regular \$4 price for a domestic beer, members will pay \$1.50; imported beer will be \$2, instead of the regular \$4.50; a mixed drink will be \$2.75, compared to \$6; and call brands will be \$3, rather than \$6.50.

To get these special drink prices, you will have to wear your name tag and purchase the drinks at the VHPA hospitality room or at one of the VHPA portable bars strategically located throughout the hotel.

Vendors, registration, memorabilia, and the VHPA hospitality room will be on the second floor.

The 1992 Reunion will be a "reuniting" reunion in that no outside activities requiring travel are planned, with the possible exception of a day trip for the children. There will be ample free time to see the sights or just relax with friends at the hotel.

If you would care to assist with the 1992 Reunion, please contact me in writing. My address is: 3831 Highway 26, Columbiana, AL 35051. See you in Atlanta!

Kenny Bunn  
1992 Reunion chairman

## SEEKING

My son, Joseph Henry Marshall, was with the 48th Assault Helicopter Company (Jokers) when he was killed in February 1971.

Perhaps some of you might remember him.

I would appreciate any information some of your fellow pilots may have.

Joseph H. Marshall

\*\*\*\*\*

Mike Hulen would like to hear from any flight school or Nam friends (235th AWC, 307th CAB, 164th CAG—Can Tho 1968-69).

Mike Hulen

\*\*\*\*\*

I am looking for Richard Rehn, former Army sergeant and a member of Class 64-4W.

His last known residence was in Connecticut.

Bill Rinaldi

2

\*\*

I will travel anywhere looking for a helicopter instructor or flight school run by a Vietnam helicopter veteran from whom to take lessons.

Noel Merenstein  
344 E. 78th St., No. 2A  
New York, NY 10021

\*\*\*\*\*

I am a helicopter pilot with "Flight For Life" in Denver.

On Aug. 21, 1992, we will be having our 20th reunion, and I have been asked to round up pilots and mechanics who have worked here since the inception of the program.

I have a list of people I have no addresses for: Thomas Barclay, Larry Bartlett, Joe Cane, Phil Cariss, Alan Davis, Ken Espey, Don Gynan, Frank Hearnay, John McGee, Chuck McNair, Vick Meisinger, Matt Orr,

Ron Payne, Paul Schibilsky, Harvey Simon, Mike Smole, Rene Soto, Ray Spates, Mike Staub, and Harlan Yoder.

Tom L. Davis III, lead pilot  
St. Anthony Hospital Systems  
Flight for Life

\*\*\*\*\*

Bob Crow and other Black Widows are looking for CW2 Al Elliott, C/101 101 ABN 68-69 (from Midwest, possibly Minnesota).

If you can help, write Bob at [redacted] or call [redacted]

I attended the Reno Reunion and found a few Black Widows, but nobody seems to know the whereabouts of Al. We would really appreciate the help.

We are slowly but surely tracking down Black Widows from 1967-68 who were with the 188th AHC, but changed to the C/101 101 ABN in 1968-72.

Hopefully, by the time the Atlanta Reunion happens, we will have enough of us located that we can have a mini-reunion.

Gerald "Bob" Crow



# Membership Committee

The largest asset the VHPA Membership Committee has is the membership itself.

If we had an unlimited advertising budget, our largest asset would still be our members.

No amount of advertising can target the select group of people we are trying to reach better than your personal contact.

If you have ever thought about or attempted to locate someone from your past, it probably was someone from flight school or your unit in Vietnam; but you didn't have the slightest idea where to begin.

Well, we can all help each other. Your friend is probably a welder in Toledo who goes to church with, coaches Little League with, or frequents the same pub with someone who is going to tell him about VHPA. You tell the guy that you worship, coach or drink with.

If you know, or know of, someone who is eligible, just ask him if he is familiar with VHPA.

If he is not, I'll guarantee you he will ask a lot of questions and want to see your Directory.

If he is, and has decided not to join, that's fine; however, it would be a service to the rest of us if he filled out the information on the application in order to be included in the Directory.

As you know, the Directory has come a long way in the past several years.

I recently contacted three people.

The first, Brad Stillman, had heard of VHPA, but never joined. He asked to see the Directory—he joined.

The second, Jerry Denton, had never heard of VHPA. He asked to see the Directory—he joined.

The third, Bill Majors, had been an early member, dropped out and didn't realize how big we had gotten. He asked to see the Directory—you got it, he joined.

You see, there are approximately 22,000 of us and we probably will never get them all. It would be great, however, to at least have them accounted for. That's all we are looking for.

With that size group, the law of averages will provide us with active members. So, guys, it's not like we have to go out and sell magazines, just deliver a census form.

## Membership Drive

VHPA has received some rather nice gifts, donated to be used as prizes for a membership drive.

Beginning with this newsletter and continuing through May 15, 1992, all applications received with a sponsor's name and member number will have points credited to the sponsor, according to the following list:

Category	Points
—Application information sheet from a nonmember who does not join:	1
—Application or renewal from a former member with at least a one-year lapse:	2
—Application for new membership:	3
—New member joins as life member:	4

The prizes will be awarded to the highest number of accumulated points as of May 15, 1992.

**First Prize:** Two round-trip tickets good anywhere in the 48 contiguous states, plus free room for three nights at the Atlanta Hilton during the 1992 Reunion. (If you live in or near Atlanta, these tickets are good anytime, not just for the reunion.)

**Second Prize:** Free room for three nights at the Atlanta Hilton during the 1992 Reunion.

**Third and Fourth Prizes:** Room upgrades to the Tower level for three nights at the Atlanta Hilton, at reunion rates.

**Fifth Prize:** A pair of banquet tickets for the 1992 Reunion in Atlanta.

## Assistance solicited

Although the Membership Committee is attempting to get the VHPA name before as many prospective members as possible, there is a no more effective way to "reach out and touch" them than you—the members.

However, I also solicit your assistance in providing ideas, names of publications in which we might advertise, and professional organizations, trade shows, air shows, reunions, etc., that may allow us to man a booth, display a banner or hand out brochures.

If you are attending such an event and would be willing to do any of the above, please let us know.

Let's both get on the controls.

Thanks,

Jack Glennon  
Membership chairman

## Membership dues increase

During the general business meeting on Saturday, July 6, 1991, at the Reno Reunion, the Executive Council brought before the general membership in attendance a matter of concern regarding the need for a dues increase if operations and services were to continue at current levels without operating a loss.

Mike Law, executive director, presented a very well-documented and organized synopsis of our present financial situation, which included a pie chart that depicted the current membership dues allocation with very little left over. (Chart on Page 17.)

A similar chart also appeared on Page 9 of the Spring 1991, Volume 9, No. 1 Newsletter in the questionnaire, which also asked the general membership if it felt a dues increase would be in order to maintain current services.

It was pointed out that there had not been a dues increase since the VHPA's early beginnings some eight years ago and that, due to ever-increasing costs of printing, supplies, postage, management services, etc., inflation had finally caught up with us.

After much discussion from the floor, a motion was made to increase the yearly dues from \$20 per year to \$30 per year and to increase the life membership dues at the same rate, from \$300 to \$450.

This motion was overwhelmingly passed by the general membership. The new dues become effective Jan. 1, 1992.

*Continued on the next page*



Continued from page 13

Even at the new rates, VHPA membership is still a bargain.

However, it is still not too late to cash in on the old rates if you have been considering a life membership or possibly some of you ladies have been considering a life membership as a gift for your pilot.

To make a life membership more attainable, VHPA has arranged for an installment payment program which allows you to choose to make either two or three equal payments over a six-month period.

And, yes, you can use your credit card; and, yes, if you hurry, you can utilize this new payment program to purchase your life membership at the old \$300 rate before the new increase goes into effect.

Please contact VHPA headquarters for further details and to make arrangements for your life membership.

Respectfully submitted

Dan Ferguson  
Secretary/Treasurer

## LAST CHANCE! 5-COLOR 8TH REUNION T-SHIRT-RENO



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## Collectively speaking

In the next four VHPA Newsletters, "Collectively speaking" will recap the responses to the questionnaire sent to members in early 1991.

Though 427 members returned questionnaires, the numbers and percentages shown are based on the first 300 returned.

### SUBJECT: Newsletter

**QUESTION:** What would you like to see added to the Newsletter?

Number of responses - 424 (total on all subjects)

Job Opportunities	97 or 23%
Want Ads	43 or 10%
Items for Sale	68 or 16%
Feature Articles	150 or 35%
No Change	66 or 16%

### Comments:

"RVN photos and stories are what really make the Newsletter interesting—Feature articles on units/operations would add nice touch."

"I believe most members enjoy the Newsletter as is, so 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it!'"

"Ads in the Newsletter would add revenue. A good price to non-members for ads."

"As you have so far, just keep passing

along whatever information you have. Without a writing staff, you have to depend on input from members."

"Want ads and items for sale from members only pertaining to Vietnam flying and military."

"Go ahead and make money. Just keep the tone of remembrance as you do now."

"Keep it simple."

"More Newsletters. Printing on the expensive paper stock is wasteful. I'd rather have more newsletters on cheaper paper."

"Unit history profiles, war stories, more photos from members would all be welcome."

**QUESTION:** Would you support open advertising in the VHPA Newsletter?

Number of Responses - 288

Yes - 227 or 79%  
No - 61 or 21%

### Comments:

"Display ads open to all, classified to members only."

"Advertising on a very selective basis would be acceptable. I would not want to see advertising that might, even remotely,

play on the emotions and therefore take advantage of our members."

"Strict policy on type and content should be established and enforced."

"Limit to a page or two of items of interest to the membership."

"Only from members."

"Only advertising by VHPA members and their firms."

"Only aviation-oriented and high quality."

"A separate advertising section would be preferred."

"VHPA needs operating capital. Go for it!"

"The advertisers would get the mailing list and the junk mail would be flowing."

**QUESTION:** Advertising income for Newsletter enhancement?

Number of Responses - 281

Yes - 183 or 65%  
No - 98 or 35%

### Comments:

"The only way to go."

Continued on the next page



"Use revenue to do audit and general operations."

"I think ad revenues should go toward establishing a trust fund to insure that the recognition of our membership and the accomplishments and sacrifices that we have made will outlive us."

"Prefer to see the revenue spent on improving services or holding down dues increases."

"Sponsor more events at Reunions."

"Only as advertising allows. Color could easily make cost increase too much."

"The Newsletter is fine the way it is."

"Perhaps, but low priority."

"Color photos look good but add little."

"Color photos aren't necessary. More and better articles would be appreciated."

**QUESTION:** Is the Newsletter a good value?

Number of Responses - 290

Yes - 287 or 99%  
No - 3 or 1%

**Comments:**

"How about one a month."

"Really brings back old memories."

"I look forward to it and read each issue cover to cover."

"Very much so. I like the format but living overseas has made receiving it very slow."

"It's the 'web' keeping us all together."

"It's the way I keep up with old friends."

"Too brief."

"Best damn deal going."

"I look forward to each issue."

"It was the turn-on for me and others to join. Might want someone to do sketches too. First one is for the 'incoming mail' motor to be more realistic."

**SUBJECT: Directory**

**QUESTION:** Is the Directory a "good value?"

Number of Responses - 293

Yes - 289 or 99%  
No - 4 or 1%

**Comments:**

"It gets better each year."

"Keeping the former members in is a good idea. Maybe we can get them back."

"The information in the Directory is more important than quality of print or photos. Could we save money here?"

"Tops. I search each issue for old friends. Make it bigger."

"You do a super job."

"May need to be printed bi-annually."

"Could possibly publish every two years."

"You can cut costs by publishing changes and an updated directory every few years."

"Nice, but it could be put out every other year."

"It has class. Please do not muck it up to make a few happy."

**QUESTION:** Liberal or strict distribution

Number of Responses - 288

Strict - 262 or 91%  
Liberal - 26 or 9%

**Comments:**

"No junk mail."

"Strict is the only way to go."

"Consider giving to Vet Centers, Military Units, other related organizations."

"Add service club, i.e., American Legion, V.F.W., D.A.V., and V.A. Hospitals."

"The Directory should only be provided to paying members—that includes staff."

"Additional distribution to other flying membership organizations, (such as the 145th AVN BN Association)."

"I already get enough 'junk mail'."

"Don't let mass mailers get it."

"More liberal but with controls set by Council, and only as a source of additional revenue."

"Let's keep it to ourselves."

**Don't forget to notify  
VHPA Headquarters of  
your new address if  
you've moved!**



**Become a Life  
Member today!**

**Call VHPA for  
details  
(513) 721-VHPA**



# 1991 Annual Business Meeting

VHPA President Greg Ross opened the meeting at 1 P.M. on 6 July with over 250 VHPA members in attendance. Greg welcomed everyone and presented the meeting's agenda via an overhead projector. In his "State of the VHPA" address he summarized the results of the Self Management Study, which had the goal to determine if it was feasible for VHPA to establish and operate an office in lieu of using a contractor for administrative services, by saying that as attractive as this might be, we just cannot financially do it at this time. Therefore the Executive Council decided not to pursue this matter further. Greg also thanked everyone for their input to the Membership Questionnaire published in the Spring issue of the Newsletter. The Council is delighted that over 427 (or 13 percent of the audience) responded to VHPA's first direct membership input attempt in its 8 year history. Future Newsletters will contain summaries from the questionnaire and the input has guided the Executive Council in several areas to be presented at this meeting.

Greg asked Mike Law to present the financial report. Mike started by saying that he would cover three separate reports, the first being a two page simplified version of the CPA audit report for 1990. Even though the audit costs over \$2,000 annually, it is considered a "good value" for three important reasons: to insure that the Association adheres the all Not for Profit regulations, to have an independent set of eyes review the contractor's bookkeeping operations (which have been excellent), and to remove "all shadow of doubt" concerning liability for the all volunteer members of the Executive Council and the various committees. The full audit report will appear in the 1991 Directory but the totals are as follows:

	1990	1989
Accrual based Income	\$155,633	\$109,931
Expenses	\$138,320	\$114,810
Assets	\$133,938	\$ 92,405
Accrual based Liabilities	\$ 94,488	\$ 70,268
Year end Unrestricted Funds	\$ 39,450	\$ 22,137

He pointed out that during 1990 the major income items were the New Orleans Reunion and Dues (\$138,284) while the major expense items were the Reunion and fees for the administrative services contractor (\$116,410). The major assets are interest bearing bank accounts and Certificates of Deposits (which continue to contain the entire \$300 principle for all Life Memberships) while the major liabilities are future services that the membership has paid for via their dues. He also pointed out that the CPAs do not consider our Life Memberships as "forever" but amortize them over a 15 year period. He closed the review of the audit by saying that clearly the VHPA is "in the black" (the membership preferred the term "in the green") and had a "small nest egg" of almost \$40,000 but that his next report would show that we will begin depleting these reserves.

Mike then presented a two-page "financial status report" in the same format used to present the audit results. The totals are as follows:

	5/31/91 actual	12/31/91 anticipated
YTD Income	\$ 82,257	\$129,945*
Expenses	\$ 62,257	\$173,155*
Assets	\$172,306	\$157,994*
Accrual based Liabilities	\$138,700	\$130,904*
Year End Unrestricted (audit)	\$ 39,450	\$ 27,090

\*means must include all Life Member dues paid to year end 1991.

He identified the major expense items remaining for the year as the Reunion, monthly contractor fees, and the Directory then added that Life Member funds must be moved from savings accounts to a CD. Thus based on the best estimates and forecasts we will reduce the "small nest egg" by 30 percent.

The third financial report was an updated version of the "\$20 dues allocation pie chart" also presented in the Membership Questionnaire. Mike covered the subordinate components for each of the major areas: Management Services \$10.53 or 53 percent, Directory \$4.44 or 22 percent, Newsletter \$3.38 or 17 percent, and Other Programs \$1.65 or 8 percent. Also mentioned were some "immediate financial considerations" such as: the administrative services contract renewal in December, the strong desire expressed in the Questionnaire for membership promotions, and the possible production of 6 Newsletters per year.

Greg Ross began the "dues increase proposal" discussion by telling the membership that \$1.65 of \$20 is all the Council has to fund the Other Programs and that the Council now believes we must either increase dues or cut services (3 versus 4 Newsletters or a smaller Directory). He said that 80 percent of Questionnaire replies favored \$30 annual dues. He announced that the Council recommended increasing the General Membership dues from \$20 to \$30 (a 50 percent increase) and the Life Membership dues from \$300 to \$450 (a 50 percent increase) effective 1 Jan 1992. He also announced that the Council had approved a policy to allow installment payments (2 or 3 equal payments spanning no longer than 6 months) for Life Membership, effective immediately. During the spirited discussion that followed, these important ideas were aired: the CPAs amortize our Life Membership over 15 years, the Council uses competitive bids for major items including the administrative services contract and the next Directory, the Life CDs are "safe" with "good interest rates;" while some members will be inconvenienced with this dues increase, the dues structure is not viewed as a problem when attracting new members, the Council has been fiscally prudent (conservative) in the past and will continue this in the future BUT DOES NOT want to ask the membership for a dues increase every couple years and is very concerned about the reductions in the "small nest egg". Finally, a motion was made, seconded and passed to adopt the Council recommended dues increase.

Greg Ross started the Constitution and Bylaws changes discussion by reminding the membership that a two thirds majority is required to make such changes. He stated that the Executive Council had taken several meetings and considerable discussion prior to approving the

*Continued on page 18*

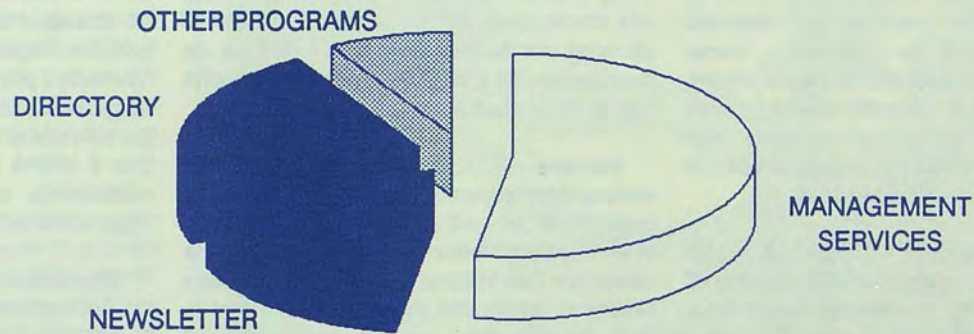


# THE VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

## FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT

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### \$20 DUES ALLOCATION



#### Management Services \$10.53 or 53%

- Bookkeeping
- Computers
- Phone and Mail Services
- Renewal Notifications
- Storage for Records & Equipment

#### Other Programs \$1.65 or 8%

- Annual Audit
- Committee Budgets
- Council Expenses
- The Gathering
- Miscellaneous

#### Directory \$4.44 or 22%

- Preparation
- Editing
- Printing
- Mailing Envelope
- Postage and Freight

#### Newsletter \$3.38 or 17%

- Preparation
- Editing
- Printing
- Mailing
- Postage

#### Immediate Financial Considerations

- Management Services contract renewal in Dec
- Membership promotions
- Possible production of 6 Newsletters per year



recommended changes and that he was certain everyone had diligently read the copy of the current Constitution, the change summary sheet, and the proposed Constitution included in their registration packets. Greg introduced Tom Percy, the Senior Member At Large, whose duties include preparing Constitution changes. To questions from the floor, Tom replied that VHPA has had no Corporate Members in 8 years and that the office of Executive Director was being renamed Secretary/Treasurer to eliminate some confusion that arouse with the management services contractor. Finally a motion was made, seconded and passed by more than the required two thirds majority to adopt the proposed Constitution and Bylaws.

Greg introduced Phil Marshall, the Junior Member at Large, to conduct the election of officers after saying that this year would be a normal year in which we elect a Vice President (who becomes the President and then the Past President in succeeding years) and a Junior Member at Large (who becomes the Mid-term and Senior Member at Large in succeeding years). Phil announced that Mike Law was the only candidate for Vice President. A motion was made, seconded and passed that be sustained by voice vote; so Mike was elected Vice President. Phil announced the four candidates for Junior Member at Large (in alphabetic order): Dick Crawley, Hayden Jones, Ken Fritz, and Charlie Rayl. As is our custom, each candidate addressed the membership for two minutes. After that the membership voted by written ballot. Later it was announced that Ken Fritz was elected the new Junior Member At Large.

Greg led off the committee reports phase of the meeting by introducing each committee chairman. The reports were:

**Data Base**--Gary Roush surprised the membership by announcing that over 50 percent of the supposedly static KIA/MIA was updated during the last year. He asked for volunteers with IBM or IBM compatible PCs to help with "data entry" for helicopter flight class records. He closed by asking everyone to look at page 165 of the current Directory and if you don't see your flight class listed here; dig out a set of orders or a class roster and send it to VHPA.

**Directory**--Mike Law announced that the Executive Council had approved the solicitation of competitive bids for this year's Directory. Because it is an \$18,000 effort, this year we would use a 4th class mail permit (versus the 2nd class) that "forced" last year's cover to "look like a Newsletter," and that the schedule calls for it to be printed during September for

delivery to the Post Office on 1 Oct; thus the membership should receive it near the end of October or early November. The page count, color cover, general roster formats will remain the same; the After Action section will be expanded as will the KIA/MIA. The Council approved the recommendation that this year's edition be "dedicated" to Marine Corps helicopter operations especially Operation SHUFLY, the early years 1962-65. Hopefully this "dedication" will go a long way toward showing our fellow pilots that VHPA is an association for EVERY helicopter pilot who flew in Southeast Asia.

**History**--Bill Greenhalgh thanked the several dozen members who have joined his committee as unit specialists, and made everyone laugh when he said that he told the Executive Council that once we get a written history for every unit that flew helicopters in SEA; then he didn't want the job anymore!! He closed by saying that there was always room for more unit specialists and that anyone interested in this should contact him.

**Newsletter**--Greg Ross reported that the Newsletter editorship is in a state of transition at the moment and that he and Gary Slaughter would treat this as a priority Executive Council matter. Greg reaffirmed his admiration for the efforts of Mike McDonald and Roger Gould as stated in the President's Roll Call in the last Newsletter.

**Public Relations**--Greg Ross reported that we only had 25 billboards this year but related two "success stories" of new members who had seen these for the first time. This led to a general comment, suggestion and question period from the floor in which these major items addressed were: Can 4 or 5 small business sized cards be included in the Newsletter so members can cut them out to give to potential members? Various advertising ideas for magazines. Can crew chiefs and door gunners join VHPA? Answer, pilots only but unlimited guests are allowed at reunions. The concept of VHPA membership for a deceased pilot will be taken under advisement by the Council. How can someone obtain copies of photos from the Newsletter at cost? The idea of establishing an "archive for VHPA memorabilia" was part of the Self Management concept but is still important and Fort Rucker's Aviation Museum has had both "good" and "bad" success stories. The WOC Hall of Fame in Mineral Wells is slowly crumbling.

**Reunion: HAI**--Jack Jordan quickly reviewed VHPA's involvement with the Helicopter Association International (HAI) by saying that our Associate Member status allows us to receive free booth space and lots

and lots of favorable publicity at the annual convention. We had 51 new members join at the last one, plus 31 renewals. VHPA sponsors a "mini-reunion" for a few hours which is called "The Gathering" and SAFT America had donated \$500 toward VHPA's 1991 expenses. He and David Owens announced that various companies were committing \$2,000 toward our 1992 expenses in Las Vegas which will be held on a Sunday night this year. He closed by asking for volunteers to man the booth in Vegas, by encouraging everyone to "come by if you are in the area," and requested suggestions for Newspapers that would carry our HAI ads at no cost. A comment was made that if VHPA could establish such a good relationship with HAI, what about other organizations like AAAA?

**Membership**--Jack Glennon summarized the committee's primary activities as striving to get "free publicity" via letters sent to several dozen publications and associations. An item will appear in the next Newsletter asking the membership for other suggestions in this area. During comments from the membership it was suggested that the "blue sheet" (entitled "Did You Fly Helicopters in Vietnam?") be periodically included in the Newsletter so all active members would have something to copy and pass along to potential members they meet.

**Reunion: Reno**--Tom Percy thanked everyone who had served on the Reno Reunion committee. Because the number of pre-registrations had a "slow start" he was concerned; however, he announced that almost 630 pilots (included 43 new members) and over 1000 people have attended the reunion thus far. The number of "first Reunion attendees" (175 at that time) is impressive. When Tom asked all the "first timers" in the room to stand up, a mighty cry went up and about a third of the audience was standing!! He said the "Life Membership raffle was going well and that during the banquet someone attending the reunion would win a free airline ticket. Since the Nugget is known for its good food, he is certain everyone will be pleased with the prime rib served at the banquet but just ask if you "need" a chicken or vegetarian meal. There was a STRONG comment from the floor that the pre-registration nametags must have larger print for next year.

**Reunion: Atlanta**--Kenny Bunn thanked the Executive Council for appointing "the original VHPA party animal" as a Reunion Committee chairman and promised larger print on the nametags for "Hotlanta". The Hilton hotel is very impressive and our contract provides for a \$70 room rate (normally \$140 single and \$165 double) and drink prices of domestic

*Continued on the next page*



beer \$1.50 (normally \$4), imported beer \$2 (\$4.50), mixed drink \$2.75 (\$6), and call brand \$3 (\$6.50). An upgrade to a suite is available at a 25 percent discount off the normal \$375 rate. During the negotiations with the hotel and to insure that our Reunion would not compete with others as we experienced in both Chicago and Reno, he said "that we would be the biggest dog in the yard or we'll stay on the porch." Needless to say, Kenny's presentation not only made everyone laugh HARD but was most informative. Kenny closed by saying that his name and phone number (205-663-7413) will appear in the next Newsletter; so "if you want a job, please call me."

To address several requests from the floor, Greg then asked Mike Law to provide some membership statistics. VHPA currently is issuing membership numbers in the 5650 range and has seen a steady growth rate of 60 to 65 per month for the last 3 plus years. We have over 340 Life Members, plus about 1300 "friends" (someone who flew in Vietnam but has not yet formally joined, paid dues) and this too has been "steady" which means that once VHPA learns of a potential member, there is a good chance he will join. Therefore, Mike encouraged everyone to send the names of their "friends" to VHPA headquarters so we can send them an information packet and include them in the database (and hence Directory). Mike concluded by saying that it is sad to note that of the 5600 members VHPA has some 30 percent who are not current with their dues and hence are not receiving the publications.

Greg thanked all those who had given committee reports and moved the agenda to walk on items. During a discussion about the 1993 Reunion site, Paul Uster and Mike McDonald volunteered to chair the activities to "make Phoenix happen." On the subject of holding Reunions around the 4th of July, it was pointed out that generally room rates are "cheaper" than over Memorial or Labor Day but that the Questionnaire responses pointed out that the 4th is difficult for many members to work into their schedules. Several favorable comments were made about the AAAA activities in Atlanta. A list of Reunion attendees should appear in the Directory each year.

There being no further business, Greg asked for a motion to adjourn, which passed at 3:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted

Mike Law  
Executive Director



## Airline ticket winner

VHPA member David L. Horton (center) and his wife, Marty, are presented two round-trip tickets on American Airlines good for any route the airline flies in the 48 contiguous states. Presenting the tickets is Greg Ross, outgoing VHPA president. Horton, who lives in Las Vegas, received the tickets at the 1991 reunion in Reno in early July. To be eligible, a VHPA member had to be current in his membership dues and be physically registered at the reunion.

**D & G** P.O. BOX 12105 • Columbus, GA 31907-0802 • 404-563-7646 • FAX 404-568-7843 • 7-Noon

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3"

**BULLION EMBLEM PATCH 15.00 each Double Clutch Back**

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M, L, XL, XXL

52 Golf Shirt (wht., lt. blue) M, L, XL (XXL add 3.00) 16.00  
54 VHPA Logo T-Shirt/ M, L, XL .... 11.50 .... XXL 12.50  
54A Sweatshirt ..... 16.50  
55 "I MY HELICOPTER PILOT" - T-Shirt ..... 11.50  
M, L, XL \*Add 2.00 2X T-Shirt  
57 VHPA Cap/patch, w/eggs (wht, navy, blk., royal) ... 9.50

59 VHPA Patch ..... 4.00  
43A VHPA Pin ..... 4.00  
62 Window Sticker ..... 1.50  
EJ-8 VHPA Logo Jacket ..... 79.95  
VHPA Back Patch ..... 35.00  
Breast Printing ..... 4 Lines 12.00 ..... 3 Lines 9.50  
Bullion ..... 15.00



# VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

7 West Seventh Street, Suite 1990 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202 (513) 721-VHPA

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS

APPLICATION: ☐

ANNUAL DUES: \$20 ☐

ADDRESS CHANGE: ☐

LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$300 ☐

SUBSCRIPTION ONLY: \$12\* ☐

(\*Included in annual dues)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please charge my MasterCard/VISA

\_\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a check/money order payable to VHPA

Credit Card No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

FLIGHT SCHOOL CLASS: \_\_\_\_\_ SERVICE BRANCH: \_\_\_\_\_

COMBAT FLIGHT HOURS: \_\_\_\_\_ SOCIAL SECURITY NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Information about EACH Vietnam Tour:

DATE		UNIT	LOCATION	CALL SIGN
From	To			

Information about YOU: Helicopters flown, medals/awards, talents, hobbies and anything else.

How did you find out about the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association? \_\_\_\_\_

Were you recruited by another member? If so, who? \_\_\_\_\_